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Goal-Setting, Self-Monitoring, and Teacher-Student Conferences and the
Relationship with Overall School Climate and Student Academic Achievement

by

Paul Thomas Godwin

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

Goal-Setting, Self-Monitoring, and Teacher-Student Conferences and the
Relationship with Overall School Climate and Student Academic Achievement

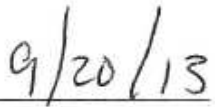
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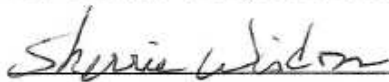
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Doctor of Education
at Lindenwood University by the School of Education



Dr. Graham Weir, Dissertation Chair



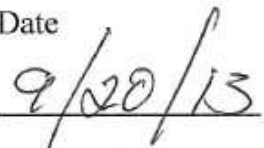
Date



Dr. Sherrie Wisdom, Committee Member



Date


Dr. Roger Stock, Committee Member

Date

Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Paul Thomas Godwin

Signature:  Date: 9/20/12

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Abstract

Programs and reforms have come and gone in the educational arena with little impact on student performance. The problem at the school of study was the students' perception of their sense of belonging and the sense of the school as a community and the students' academic performance did not show adequate growth. The study took place in a mid-western suburban elementary school serving 440 students kindergarten through fifth grade.

The significance of the study was to examine the impact of a Goal-Setting Worksheet, along with regular teacher-student conferences, as a strategy to improve the overall school climate and academic achievement as measured by climate survey results, standardized test scores, attendance rates, and office referrals.

The process allowed teachers and students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade the opportunity to work together to complete the Goal-Setting Worksheet by setting goals, establishing a plan of action, and providing feedback through conferences throughout the goal-setting period. Students assessed their progress and worked with the teachers to determine if the student needed to revisit their goal or establish a new goal. The purpose of this process was to increase the students' perception of their sense of belonging and academic achievement.

To determine if there was a change in the students' perception of school climate, students took the Caring School Community climate spring survey and the pre and post School Climate survey. Academic performance was measured by comparing scores on the Missouri Assessment Program Communication Arts and Math test and the Gates-

MacGinitie Reading Test. Survey results and academic scores were compared over a four year period.

The results were that the implementation of the goal-setting worksheet and teacher-student conferences to school climate did not yield the desired change at the school of study in the areas of overall school climate or academic achievement.

However, the understanding of the value of the two has influenced the staff to continue the desire, process, and pursuit to improve the students' perception of the school climate and increase academic performance. Because of the limited timeframe of the study, further investigation of this process is recommended.

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Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

Background of the Study

“The tragic weakness of the present school is that it endeavors to prepare future members of the social order in a medium in which the conditions of the social spirit are eminently wanting” (Dewey, 1902, as cited in Clift, 2005, p. 271).

Dewey identified a flaw in the educational system at the turn of the 20th century and still, at the turn of the 21st century, schools continued to struggle with providing an entirely appropriate environment to educate children. Various social and academic problems facing the youth of America mounted in exponential fashion. For example, “bullying in public schools is a serious and escalating problem” (Essex, 2011, p. 192). School systems attempted to meet the needs of all students, but they were not providing adequate support for students who struggled socially due to various circumstances within the school. Further research also explained the challenges associated with meeting the needs of all learners. “It is difficult to reject the reality of discriminatory harassment in all its forms—overt and covert, obvious and subtle, individually prompted and institutionally embedded,” (Stengel, 2010, p. 524). Unfortunately, the harassment which took place in schools was often overlooked or not even noticed which ultimately led to students feeling isolated, rejected, and disconnected from their peers in a place where students safety was paramount.

American schools needed to provide the type of environment where all children felt valued and appreciated. The American educational system needed learning environments where all students felt like they belonged and could reach their academic potential. The researcher of this study, along with others in educational literature,

believed a “positive sustained school climate promotes students’ academic achievement” (Cohen, Pickeral, & McCloskey, 2009, p.46). The questions educators, researchers, politicians, and society have asked for years revolved around getting to a sustained positive school climate where all children, regardless of ability, background, religion, race, or color could feel secure as they received a quality education. Gardner (2010) might have been on the right track when trying to establish the root societal challenges, or for the purposes of this study, a less than ideal school climate, when referring to starting with respect. “The respectful mind, however, starts with an assumption that diversity is positive and that the world would be a better place if individuals sought to respect one another” (Gardner, 2010, p. 20).

Fortunately, there was a growing amount of research to help educators identify a relationship between peer groups and a student’s outcome in school (Faircloth & Hamm, 2011). The effects of school violence, bullying, and isolation within the school environment had become a strong focus for school administrators across the country. Mary Wakefield, who ran the Health Resources and Services Administration at the Department of Health and Human Services, stated at a White House conference on bullying, “Government statistics show that roughly one-in-three middle and high school students report being bullied. Research shows that bullying adversely affects children's mental health, academic success, and ability to relate to other kids” (Mimi, 2011, p. 2).

In addition, the growing emphasis on higher academic performance for all students in the United States reached a tragic level of concern because of the requirements to meet the demands of No Child Left Behind. Students in the United States were trailing global competitors academically and were ultimately having

difficulty in the real-world after college, if they had the opportunity to attend. This idea was supported by the work of McLester and McIntire (2006) in their article titled, “The Workforce Readiness Crisis.” McLester and McIntire (2006) reported the United States faced an increasingly competitive world market driven by digital globalization. The two authors then addressed the urgency for the American education system to meet the challenge of preparing graduates skilled enough to keep our country on the cutting edge. Their response was, “According to a survey of more than 400 Fortune 500 companies, we're not doing enough” (McLester & McIntire, 2006, p. 22).

High academic performance cannot take place if the school climate has the potential to negatively impact the students who attend the school. Research has confirmed a positive association between students’ attitudes towards their school and various academic outcomes, such as academic performance, success expectations, engagement, and academic self-efficacy in all levels of school (Osterman, 2000). Thus, procedures and protocol must be established in schools to support the children who are left behind socially and academically due to lower self-esteem and sense of belonging. “The need for relatedness includes the need to feel connected with others and thus the need to experience a sense of belonging” (Sancho & Cline, 2012, p. 64).

At Green Elementary, a pseudonym for the school study site, establishing and maintaining a positive school climate coupled with increasing academic student performance were lofty goals building level administrators in the researcher’s district, and others, addressed each academic school year for required School Improvement Plans (SIP). “Research has shown that schools implementing supportive and positive school climate strategies were more successful in creating environments conducive to learning”

(Safe and Positive School Climate, 2008, p. 41). The ill-effects and consequences of not providing a positive learning environment and obtaining high levels of academic excellence were significant on numerous levels.

Across the country, increased dropout rates, bullying, youth suicide, as well as growing crime and incarceration rates, just began to skim the surface of the tragedies associated with poor school climate. According to the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance report, of the students surveyed, 19.9% were bullied at school, 13.8% seriously considered suicide, 5% felt unsafe at school, and 26.1% felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more, (Eaton et al., 2010). To help put this into perspective, Green Elementary had 440 students. If these percentages were an accurate picture of Green Elementary, 88 students were have been bullied, 61 students would have considered suicide, 22 students felt unsafe, and 115 students felt sad or helpless. If these numbers were, in fact, real statistics for Green Elementary, the administrative team and teaching staff would have a significant amount of work to do in order to create an entirely positive learning environment where all students could success academically or socially.

Further, employment rates, higher rates of poverty, and an inadequate standing on the economic global scene rose to the top of the list when students in the United States did not reach high levels of academic performance, according to the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). “With the nation ranking 20 out of 28 among industrialized democracies on high school graduation rates, the dropout problem is a substantial drag on the nation’s economic competitiveness,” (Princiotta, Reyna, & National Governors Association, 2009, p. 4). Again, the OECD data stressed the importance of ensuring students were able to receive the necessary instruction in an

appropriate school environment to achieve at their highest level. Thus, transforming schools into emotionally, psychologically, and physically safe spaces for all must be the paramount priority for educators (Sadlier, 2011).

School Climate. “It has been demonstrated that the prevailing climate within an institution has an impact on student outcomes” (Meeuwisse, Severiens, & Born, 2010, p. 531). Climate represents the measurable effects related to the practices, programs, and structures within a school (Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997; Schoen & Teddlie, 2008) which led to greater academic results and an increased sense of belonging for all students. In general, Black (2010) stated school climate influences not only the day-to-day experiences, it impacts the quality and effectiveness of the entire educational experience for the students.

School Culture. Culture represented the beliefs, values norms, ceremonies and rituals shared by members of school (Krumm, 1996; Stolp, 1994; Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011). Moreover, “traditions are part of culture, but much of the day-to-day routine, whether written in policy and procedure or acknowledged in unwritten expectations, guides everyone at the school,” (Roby, 2011, p. 782). However, the culture of schools has been invaded by external mandates which demanded specific requirements and expectations. For example, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, greatly impacted the culture of public schools (Mallory & Reavis, 2007). Depending on the school environment, this could be either an amazing attribute to a building or the major flaw students, teachers, and parents detest most. For schools who met or exceeded the federal demands of NCLB and had a positive school climate, a positive culture was expected and supported for students, teachers, and families. Buildings who failed to meet

the requirements had the pressure to make the necessary growth for the upcoming school year. When the hard work put forth by the students and teachers was not rewarded with acceptable academic achievement, spirit and moral were depleted and the school environment suffered. The culture of a building took time to create, for better or worse.

Similar to climate, a positive culture can lead to increased student achievement and higher job satisfaction among the staff (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011). Patterns of poor behavior generated poor culture because disruptive students could make learning difficult for others to learn; therefore, school administration and staff members must work to break bad habits and to create a better, more positive, culture for students and staff.

Global Implications in Regards to Student Academic Success. Students in the United States continued to fall behind other nations around the world and the plans to rebound soon were in question. Ken Kay concurred with this statement when he wrote the forward for the book, *21st Century Skills- Rethinking How Students Learn*, “the United States has no clear sense of purpose or direction for securing our future economic competitiveness” (Bellanca & Brandt, 2010, p. xix).

To help determine national rankings in education, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) administered a test every three years to 15 year old students around the world. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) website, “PISA is an international study that was launched by the OECD in 1997. PISA aims to evaluate education systems worldwide every three years by assessing 15-year-olds' competencies in the key subjects: reading, mathematics and science” (OECD, 2013). *USA Today* posted on December 7, 2010, students in the United States were performing about average in reading and science, and

below average in math on the 2009 PISA. The article continued to state, “out of 34 countries, the U.S. ranked 14th in reading, 17th in science, and fifth in math” (Associated Press, 2010, p. 1).

The global implications were real. The United States continued to trail global competitors in all academic areas and this trend had not gone unnoticed. “Educators have long struggled to understand why some students fail to thrive in traditional classroom settings” (Quinn, Poirier, Faller, Gable, & Tonelson, 2006, p. 11). The fixes were not simple and cannot take place overnight. Realistically, creating learning environments where all students feel like they belong was not the “silver bullet” to remedy the American educational system. It was a single factor, a piece of the larger puzzle, which needed to be addressed if Americans planned to rise to the top, in the academic or economic arena.

School Improvement. Continuous improvement was a constant challenge in schools across the country as school districts strived to meet the demands set by government regulations. Building administrators did have the autonomy to direct the focus in the appropriate areas for the school. Typically, academic achievement was the priority when principals established the building goals each year. However, the climate of the building recently became a more specific component of building and district level school improvement plans. In fact, Mallory and Reavis (2007) stated, the gap of school culture (and climate) was the first gap principals should address before and during implementation of school improvement strategies. More recently, Doll (2010) stated “school climate has been called the fourth leg of school success, after curriculum materials, instructional strategies, and teacher” (Doll, 2010, p. 12). Researchers have

linked a connection to increased academic performance with a strong school climate. Building administrators needed to prioritize the professional culture of the school to ensure staff has the necessary skills to promote a positive school climate, build connectedness among all stakeholders, and link students' academic performance to behavioral and academic goals (Cawood, 2010; Faulkner, Adlaf, Irving, Allison, & Dwyer, 2009; MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009). Building principals in the researcher's school district were required to include climate and academic goals within school improvement plans (SIP) each year. Further, a key to establish such a climate for students revolved around the ability of the principal to communicate effectively. This was supported in Sadlier's (2011) work which focused on the principal's role in creating a safe and respectful school climate when stated, "The ability to communicate in ways that foster understanding and build positive school climates for staff and students are neither optional nor unimportant skills for a principal" (p. 193).

Again, research supported the connection of improving student achievement by creating learning environments which encouraged student integrations and interpersonal competency (MacNeil, et. al, 2009; Quinn et al., 2006). To summarize, there was a correlation or connection to a strong, positive building climate and academic performance.

Statement of Problem

In order to achieve at their highest level of academic performance in schools and maintain a significant level of self-esteem, students needed to have a strong sense of belonging and feel connected to their peers and environment. Threatening students' sense of belonging (bullying) still existed in schools which impeded the desire for

students to want to attend school. Student academic performance levels were not making the grade on the national scene. There continued to be an achievement gap among students at all levels of instruction. The facts and negative educational trends were undeniable and “there is no evidence that any reform strategies currently being used in the United States were having a positive impact on student achievement” (Tucker, 2011, p. 39). Americans were at a pivotal point as a nation in regards to how the United States appeared on the global scene. Educators needed to help our children successfully grow and succeed in schools and in the world. However, how would educators, parents, and community members foster a stronger sense of belonging among all students, both those who were experiencing success in school and those who were encountering difficulties of one kind or another (Wellik & Kazemek, 2008)? In addition, “sense of belonging to school appears essential to many educational processes and schooling outcomes” (Ma, 2003, p.341).

“Our nation’s schools were faced with complex and deep-rooted challenges such as poverty, discrimination, weak school-family relationships, low student motivation, and high student mobility” (Muscott et al., 2008, p. 7). In comparison, the suburban study-site school only had a small percentage of students who experience such lifestyles. News in the national media about two students’ deaths as a result of harassment in school highlighted a renewed desire for educators to address the culture of bullying and harassment in public schools, especially when the victims were targeted for their real or perceived differences (Terry, 2010).

“Unfortunately, peer bullying and harassment and their too frequently tragic outcomes were not novel events for students in American schools” (Sadlier, 2011, p.184).

The emotional well-being of children had become a topic of conversation among elementary school educators and their focus turned to improving the lack of connectedness or an inadequate sense of belonging. “A sense of belonging was associated with positive relationships with peers and feeling a connection to one’s form [peer] group” (Sancho & Cline, 2012, p. 70).

Unfortunately, the efforts which have taken place over the last few decades in schools had not completely abolished the negative aspects of a school’s environment. “Bullying, harassment, and intimidation in our schools continue as part of a complex social and cultural phenomenon” (Terry, 2010, p. 99). Further, “bullying is one of the most common forms of youth violence; it has been linked to a host of negative consequences for children’s health and mental health” (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009, p. 636). This statement was magnified by events which took place around the country with children on an entirely too frequent basis. Headlines and news stories made people cringe when the life of child was taken too soon as a result of suicide or injury due to the stresses of being bullied or alienated. Siris and Osterman (2004) feared bullying may be viewed as an inevitable part of growing up, and for some, the repeated harassment, rejection, and sense of isolation may lead to violence against themselves or others. Thus, the researcher decided to address the perception of the students’ sense of belonging and sense of the school as a community as they related to increasing third, fourth, and fifth grade students’ academic progress at the elementary school level. The need to increase students’ sense of belonging was supported in other studies. More specifically, Ma (2003) stated, “Students’ sense of (or lack of) belonging to school has social consequences beyond recent tragedies of school violence” (p. 340).

Background of the Researcher

Green Elementary School, a pseudonym for the school of study, was in a transitional stage at the time of this research because a new building principal was hired. The building principal had experienced success with establishing a positive learning environment in previous places of employment. The researcher's five previous schools were all recognized as Missouri Schools of Character and National Schools of Character from the Character Education Partnership (CEP). After reviewing Green Elementary's Caring School Community (CSC) School Climate data from the previous years, the researcher noticed the research building had a sound foundation of a positive climate, but also identified areas in which the school could improve the overall school community. However, with 12% of students who participated in the Voluntary Student Transfer Program (students who live within the St. Louis City limits but attend a St. Louis County school), 14% of the students receiving Free or Reduced meals due to financial hardship, and 17% of the students receiving Special Education Services, the need to address the entire student body was warranted.

Study Setting Demographics

The demographics of Green Elementary included a total of 440 students during the 2011-2012 year. Of the 440 students, there was a moderate amount of diversity among the students. The breakdown of the demographics included 344 (78%) White, 54 (12%) Black, 29 (6%) Asian, 9 (2%) Hispanic, and 11 (2%) classified as Other. The socioeconomic status of the building included 62 students (14%) who received Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) which assists families whose incomes were sufficiently low. The

cost of their school meals was partially or completely subsidized by the federal government (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, & Nutrition Service, 2010).

In addition, 75 (17%) students received services from the Special School District to support the students' learning. The school study-site also serviced 11 (2%) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and 63 (14%) Talented and Gifted students.

The researcher understood the role of the principal shaping the culture of the building and how his actions would directly impact the culture of the building and school community. Strong cultures allow organizations to be more adaptable, motivated, committed, cooperative to resolve conflicts, greater capacity for innovation, and are more effective in achieving their goals (Louis & Wahlstrom, 2011). With this understanding and knowledge, the researcher knew his role was to build on the existing culture and build the trust with the students, teachers, and parents to make strides in areas focused on improving the sense of belong, sense of school as a community, and academic performance.

The researcher, as the new building principal, reviewed the existing data from the Caring School Community (CSC) climate survey and the academic results from various standardized tests upon arrival. The researcher identified that the school's students experienced an inconsistent level of sense of belonging as described by the CSC climate survey comparative to his previous school's data and the district average. Academic progress was being made on the required state-wide assessment, but not at the required pace set by the state resulting from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

The researcher's district was a member of the Character Education Partnership and Character Plus. Through these memberships, all schools were provided support and training with developing and implementing a solid Character Education program. The pinnacle for school for Character Education was to be first recognized as a State School of character and ultimately, a National School of Character. To help establish a solid understanding of what a National School of Character should look like, schools had access to the Eleven Principles of Effective of Character Education as determined by the program developed by the Character Education Partnership.

“Based on the practices of effective schools, the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education form the cornerstone of CEP's philosophy on how best to develop and implement high-quality character education initiatives” (CEP, 2010). The principles were as follows: promote core values, defines character to include thinking, feeling and doing, uses a comprehensive approach, creates a caring community, provides students with opportunities for moral action, offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum, fosters students' self-motivation, engages staff as a learning community, fosters shared leadership, engages families and community members as partners, and assesses the culture and climate of the school.

The connection to this study and the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education can be made in Principle 4, Creates a Caring Community and Principle 7, Fosters Students' Self-motivation.

Purpose of Study

Based upon multiple factors, the stage was set for the administration, students, staff, and parents to embark on a journey to increase the overall school climate with a

direct focus on improving the students' sense of belonging (connectedness), sense of school as a community, and academic achievement through the implementation of Goal Setting Worksheets (GSW) for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. "The earlier children master the goal-setting procedure and learn to manage the quality of their thoughts about themselves, the better prepared they are for the more academically oriented school climate and later life experiences" (Szente, 2007, p.453). Further, Doll (2010) supported the need to increase the level of student belonging because the connectedness will more likely lead to postsecondary educational and career opportunities.

The researcher in this study believed the students' emotional well-being should also be taken into consideration when planning and preparing to help students realize their full potential and also be accepted by their peers. Goodenow (1992) and Sancho and Cline (2012) both identified schools as a social environment where positive relationships among peers was an essential part of educational psychology and was also instrumental when a sense of belonging was being established.

In addition, it was equally important for students to understand and value the need to be their own advocate as they pursued their personal goals in school and in life. Goal-setting had shown success in the academic arena. "Teaching goal setting is a clearly defined method for redirecting the teaching patterns to guide students toward a more constructive path in life" (Rader, 2005, p. 125). In addition, by linking learning goals with students' personal goals students were able to modify their strategies which increased motivation and in turn, improved their learning (Talbot, 1997; Wolters, 1998).

Research Question and Hypothesis. Would the implementation of an intentional focus on curricular or behavioral goal-setting, self-monitoring, and teacher-student conferences increase the overall school climate and student academic achievement? The researcher was in a leadership position within the school of study. With the purpose of increasing sense of belonging, sense of school as a community, and academic achievement, an intentional focus on academic and behavioral goal-setting was designed. This study measured the effectiveness of goal-setting on the overall school climate and academic performance of students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. The implementation of a Goal-Setting Worksheet (GSW) students used on a weekly, bi-weekly, or unit/chapter basis to help the student and teacher monitor the student's progress throughout the duration of each goal and was dependent upon the student's individual goal. The properties of the GSW included the beginning and end date of the goal-setting timeframe, the area of focus whether the goal was academic or behavioral, the action plan to achieve the goal, each conference date between the student and teacher, a self-assessment piece for the students to determine if the goal was met, and the "now what" section which allowed the students to determine what they would if they met or did not meet the goal.

Students in third, fourth and fifth grade who regularly set goals of their choosing, self-monitored their progress and assessed their efforts, and maintained consistent conversation with their teacher would:

a) raise the school's overall CSC climate score in the area of feelings of belonging (survey),

- b) raise the school's overall CSC Climate score in the area of sense of school as a community (survey),
- c) raise the School Climate average response score (survey),
- d) increase the third, fourth and fifth grade students' academic performance on standardized tests (MAP and GMRT),
- e) increase the third, fourth and fifth grade students' average daily attendance,
- f) decrease the number of discipline incidents for students in third, fourth and fifth grade,
- g) increase academic performance and climate score for students in third grade who regular set goals compared to those students who do not use the (GSW).

Alternative Hypotheses. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will increase the students' level of sense of belonging, and sense of school as a community as measured by the CSC climate survey for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student teacher conferences will increase the school climate level as measured by the School Climate survey from fall to spring for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will increase the students' academic performance on the MAP Communication Arts and Mathematics assessment and GMRT for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

Finally, the implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will improve the number of discipline referrals and attendance rates for student in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

Definition of Terms

AIMSweb. AIMSweb was a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment. The results were reported to students, parents, teachers, and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention assignment.

Caring School Community. An approach “designed to develop students’ sense of community in school – their sense of belonging, contribution, and influence” (CHARACTERplus, 2007, p. 105). The Caring School Community™ (CSC) the CHARACTERplus WaySM offered a multi-phase, school wide program whose central aim was to help each school become a “caring community of learners” that effectively promoted students’ intellectual, social, and ethical development and teachers’ continuous improvement of practice.

Climate. The definition of school climate usually encompasses dimensions of the perceived social environment that: (a) have a contextual influence on the learning and development of students, (b) remain stable over time, and (c) can be meaningfully aggregated across raters. Definitions of climate focused on conditions as they were viewed by students, teachers, or parents, rather than on objective aspects of the setting. “Illustratively, school climate may be reflected in the frequency with which teachers go out of their way to explain material to students, a behavior that can be observed by students” (Brand, 2011, p. 1).

Culture. “Patterns of meaning or activity (norms, values, beliefs, relationships, rituals, traditions, myths, etc.) shared in varying degrees by members of a school community” (School Culture, n.d.).

Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL). Students whose family incomes were sufficiently low, 130-185 % of the poverty rate, so the cost of their school meals was partially or completely subsidized by the federal government (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food, & Nutrition Service, 2010).

Gates MacGinitie (GMRT) Reading Assessment. The GMRT was used by teachers and schools to know the general level of reading achievement of individual students throughout their entire school careers. The objective information obtained from GMRT, complemented by teachers' evaluations and other sources of information can provide a basis for the following (Riverside Publishing):

- Organizing students into appropriate instructional groups
- Selecting students for individual diagnosis and special instruction
- Identifying students who are ready for more advanced instruction
- Placing new students into proper instructional programs
- Evaluating the effectiveness of instructional programs
- Reporting student progress to parents, teachers, and the community

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). The state test administered to all Missouri students in grades 3 through 8 (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010). MAP was an acronym for Missouri Assessment Program. It was a series of assessments for Communication Arts, Mathematics and Science at grades 3-8; and Communication Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies in high school. These assessments were designed to see if students in Missouri were meeting the Show-Me Standards. The grade-level assessments were made up of multiple-choice, machine-scored items, as well as "constructed response" items. These items required

students to supply (rather than select) an appropriate response. In addition, the grade-level assessments included some items from TerraNova, a nationally normed test developed by CTB/McGraw-Hill, so Missouri student achievement could be compared to groups of students who took the same test in other states.

Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). The state guidelines used for curriculum and school operations to rate effectiveness of schools (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010).

Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE). Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE) described a student's level of achievement in relation to the scores of other students in the same grade and were placed on a scale of 1 to 99. NCEs were suitable for computing averages.

Percentile Rank (PR). A Percentile Rank (PR) was an indicator of where a student's performance fit within the performance of other students in the same grade. PRs were placed on a scale of 1 to 99 and indicated the percentage of students in the norming group whose raw scores were lower. They did not indicate the percentage of questions a student answered correctly. Percentile Ranks were placed on a curve; most students earn PRs somewhere in the middle of the scale. Differences in PRs at one part of the scale may not represent the same difference in achievement as the same PR differences at another part of the scale. Percentile Ranks were not suitable for computing averages.

School Climate. Staff created partnerships with parents; students took part in setting classroom norms and rules; student pairs worked collaboratively on activities that were aligned with the academic curriculum; students learned to work cooperatively; and students felt competent to achieve academic success (Caring School Community, 2012).

Also defined as the “shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that shape interactions between the students, teachers, and administrators” (Mitchell, 2010, p. 272).

School Climate Survey. The researcher created the School Climate Survey to be used as a pre-survey and post-survey to identify the students’ perception of the school’s climate at the beginning of the school year compared to the end of the school year and study. More specifically, the survey was directed toward a student’s sense of belonging determined by teacher to student relationships, student to student relationships, and student involvement in and outside of school.

Self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) reported in the book, *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, self-efficacy beliefs were an important source of motivation. “Self-efficacy refers to a person’s belief in his or her ability to perform at a designated level. These beliefs were measured by degrees of certainty that one can perform given tasks” (Bembenutty, 2009, p. 458; Doll, 2010, p. 13). Other definitions of self-efficacy were defined in multiple research studies. Self-efficacy referred to task-specific self-confidence and had been found to significantly affect a wide range of actions, including behavioral choice, level of performance, effort in the face of failure, the selection of useful task strategies, goal choice, and goal commitment (Bandura, 1997). Additional research “suggests that students who demonstrate high levels of positive self-belief in their competencies, in both academic and non-academic contexts, tend to have higher self-esteem when compared to their lower scoring peers” (Szente, 2007, p. 450). For the purpose of this study, self-efficacy was defined as “a person’s belief that he or she will succeed at the task he or she attempts” (Doll, 2010, p. 13).

Sense of Belonging. Defined as an individual's being part of a social group in the school he or she values and feeling accepted and valued by the members of the group (Goodenow, 1992). Other researchers have also referred sense of belonging as the following: feelings of belonging, school connectedness, school attachment, sense of relatedness, sense of school community, or school membership (Daly, Buchanan, Dasch, Eichen, & Lenhart, 2010; Roffey, 2013; Sancho & Cline, 2012; Sayer, Beaven, Stringer, & Hermena, 2013; Schaps & Cook, 2010). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used sense of belonging throughout the research except when referring to the CSC survey section titled, Students' Feelings of Belonging.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals. S.M.A.R.T. Goals was a goal-setting and monitoring process deemed the S.M.A.R.T. (O'Neill, 2004, p. 32). S.M.A.R.T. was an acronym for specific, measurable, attainable or achievable, relevant or realistic, and time-bound.

Socio-economic Status (SES). Socio economic status, referred in this dissertation to students whose family income was sufficiently low to qualify to receive Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL).

Stakeholders. Stakeholders were members of a school community that had a stake in the workings of the school including, but not limited to, staff, parents, students, and community members (Reeves, 2009).

Students' Feeling of Belonging. Students were nice to each other; they get along; they respect their teachers; they treat each other fairly, and they tell the truth (Caring School Community, 2012). To maintain consistency throughout the study, the phrase Students' Sense of Belonging was used.

Students' Sense of School as a Community. Students felt the school was like a family; students help each other learn and treat each other with respect; they work together to solve problems, and feel good when someone does well. (Caring School Community, 2012).

Talented and Gifted. The Talented and Gifted students were those students who qualify according to the following criterion: a global measure of intelligence from either the WASI-II, WISC-IV or Stanford-Binet: Fifth Edition, a standardized, nationally normed measure of academic achievement from the last two years in one of the following areas: total battery, basic battery, total math or total reading, and the student's score on the Renzulli/Hartman, "Scale for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students."

Summary

As an educator for 15 years, the researcher placed a great deal of importance on providing a safe and welcoming environment for all students to learn and grow. Research supported the need "to promote truly safe schools, educators must understand the culture of all their students and the community they serve, and help all students understand and respect the culture and climate of the schools they attend" (Bucher, 2005, p. 59). As a new elementary building principal, the vision and desire were still the same, but encompassed an entire school community. "Schools, as social institutions, have an important role to play in forming and maintaining constructive and geographical and relational communities" (Sayer et al., 2013, p. 9). With this understanding, the researcher maintained his focus and drive to improve the overall climate and culture of a building

serving over 440 students and 60 staff members became an eagerly assumed goal of the researcher.

The purpose of this study revolved around improving the overall school climate and culture with a specific focus to increase the third, fourth, and fifth grade students' sense of belonging through the incorporation of setting personal academic or behavioral goals paired with teacher-student conferences. The CSC end-of-year survey and the School Climate pre-survey and post-survey were used to determine if there were gains in the students' sense of belonging and overall school climate for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

Furthermore, the study was conducted to make a positive impact on the students' academic achievement over the course of one school year and hopefully on a continued basis for years ahead. The students' academic performance was determined by their scores on the MAP test taken at the end of the school year and the results of the GMRT.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review for this particular study was initiated to identify what the research stated regarding the relationship between school environment and academic performance. For the purpose of this study, school environment encompassed the climate and culture of the building. To address the current perception and develop an understanding of school environment, *climate* and *culture* were more accurately defined because there was some “interchangeability and fluidity between scholars in the literature” (Sadler, 2011, p. 193). A clear understanding of each was required if changes to the building’s climate were to take place.

While addressing the climate of the building, the researcher focused on research about students’ sense of belonging and the students’ perception of the school as a community. Therefore, belonging in a school setting was defined in the research. In addition, the educational literature provided a clear understanding of what students consider necessary for a community suitable for learning and socialization.

As previously stated, there had been multiple reforms to increase student academic performance. School counselors and administrators could also argue several programs had been implemented to improve social development and acceptance of all children. However, the focus for this literature review revolved around student motivation and embodied the need for goal-setting as the necessary contributor for the students at Green Elementary to improve their level of perception of sense of belonging, sense of the school as a community, and academic performance.

Culture versus Climate

Schools required so much more than an aligned curriculum through the Common Core State Standards and high test scores. Schools needed to address the climate and culture of the building to support the desired learning outcomes. Other studies supported the idea school climate and culture was associated with school performance, improvement, and outcomes (Lindahl, 2011; Zullig, 2011). School populations who experienced a good school environment must maintain the high level of academic success and positive climate to prevent the school environment from becoming toxic at a time of development when a sense of success and a growing, positive self-concept is needed for students (Schulz, 2011).

In addition, the notion of climate and culture was more relevant in schools had been addressed in multiple studies. In fact, school principals suggested “focusing on development of the school’s culture as a learning environment is fundamental to improved teacher morale and student achievement” (MacNeil et al., 2009, p. 74). Throughout the literature, scholars weighed in on their definitions of climate and culture, making it difficult to determine differences among them. In fact, one resource stated, “in view of these conflicting conceptualizations, for the purposes of this article, no attempt to differentiate between the two terms is made” (Lindahl, 2011, p. 17). However, a clear definition was established after evaluating ones presented through the course of this study. For example, school climate was defined as “the shared beliefs, values, and attitudes that shape interactions between the students, teachers, and administrators” (Mitchell, 2010, p. 272). Fan’s (2011) definition of school climate was summarized as, the character and quality of life within a school shaped by its structure, physical

environment, instructional practices, interpersonal relationships, and overarching values, objectives, traditions, and customs. For the duration of the study, the researcher used Merriam-Webster's Dictionary more simplistic definition of climate as, "the prevailing influence or environmental conditions characterizing a group or period" (Climate, n.d.).

Similar to climate, the term culture also gathered multiple definitions in the literature. First, Wilson explicitly defined culture in the work, *Great American Schools: The Power of Culture and Passion*. It argued the culture of the school was:

sustained by consistent leadership that engages stakeholders; a clear purpose; a value system that guides behavior and builds respect; flexibility of design that includes choice; and relationships and a sense of caring that reaches all learners and the community beyond. (Wilson, 2008, p. 38)

Secondly, Van Houtte's (2005) similar definition of culture was defined as the set of shared meanings, beliefs, and assumptions of the members of the organization. For this study, the researcher used Merriam-Webster's definition of culture as "the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization" (Culture, n.d.). Regardless of their multiple, yet similar meanings, the authors, researchers, and educators pointed out climate and culture can positively or negatively influence the tone of a school and the children's and staff's attitude toward it.

Additionally, the climate and culture of a building had the potential to alter the staff's attitude toward going to work each day and provided parents with a positive or negative impression of the building. Because staff and parents played essential roles in the development and teaching of the children, having a warm and welcoming environment was closely tied to student outcomes. Parents, teachers, and community

leaders could support optimal youth development by nurturing this sense of group belonging rather than disdaining or dismissing it (Newman, Lohman, & Newman, 2007).

Finally, “in the 1990’s, culture became validated as a “prominent expression” to point to the character of the school” (Van Houtte, 2005, p. 74). The idea of creating a school with positive character had infiltrated school systems and established the need to provide schools the opportunity for students to feel safe, successful, and confident in themselves. Other researchers in education acknowledged this concept. A supportive and safe school is one which welcomes the diverse population of students, staff, and parents to interact in a nonthreatening manner which reflects the educational mission of the school while fostering positive relationships, personal growth and the school community is valued for their varying contributions (Bucher, 2005; Nassar-McMillan, Karvonen, Perez, & Abrams, 2009).

Again, the literature supported the association between good school climate and a sense of connection to the school (Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006). However, one impact which has not been addressed related to the emotional implications was the emotional safety of children. Bucher (2005) stated emotional safety was just as important as physical safety therefore there needed to be consideration for the intellectual and emotional safety of students. Emotional and physical safety were factors which played a part in the climate and culture of a building. Goldstein, Young, and Boyd (2008) agreed there were several mechanisms which could impact a child’s experience at school, bullying being one of the greatest contributors to students’ feelings.

Further, in the effort to improve school climate to optimize the learning for all students, Bradshaw and Wassdorp (2009) urged data be collected in schools which were

affected by the negative attributes of a school such as violence, gang activity, and academic failure. This must be done, not only to protect the child socially, physically, and mentally, but to provide a warm and welcoming place to learn and gain the educational skills needed to achieve academically. Roffey (2013) suggested where there was connection and inclusion there was less likelihood of development of negative groups such as gangs.

In conclusion, the complexity of diversity's blending is of great significance in the academic setting. The need for a change in a schools' culture or climate was not unnoticed. In fact, research over many decades had confirmed safety, teaching and learning, relationships, and environment were key aspects of school climate and these aspects exerted a strong influence within the school (Smith, 2012). School leaders and staff needed to be honest and identify their current reality in order to make necessary changes to move forward for the benefit of all students so all students feel like they belong to the school community. Mallory and Reavis (2007) concurred with their statement, "Not paying attention to the culture of the school, 'as the way we do things around here,' may impede the process of adapting to change and improving" (p. 9).

Belonging

Though dated, Goodenow (1992) stated, "belonging has been identified as a potentially important factor in education as least as far back as Maslow (1962), who listed it as a basic human need, one that must be met before high motives can be activated," (p. 185). Maslow and Goodenow continued to have support in their rationale for addressing the need for student belonging. More recently, Schaps and Cook (2010)

stressed increasing students' sense of connectedness to school may prove pivotal to leveling the playing field for students.

The research, again, provided multiple variations to the meaning and coined different definitions of belonging to essentially mean the same thing. In Booker's (2006) work, "belonging" was defined as "student perception of teacher warmth, in other students it involves the level of student classroom participation, and in some explorations it was defined as student engagement" (p. 2). Some studies identified belonging as students' feeling of belonging which is addressed later in the literature review. The *Characterplus Way*® (Caring School Community, 2012) defined students' feeling of belonging as students were nice to each other, got along, and treated each other fairly. Further, they respected teachers and told the truth. Schulz (2011) used the term alienation in conjunction with belonging in her research. Her definition of alienation was defined as the lack of belonging and engagement of students in a school setting.

For the purpose of this study, sense of belonging and feeling of belonging were used interchangeably when discussing the results from the CSC Climate Survey. Regardless of the orientation of the definition, the negative impact weighed heavily on their mind. The definitions previously mentioned were evident not only in the school of study but in schools across the country and needed to be addressed to meet the needs of all students.

In an article titled, "From Punishment to Responsibility," which focused on providing students with an alternative school setting due to failures in a traditional classroom, Fuller (2009) summarized the most aggressive student has learned necessary survival skills and feeling rejected was another factor impacting success in school. The

evidence, again, showed “aggression within the school has important implications for youth development and academic success” (Goldstein et al., 2008, p. 642). Regardless of physical, mental, or verbal abuse, a student’s poor sense of belonging affected the students’ opportunity to learn and grow. Therefore, schools had a responsibility to provide the opportunity for every student to belong to their academic environment and focus on both educational and social success.

Throughout the research, evidence supported the need for students to feel a strong sense of belonging and have the opportunity for them to be connected to their peers. Reports indicated school connectedness and acceptance are associated with reduced risk of negative development outcomes such as anxiety and depression (Sukkyung et al., 2008; Newman et al., 2007). Student and school connectedness played a key influence in the students’ engagement and educational outcomes (Roffey, 2013). The positive outcomes connected to school connectedness or sense of belonging had been documented across all student populations (Daly et al., 2010).

Other studies supported the idea of being connected and supported by key contexts of family and school showed lower rates of antisocial behavior and better rates of academic achievement (Lerner et al., 2005). Booker (2006) agreed inclusion in school and academics had a connection with each other in her statement, “Increased connection to the school environment, by way of positive and encouraging interactions with peers and teachers, results in higher levels of student performance and mastery” (Booker, 2006, p. 302).

In general, students with a greater sense of school belonging were found to be less anxious, less lonely, more autonomous and pro-social, more intrinsically than

extrinsically motivated, and more successful in their class. Furthermore, they valued education more, participated in both in-class and out-of-class activities more frequently, had higher self-esteem, higher school attendance rates, better relationships with their teachers and peers, and are, in general, more satisfied with their lives (Cemalcilar, 2010).

Sense of Belonging

“Belonging” was taken one step further in the field of education to account for the children’s perspective about how they value their school environment. Therefore, the phrase *sense of belonging* became a key conversation piece in education. Booker (2006) identified sense of belonging as a relevant concept in education for decades. For most children, schools provided the context in which the first significant relationships with people outside the family were formed (Cemalcilar, 2010). Based on these findings, it might be expected that teacher and peer interactions possibly form antecedents of students’ sense of belonging (Meeuwisse et al., 2010). Therefore, a deeper understanding of what these aspects meant in a school environment and how they impacted the life of a child in school were identified in various studies.

Cemalcilar (2010) referenced Goodenow’s work from 1992 when the social embeddedness of learning and teaching was emphasized and demonstrated student outcomes were strongly influenced by the characteristics of the schools’ social settings (p. 248) by stating, “students want to “fit-in” and have something of value to offer. For the greater part of early childhood and adolescence, schools present a primary context for social relationships and an opportunity to satisfy the need of relatedness” (Cemalcilar, 2010, p. 247). Finally, children with the feeling of connection toward their school

environment showed greater positive psycho-social outcomes than those students who felt disconnected (Way, Reddy, & Rhodes, 2007).

To establish a foundation of understanding for sense of belonging, the term needed to be more clearly defined because again, there were multiple words to essentially say the same thing throughout the research. Clarifying sense of belonging, school connectedness, inclusion, or school engagement required a more in depth investigation at definitions other researchers have used in their work.

Goodenow's (1992) definition of school connectedness or sense of belonging was the manner in which students felt accepted, respected, included, and supported by their peers in the school setting. In another study, "school belonging was associated with both academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction, which included satisfaction with classes, homework, student behavior, and school discipline" (McMahon, Parnes, Keys, & Viola, 2008, p. 396). Juvonen (2007) wrote, "*connectedness* and *belongingness* were used interchangeably to refer to sense of acceptance, respect, support, and caring" (p. 198). She continued to define school engagement as behaviors which required participation which captured interest, willingness to put forth effort, and commitment to do well in school (p. 198). "Sense of belonging denotes a feeling of relatedness or connection to others" (Booker, 2006, p. 301). Nutbrown and Clough (2009) provided the following statement regarding belonging in schools; "Inclusion was a social struggle where individual identity and difference has prominence" (p. 193). In their work they used the term "inclusion" to mean "maximizing participation in, and minimizing exclusion from, early years' settings, schools and society" (Nutbrown & Clough, 2009, p. 194). Finally,

Faircloth and Hamm (2005) hypothesized that “belonging was an underlying, explanatory factor in the relationship between motivation and achievement” (p. 297).

The researcher of this study referred mostly to Goodenow’s (1992) definition of sense of belonging for this study as the students’ perspective of how they are accepted, respected, included, and supported by their peers and teachers in their individual effort to learn and grow as a people.

Similar to “belonging,” there were also negative repercussions when students lacked a strong sense of belonging in their school environment. As an opposition to the positive impacts of sense of belonging, “failed belongingness was being alienated and not a part of the family, group of friends, or other valued groups” (Joiner, 2009, p. 245). Research also pointed out the outcomes of being socially disconnected can have an effect on children, regardless of age. Whether the student was excluded, socially isolated, or experienced failed belonging, there are pains associated with their negative experience including anxiety, depression, anger, fear, and even suicidal desires (MacDonald & Leary, 2005; Van Orden, Witte, Gordon, Bender, & Joiner, 2008). Based upon this research, the author of this review believed sense of belonging played a crucial part in the development of a child and the academic environment must work to ensure success for all children. All students should be involved in the school community because they experienced school in different ways.

A few researchers have put forth the effort to identify the students most at risk of being disconnected from their peers. “Research on rejected youth suggests that social exclusion has far-reaching social consequences” (Newman et al., 2007, p. 244). Another study explained, “The influence of stigma linked to poverty in fostering feelings of

isolation through distancing and self-isolating behaviors was also demonstrated,” (Stewart et al., 2009, p. 191). In several other studies bullied students also suffered from the negative results of being isolated or lacking a sense of belonging. However, the following statement summarized it most accurately. “Bully victimization can be considered to be a sequence of related experiences that thwart a student’s progress toward desired goals, especially toward the goal of meeting social-development needs for affiliation and bonding with peers” (Sukkyung et al., 2008, p. 447-448).

The groups of students affected by the lack of sense of belonging, school connectedness, engagement, or inclusion have already been presented. Now, more specific characteristics will be shared to provide more clarity and details to the previously listed material. Stephens (2010) presented the following information:

The most critical factors are teenage pregnancy, child abuse, chronic truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, and crime and delinquency. Also cited were lack of commitment to the norms/rule/laws of society, lack of hope and faith in the future, dropping out of school, poor health care, homicide and suicide, unemployment or underemployment, and poverty. (p. 17)

Stephens’ list of identifying indicators clearly encompassed a large portion of the youth’s population. Additional research (Ray & Elliott, 2006) explained students with learning and behavior difficulties had a more challenging time adjusting socially. “Key indicators of social adjustment include perceived social support, self-concept, and social skills” (p. 493). Minority students also feel less at home in their educational environment and this may result in negative outcomes (Meeuwisse et al., 2010).

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation has been referenced in numerous studies as an indicator for student success in school and later in life. In fact, Maslow (1954) claimed “motivation may be driven by either intrinsic or extrinsic factors or the interplay of both” (as cited in Goodman et al., 2011, p. 373). In addition, Sanacore (2008) made the connection that feelings, opinions, and choices were also possible factors in motivation.

Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation were also two commonly referenced types of motivation in the educational setting. However, there was question about which type of motivation had more effect on students. Depending on the source, the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and academic performance varied as the research was not consistent (Hayenga & Corpus, 2010). In some instances, studies supported the role of both forms of motivation as a key in the path to academic success (Rassuli, 2012; Goodman et al., 2011; Hayenga & Corpus, 2010; McLachlan & Hagger, 2011; Becker, McElvany, & Kortenbruck, 2010).

There was research to support and define both profiles of motivation in the educational setting. The researcher defined extrinsic motivation as receiving a reward for something which was expected or feared receiving a negative consequence. The researcher also defined intrinsic motivation as completing a task because it was expected with no fear and guilt and without reward. Hayenga and Corpus (2010) defined intrinsic motivation as engaging in a task for its own inherent rewards whereas extrinsic motivation refers to engaging in a task in order to attain some separable outcome- such as approval from authority figures. Through reinforcement from family, faculty, and friends, intrinsic motivation may become a part of a personal value system.

Extrinsic Motivation. Pink (2011) referred to extrinsic motivation in the book, *Drive: The Hidden Truth about What Really Motivates Us*, as the “stick and carrot” method. Pink also used the phrase “if you do...than you get...” to explain the concept of extrinsic motivators (p. 15). Extrinsic behavior results from receiving rewards or pleasing someone else. For example, in the school setting a teacher may reward the students with something tangible like candy or an extra recess if they behaved appropriately for a substitute teacher. The reward could also be in the form of verbal praise which would constitute as an intangible reward. In both examples, the student was expecting to get a reward for doing something. In essence, they were motivated because of the prescribed reward.

The literature surrounding the topic of extrinsic motivation provided several definitions and varying perspectives. Kover and Worrell (2010) referred to extrinsic motivators as “instrumentality beliefs” which suggested there were external reasons for engaging in the required task. Similarly stated, McLachlan and Hagger (2011) suggested extrinsic behaviors had an outward focus and directed toward outcomes with a larger spotlight such fortune and fame. In this study, extrinsic motivation was defined as performing a task or working toward an assigned goal for the purpose of receiving a reward or because of the fear associated with not completing the task or goal.

Interestingly, there was conflicting research regarding origin or reasons supporting extrinsic behaviors. For example, researchers did identify individuals outside one’s own interpersonal bubble and pressures from the outside world were possible factors guiding extrinsic behaviors in individuals (Northrup, 2012; Ferssizidis et al., 2010). Monetary gains, parent preference, guilt, or prestige were specific factors which

were identified as extrinsic motivators. Conversely, Goodman et al. (2011) claimed extrinsic motivation was driven by the dynamics of a family and the educational environment. Regardless, it appeared there were circumstances when motivation was influenced one way or another by outside individuals.

There was not a consensus among the literature to support only one form of motivation to enhance to the performance of students. However, “a number of studies have indicated that rewards, or other concerns that are external to the task at hand, can diminish the intrinsic motivation to engage in a task” (Kover & Worrell, 2010, p. 471). Too much external rewarding can lower one’s personal motivation. “Extrinsic motivation often hinders potentially desirable outcome” (Ferssizidis et al., 2010, p. 355). Based on the researcher’s experience, the use of extrinsic motivation was not encouraged as the primary means to encourage students to reach their potential. Research supported the notion extrinsic motivation could have lasting negative effects on children. Northrup (2012) had a similar idea when he concluded the extrinsic motivators will most likely be remembered when we are older, but the intended skill may not always remembered. Essentially people remember the reward rather than the skill to be learned. This was not necessarily the intended outcome for teachers.

Intrinsic Motivation. In contrast to extrinsic motivation where there was a potential reward for completing a task or learning a new skill, intrinsic motivation relied on an individual’s self-motivation or one’s own personal desire. Similar to other terms in this study, educators and researchers interpreted and validated their own definitions for their research. For example, Rassuli (2012) identified intrinsic motivation as behavior valued for its own importance, not for the sake of receiving a reward. McLachlan and

Hagger's (2011) research suggested intrinsic behaviors are "inherently rewarding and fulfilling to pursue through the satisfaction of the three psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness." Finally, "Intrinsic motivation is tied to your personal drive to do something" (Northrup, 2012, p. 38). For the purposes of this study, intrinsic motivation was defined as an individual's self-motivation to pursue a desired outcome. People satisfied with their performance will include their behavior intrinsically because of the positive psychological fulfillment.

Why focus on intrinsic motivation? "Motivation is a key factor in promoting academic success and intrinsic motivation is especially important for developing autonomous learners" (Sanacore, 2008, p. 40). From an educators' viewpoint, researchers have identified valuable reasons to support this researcher's desire to improve intrinsic motivation among the students. If intrinsic motivation meets psychological needs then future potential can be achieved. Ali, Akhter, Shahzad, Sultana, and Ramzan (2011) agreed intrinsic motivation was often associated with curiosity, which culminates in satisfaction through learning. This type of motivation was prompted by want, desire, urge, or drive.

In summary, motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, played key roles in the educational setting. As a result of Sanacore's (2008) research to turn reluctant learners into motivated and inspired learners, he made a valid statement directed toward teachers who had difficulty determining whether to focus on motivating students or the curriculum. Sanacore (2008) claimed teachers need to strike a balance between curricular requirements and students' motivational issues in the classroom as they

strengthen their chances their students will be successful learners and will want to learn for the rest of their lives.

Goal Setting

For years, teachers and administrators have worked to support students with varying backgrounds and needs associated with their academic and social abilities. Over the course of time, there were successes and struggles in the educators' attempts to reach, motivate, and teach students so they achieved at their highest potential. Similar to Sanacore's (2008) research, the teachers involved in this study continually tried to motivate their reluctant students with a variety of methods and techniques. "Teachers have attempted to motivate reluctant learners by using strategies and activities with varying degrees of success" (Sanacore, 2008, p. 40). As Schulz (2011) pointed out, educators had all the necessary knowledge and authority to determine if a student was successful, but students were critical and less tolerant of their authority figures. To fully maximize the children's potential, the children needed to become part of the solution and individual goal setting was the avenue taken in this study.

Elementary schools were the ideal place to implement such a powerful tool for children because these years were a "critical period for the formation of task value beliefs," otherwise known as goals (Metallidou & Vlachou, 2010, p. 777). Locke and Latham (2006), pioneers on the topic of goal-setting theory, made a statement which should be directly associated with the purpose and desire of all educators. "Goals may simply motivate one to use one's existing ability, may automatically 'pull' stored task-relevant knowledge into awareness, and/or may motivate people to search for new knowledge" (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 265).

Goal setting was the attempt to reach the reluctant learners or students who seemed forced into learning or felt disconnected from their environment. Goal setting research (Lerner & Locke, 1995) showed personal goals, in comparison to assigned goals, were greater indicators of performance because students were able to adjust goals to match their personal commitment and effort. In addition, goal setting and establishing a means to accomplish the task taught the students the life-long skill of identifying a problem or needed skill and creating the necessary action steps to problem solve. Szente's (2007) connection to goal-setting, motivation, and self-efficacy was further defined when stated, "children with high self-efficacy persist at tasks longer, are more motivated, and tend to work harder to achieve their goals" (p. 450).

The practice of goal setting had been an established practice at the school of study over the last several years. However, the teacher's role and participation in the goal setting routine appeared to be limited and the time span between setting the goal and attaining the goal was carried out over a several week period, at times even an entire quarter. The researcher believed successful goal setting for elementary-age children had more relevance, valued substance, and impact when a shorter, specific time-frame was established.

Another valuable attribute to the goal setting process was the ability for the students to select the area in which they wanted to focus and the students were able to determine their own goal, academic or behavioral. When students had the ability to voice their own opinions, they were more apt to invest in the journey to achieve the goal they have set. The same rationale was supported in other research. By creating their own goals, the students' feelings and choices were valued and reflecting on why they hoped to

reach their goal, rather than simply being told what their goals were, was what motivated them work toward their desired goals in school and in life (Sancacore, 2008; Rader, 2005).

In sum, goal setting was an opportunity for students to be more engaged in their educational experiences. Research supported goal setting as a means to increase motivation and ultimately had the potential to improve the level of student performance on a specific task or skill. The long-term impact was to teach students the life-long skill of problem solving through their involvement in their own goal setting practices.

Teacher Feedback. Teacher feedback was a key element to the success of students in the classroom. In fact, the teachers in this study had a portion of their evaluation instrument focused strictly on high quality, accurate, substantive, constructive, specific, and timely feedback. In essence, it was required practice in the classroom for teachers from which the students benefit. During this goal-setting study, the opportunity for high quality feedback was prescribed at least three times during a goal-setting period. “Ongoing feedback can also assist children in revisiting their goals and their actions on a regular basis, and maintaining their motivation and persistence over the chosen task” (Szente, 2007, p. 451). More specifically, in earlier research, Bardwell (1984) stated quantitative feedback had more impact for children than qualitative comments. For example, “you got all 20 questions on the test right” rather than “you did well on the test.”

The teacher’s role in the goal-setting process was vital to the process of instruction and student learning in that their classroom instruction was guided by the level or intensity of the students’ goals. “Setting more ambitious goals may serve to prod

teachers to revise instruction more often; conversely, setting less ambitious goals may seduce teachers to settle for weak growth” (Fuchs & And, 1989, p. 108). Additional researchers supported the need to set more ambitious because the highest level of performance was achieved and the level of motivation increased (Locke & Latham, 2006; Jagacinski, Madden, & Reider, 2001; Doll, 2010). However, “there are limits to the generalization that higher goals lead to higher achievement” (Jenkins & Terjeson, 2011, p. 33) so teachers needed to be cognizant of the students’ goals. By teachers being more involved with their students and aware of their abilities, the teachers were able to assist, monitor, and influence the students’ desired achievement while they established their goal. Locke and Latham (2006) were pioneers and advocates for goal-setting; however, they advised caution when working toward too specific and challenging of a goal. “Focusing on reaching a specific performance outcome a new, complex task can lead to ‘tunnel vision’ – a focus on reaching the goal rather than on acquiring the skills required to reach it,” (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 266). Thus, an additional role of the teachers were to help students refrain from getting so locked in on the completion of the goal that they were not learning the necessary skills or content along the way to completion of the desired goal.

Another crucial element to the success of students in school was the students’ perception of their teacher’s confidence in their ability. Liu and Wang (2008) accurately summarized the teachers’ role in their students’ level of achievement as it related closely to this study and the goal-setting process. They wrote:

Teachers also need to be aware that lower-ability stream students’ academic

confidence is highly dependent on their perception of teachers' expectations, perhaps more so than their higher-ability stream counterparts. Therefore, if teachers are keen in improving lower-ability stream students' level of confidence, they need to have high but realistic expectations of academic performance from them. The expectations should be in line with the students' abilities and not their stream memberships. In essence, students, regardless of stream, should never be left with a sense of inadequacy and failure with too high an expectation. But, at the same time, they should not be left with the feeling that they are beyond help, and there is no cause for any hard work with too low an expectation. (Liu & Wang, 2008, p. 253)

Summary

The relationship between the student and teacher had to be one where trust was evident and a true understanding of each child's ability was clearly known. "The relationships between teachers and students are the most important to achievement" (Doll, 2010, p. 12). Their bond was the pathway to their academic and behavioral success in this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The study was designed to assist the researcher's building administration, students, staff, and parents as they embarked on a challenging voyage to increase third, fourth, and fifth grade students' sense of belonging and sense of school as a community through the implementation of GSW and regularly scheduled teacher-student conferences. The GSW was a new initiative for the students and staff to improve the overall school climate and to make a positive impact on the students' academic achievement over the course of one school year and hopefully on a continued basis for years ahead.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Would the intentional focus on curricular or behavioral goal-setting, self-monitoring, and teacher-student conferences increase the overall school climate and student academic achievement? It is the researcher's belief that the students' perception of their sense of belonging and sense of the school as a community would increase along with multiple academic indicators over the course of a school year. Also, non-academic indicators such as daily attendance and behavioral referrals would improve for students involved in the study.

Null Hypotheses

Null hypothesis #1. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students' level of sense of belonging and sense of school as a community, as measured by the CSC climate survey for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The researcher applied the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the third, fourth, or fifth grade students' perceptions of their sense of belonging and sense of school as a community during the final year of implementation and study. In addition, the researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the students' perceptions of their sense of belonging in grades 3 through 5, for any one year throughout the four year period.

Null hypothesis #2. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student teacher conferences will not increase the school climate level as measured by the School Climate survey from fall to spring for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. The statistical z -test was applied to determine if there was a difference in means from the pre-survey to the post-survey.

Null hypothesis #3. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students' academic performance on the MAP test and GMRT for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

A single factor ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in the MAP Communication Arts scores, MAP Mathematics scores, and the GMRT scores for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade for any one year throughout the four year period. A z -test for difference in means was also conducted to determine if there was a noticeable difference in means between 2009 to 2012 for the current fifth grade students on the MAP Communication Arts test. Finally, a z -test for difference in means was also conducted to determine if there was a difference in mean between 2010 and 2011 scores for the current fifth grade students.

Null hypothesis #4. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the attendance rates for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The researcher applied the ANOVA to determine if there was a statistical difference in third, fourth, and fifth grade students' attendance rate for any one year throughout a three year period. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the attendance rates for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The researcher applied the ANOVA to determine if there was a statistical difference in third, fourth, and fifth grade students' attendance rate for any one year throughout a three-year period.

Null hypothesis #5. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not reduce the number of behavior office referrals.

The ANOVA test was applied to determine if there was a statistical difference in the number of office referrals for the students who participated in the study over a four-year period. Data for the same sample of students was collected for each of the four years.

Research Setting

Green Elementary School, located in a western suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, was an elementary school building serving children in grades kindergarten through the fifth grade. During the period of the study, the student population was 440. The staff at Green Elementary was comprised of 51 staff members. Among the 51 staff members were 20 general education classroom teachers, 11 specialist teachers (which included our

counselor, librarian, physical education teachers, etc.), one ESOL teacher, three reading specialists, four classroom assistants, 10 Special School District teachers, and two administrators. The experience of the teaching staff ranged from zero to 35 years of experience.

The student population at Green Elementary included a total of 440 students during the 2011-2012 year. Of the 440 students, there was a moderate amount of diversity among them. The breakdown of the demographics included 344 (78%) white, 54 (12%) black, 29 (6%) Asian, 9 (2%) Hispanic, and 11 (2%) classified as Other. The socioeconomic status of the building included 62 students (14%) who received Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL). In addition, 75 (17%) students received services from the Special School District to support the students' learning. The school study-site also serviced 11 (2%) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and 63 (14%) Talented and Gifted students.

The 2011-2012 school year marked the fifth anniversary of the building. Over the 25-year period, the teachers experienced change in the climate of the building and academic scores fluctuated from year to year. Nine years prior to the study, the school experienced the outcomes of redistricting. As a result, the student population dropped from 515 students to 440 students over the nine year period. The loss in enrollment moved 75 students and their families to neighboring schools which resulted in Green Elementary losing a portion of their parent community who were able to volunteer their time and energy to support the students, teachers, and eventually the school climate and culture.

Conceptual Framework

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Green Elementary was a member of the Character Education Partnership (CEP) and actively involved in developing and implementing a Character Education program which would eventually achieve the recognition of a National School of Character. To help establish a solid understanding of what was required to achieve the status of a National School of Character, the CEP created the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education guidelines.

The researcher focused on Principle 4 and Principle 7 for this study. Principle 4 was identified as Creates a Caring Community. The CEP (2010) defined this as:

schools made it a high priority to foster caring attachments between students and staff, help students form caring attachments to each other, foster caring attachments among adults within the school community, and take steps to prevent peer cruelty and violence and deals with it effectively when it occurs. (pp. 8-9)

Fostered Students' Self-Motivation characterized Principle 7. The CEP (2010) defined Principle 7 as:

staff and students recognized and celebrated the natural, beneficial consequences of acts of character rather than rewarding students with material recognition or rewards and the school's approach to student conduct uses all aspects of behavior management as opportunities to foster students' character development, especially their understanding of and commitment to core values. (pp. 14-15)

The GSW was created by the researcher based on various structures identified in multiple studies (Appendix A). The goals established must be specific (Locke & Latham, 2002), attainable (Brunstein, 1993; Schunk, 1996), optimally challenging, and relatively

close at hand (Downie, Koestner, & Horberg, 2006). Proximity, specificity, and difficulty were other key components as defined by Schunk (1996) in his work on goal setting. The components of the GSW for this study included: time frame, concept or skill, subject area or behavioral, three action plan steps, three student-teacher conference dates, self-assessment, and future plans.

In summary, the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education was the roadmap for Green Elementary to reach the desired level of school climate satisfaction. The GSW was a vehicle the students used to reach high levels of positive climate and academic achievement.

Instrumentation

Goal-Setting Worksheets (GSW). The GSW was an implementation tool created by the researcher to assist the students in planning, executing, and evaluating their goal setting process. Specific numerical data was not collected from the GSW. However, the staff did monitor the students who regularly meet and did not meet their goal and used this information to influence their instruction and interventions for the students.

Students in third, fourth, and fifth grades were coached by the researcher on how to set goals and work toward achievement to contribute to students reaching their highest level of school potential because “goal setting is not an innate skill” (Hallenbeck & Fleming, 2011, p. 38). For this study, the GSW was explained to the students by the researcher and implemented on a weekly basis. Initially, to further assist the teachers and students to develop an understanding and process of the GSW, grade levels elected to share a common behavioral goal in lieu of an academic goal. For example, the students

had a difficult time with transitioning from subject to subject and class to class with a reasonable noise volume and in an appropriate time frame. The students' goal was to transition quietly within a specified amount of time. Together, the classmates worked to achieve their goal as they were all accountable. To support the idea of working together to establish the initial goal and understand the goal setting process, Szente's research suggested, "many students need guidance and modeling from teachers as well as constant feedback" (as cited in Margolis & McCabe, 2006).

After two weeks of having a common, behavioral goal, the teachers and students began to set common, academic goals in the individual classrooms. For example, in one classroom, the students and teacher set a goal in their math class for every student to score above an 80% on an upcoming test. As a result of their first common academic test, the students in this class scored an average of 87%. All students reached the goal.

Once teachers were comfortable with the routine and students understood the goal-setting process and procedures, the students were given the freedom to begin setting their own goals and establish the necessary steps to achieve their goal which was part of the design of the study. To further support the goal setting theory (Bandura, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990; Jagacinski et al., 2001) agreed by experiencing success with setting and achieving challenging goals, children tended to set higher goals and maintained a firmer commitment to achieve them and had a higher level of performance. Further, "as children develop self-efficacy and begin to embrace some positive thoughts, they will be able set realistic goals and also find ways to achieve them" (Szente, 2007, p. 451).

Caring School Community Climate Survey. The researcher's district provided the opportunity for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 to take the CSC survey each spring to

weigh in on their perception of the building's climate in multiple domains. The CSC climate survey was provided from Character Plus. A benefit of membership of Character Plus was the service of a CSC climate survey. In addition to the students taking the survey, parents and staff members were also invited to complete the survey. Schools used the results of this survey, along with other data, as a contributing factor to the focus and theme for the upcoming school year, the school's climate portion of the Missouri School Improvement Plan (MSIP), and the foundation of the researcher's study.

The CSC survey identified the overall school climate and culture of the building's community. The survey was taken online by students, parents, and staff members. However, for the purpose of this study, the researcher only used the data reflected from the students' responses. The CSC survey results were broken down into several categories. The individual categories of the survey were: Students' Sense of Belonging, Sense of School as a Community, Parent-Staff Relationships, School Quality, Parent Involvement at Home and School, Students Feeling of Competence, Students Autonomy and Influence, Staff Belonging, School Leadership, and Safety. As mentioned previously, the purpose of this study was to focus on the Students' Sense of Belonging and the students' Sense of School as a Community therefore the other categories were not represented in this study. The indicators from the student survey not included in the study were Students' Sense of Autonomy and Influence, Students' Feeling of Competence, Students' Sense of School Safety, Parent Involvement at School, and Parent Involvement at Home.

There were several other indicators from the survey which contributed to the building's overall school climate, but were not included in this study. The parent survey

included Student Belonging, School as Community, Parent-Staff Relations, School Quality, Parent Involvement at School, and Parent Involvement at Home. The staff survey included Student Belonging, School as a Community, Autonomy and Influence, Parent-Staff Relations, Staff Belonging, School Leadership, and Parent Involvement at School.

For this study, the researcher used the CSC climate survey as a means to measure the effectiveness of the GSW over the course of the 2011-2012 school year. The data collected from the CSC climate surveys from 2010-2011 and the two previous years were used as “pre-measures” in this study. The results from the 2011-2012 CSC climate survey were used as the “post-measure” in the study.

School Climate Survey. The researcher of this study wanted to have climate data which provided a reflection of the students’ perceptions at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year compared to the end of school because the CSC climate survey only provided an autopsy report of data for each year. Therefore, the researcher created the School Climate Survey (Appendix D) for the students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade. The questions on the survey were constructed to fit a Likert-scale format. The pencil-paper survey focused on the students’ perceptions of their safety, their own work ethic, predictions of their future plans, their teacher’s level of respect for the students, their parent’s involvement and attitude toward their learning, and their level of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. The School Climate Survey was given to the students by their classroom teacher in October of 2011 and the post-survey in May of 2012. This primary data was used as a comparative measure to determine if there were changes in the

students' perspective of the building's climate from the fall to the spring as there was not another instrument provided to the school from the district to measure this data.

The School Climate Survey was given to students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade as a means for the researcher to determine if there were gains in the climate from fall to spring. When determining if gains were made from the fall climate to the spring climate as determined by the responses of the School Climate Survey, the researcher completed four steps. First, a point value was assigned to each measure, or level of perception, across the Likert-scale (Strongly disagree- 1, Disagree- 2, Not sure- 3, Agree- 4, and Strongly agree- 5). Second, the student responses were tallied from each question and each survey to give each measure a total for the 15 questions. A product was then calculated from the total for each measure across the Likert-scale and the point value assigned to each measure. After a total score (product) was calculated, the researcher divided the product by the number of participants in the survey to establish a mean for each of the 15 School Climate Survey questions. Next, the mean for all 15 questions was calculated. This process was conducted for all three grade levels. Finally, to determine if there was a significant change occurred, a z -test for difference in means was calculated for each grade level and the building as a whole.

Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). One of the indicators to determine the academic success of this study rested on the outcomes of the students' performance on the MAP test from the spring of 2012. Specifically, the results from the MAP test in the spring of 2011 were compared to the results from the spring of 2012. Also, in an effort to gain a historical perspective of the students' performance on the MAP test, the results from 2012 were also compared to 2009 and 2010 MAP test.

After the 2011 spring MAP scores were received in the fall of 2011, the administration and classroom teachers reviewed the data. The administration and classroom teachers then used the MAP data from the spring of 2011 to determine if there were gains or deficits from the previous year and to establish SMART Goals for their grade level and, ultimately, for the building's school improvement plan.

The MAP test was an assessment taken by students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade throughout the state of Missouri which identified the students' progress toward Missouri's educational standards. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2012) included sections from the Terra Nova survey, a national norm-referenced test, which compared same-age students across the country. The reliability of each MAP test was also calculated through the "reliability of raw scores, overall standard error of measurement, IRT-based conditional standard error of measurement, and decision consistency of achievement-level classification" (MODESE, 2012, p. 136). Further, "the reliability of raw scores on the MAP tests was evaluated using Cronback's coefficient alpha, which is a lower-bound test of reliability" (MODESE, 2012, p. 136). The students' teachers proctored the pencil-paper test the spring of each school year to assess the students' knowledge in the areas of Communication Arts and Mathematics. Students in the fifth grade also took the Science section of the MAP test. However, this information was not used in this study. The data from the MAP test was secondary data.

Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT). Another indicator to the academic success of the study was the students' performance on the GMRT from the spring of 2012. According to Riverside Publishing (2010), the purpose of the GMRT was to

provide teachers and school personnel the general level of reading achievement of individual students throughout their entire school careers. “This assessment was standardized nationally on 1,664 students in 1989, and validity measures were determined using the GMRT in 1990-1991. Reliability and validity measures for this assessment are within expected ranges” (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2013).

The GMRT was an online reading assessment which provided specific information about each student in the area of comprehension and fluency. The GMRT also provided national percentile ranks, standard scores, normal curve equivalences, and grade level equivalents. Further, “there was convincing evidence for the reliability and validity for the GMRT assessment. Test reliability indicated adequate consistency in scores” (Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, 2013). Additionally, the GMRT was the only standardized assessment which was taken by the students in the fall and again in the spring each year to measure growth in the area of reading over the course of the school year.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the GMRT reading scores from the fall of 2011 as the “pre-test” or baseline score to compare the results of the spring 2012 GMRT to help determine if the GSW influenced the students’ academic performance. Again, to gain a historical perspective of the students’ performance on the GMRT, the researcher also used data from the 2009-2010 school year as a comparative measure for the study. Further, the classroom teachers utilized the GMRT scores from the fall of 2011 to help drive their SMART goal for the 2011-2012 school year.

As a special note of attention, the GMRT scores for third grade were the only standardized test scores taken the previous year as they did not participate in the MAP testing in the spring. This was secondary data.

Attendance Data. Over the course of the study, the researcher monitored the overall attendance of the students in third, fourth, and fifth grade to observe any potential trends in the data with the students who were participating in the goal-setting and their attendance.

For this study, the average daily of attendance was collected from Infinite Campus and presented in two formats over a three-year period. Infinite Campus was the building's student information system that stored attendance, grades, schedules, behaviors, etc. First, the researcher created a cohort report which displayed the average daily attendance for the same groups of students over a three-year period which included the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and the 2011-2012 school years. Secondly, a yearly average daily report was created to display the attendance rate over the same three-year period for the specific grades participating in this study which included third, fourth, and fifth grade. This information was also considered secondary data.

Discipline Data. For the purpose of this study, measurement of the number of behaviors was directly connected to office referrals the students received from staff members. Office referrals were issued by staff members to students when severe actions and choices were made by students or if there was a continual repeat of inappropriate behaviors over a short period of time.

To help monitor the office referral documentation, monthly reports were generated by the district to assist in maintaining accuracy and to help track students'

behaviors so they could work with the children to remedy their behaviors or provide supports if needed. The researcher generated a discipline report for the building each quarter to identify students who were receiving discipline referrals in all grades. This data was recorded and graphed each quarter to observe trends in the data with goal-setting and student behavior. The discipline data was also collected from the Infinite Campus.

Similar to the average daily attendance data, the number of office referrals was collected and presented in two formats over a three-year period. First, the researcher created a cohort report which displayed the number of office referrals for the same groups of students over a three-year period which included the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and the 2011-2012 school years. Secondly, a table was created to display the number of referrals over the same three-year period for the specific grades participating in this study which included third, fourth, and fifth grade. This information was also considered secondary data.

Procedures

Goal-Setting. During the first back-to-school meeting in August 2011, the staff was presented with the academic and climate data from the 2010-2011 school year, the school's motivating theme for the current school year, and the climate goal for the year to help lay the foundation for the work ahead of them for the 2011-2012 school year. In addition, the staff was informed of this study which included the teachers' and students' procedures, the rationale for the study, and the desired outcomes. The researcher presented the study to the staff with the intention of not having the staff to agree to the

commitment until the teachers were settled into their classrooms with their new students and routines.

Several weeks were allotted for teachers to get to know their students and allow time for students to adapt to their new classroom environment. The teachers had the liberty to engage the students however they desired to help establish the classroom environment without the pressures from the administration to start addressing the regular district curriculum or the procedures of this study. The students and teachers worked together to establish classroom norms and teach and review the building's expectations.

While the teachers and students worked to establish a solid foundation of expectations to start the year successfully, the researcher attended class meetings to discuss building expectations with students and teachers. Class meetings were an opportunity for the students and teachers within a class to gather and discuss items pertinent to their specific classroom environment such as upcoming events, behavior concerns, or establishing norms. Because the researcher of this study was new to the building, establishing rapport, trust, and expectations with students, staff, and parents was an initial focus. Thus, he attended the class meetings.

Once the teachers were comfortable with their classroom norms and had a grasp on the students' personalities and abilities, the researcher presented the study to the staff again during the September 2011 staff meeting. At this time, he requested teachers from the third, fourth, and fifth grade to participate in the study. The researcher narrowed the group of teachers to only the third, fourth, and fifth grade because this was the only group who took the MAP test and the CSC climate survey. As a result, nine of the 11 possible third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers volunteered to participate in the goal-setting study.

The two teachers who did not want to participate in the study verified their decision because they wanted to see if there was a difference in the outcomes for students who participated in the study and those who did not participate.

During the course of the following week, the researcher was invited into the participating classrooms to explain the study and present the GSW to the students. Because most of the students were accustomed to some form of goal setting from previous years, and in some cases, their current year, the researcher engaged the students in discussion about how to establish goals and the necessary steps to accomplish their objective. Based upon the dialogue with the students, there was not a consistency among the students and teachers about how to set goals and work toward them. The researcher needed to clarify and elaborate on the specifics of this study and the GSW to help validate the process. Therefore more detailed information was provided on how to determine an appropriate goal, set a reasonable timeline, create the necessary action steps to accomplish the goal, and develop a means to assess if the goal was achieved or not. To further help with the teaching and learning piece, the researcher worked with the teachers and students to establish a whole-class goal to walk them step-by-step through the process of GSW.

Over the course of three weeks, the researcher visited with the participating teachers and talked with all the students participating in the study to answer questions or explain any aspects of the GSW. Though not required, all students were encouraged to participate in the goal-setting process as a means to increase their engagement, form a stronger relationship with their teacher, and establish a connection to their learning or behavior patterns. Ultimately, all students did participate in the GSW procedures.

During the classroom visits, the researcher asked students individually to state their goal and asked about the progress toward reaching their goal. In addition, the researcher had the students share their individual actions steps needed to accomplish their goal. Even though the class had the same goal, the path to accomplish the goal varied from student to student. This purpose was twofold. First, the researcher wanted to know the students on an independent level, their goals, and understand what they were working toward throughout the week to continue to establish a solid rapport with each student. Secondly, by visiting each class the researcher was able to identify which teachers and students were participating in the study and verify validity and regularity.

At the end of the first two goal-setting periods, the researcher joined the classes participating in the study and identified the students who met their class goal and who had not yet achieved the goal. Originally, for the whole class goals, the students simply raised their hands if they accomplished their goal so the researcher and teacher could get a quick assessment of the success of the whole class. When the goals became student specific to their individual needs, the process changed. The students had to self-evaluate their progress to determine if they reached their goal and check the appropriate indicator on the GSW (which will be described in the next section). After the level of achievement was assessed, the researcher and the classroom teacher then talked the class through the process of establishing the next steps to set a new goal or create a new action plan to continue working toward the unachieved goal.

Finally, at the end of the goal-setting periods, the students turned in their GSW to their teacher after the final student-teacher conference. Once the teacher had the class set of GSW for a specific goal setting period, they were collected by the researcher. The

researcher gathered the GSW each period to identify the students who continually struggled to meet their goal and account for the students who were achieving success on a regular basis. The researcher did not collect specific data from the GSW for the purpose of this study, rather, he used the information to work closely with struggling students or assist teachers with helping students set more challenging goals.

In summary, the researcher spent three to four weeks (depending on the teacher and students) working with the students and teachers participating in the study to assist in establishing the procedures for the GSW. By regularly visiting the classrooms, the researcher was able to help students or teachers unsure of the expectations or procedures by providing suggestions, answers, clarification, or guidance. After the procedures were clear and students and teachers understood what was expected through the whole class goals, the students had the liberty to set individual goals for themselves in areas of their choosing. The students continued to set individual goals, conference with their teacher, and work toward their goals throughout the remainder of the school year.

Goal-Setting in Action. From October until the end of the school year in May, the students continued with the GSW. The students independently set goals and action plans on a weekly or biweekly basis. Their goals were dependent upon the student's current level of understanding of a concept or skill, an upcoming assessment, or continual behavior issues. Again, the goal may have also had academic or behavioral relevance. The students used previous assessments, homework assignments, and feedback received from the teacher to help drive their goal-setting decision. Other possible targets for their goal setting may have been based on the students' knowledge of their MAP results,

GMRT scores, AIMSweb benchmark performance in reading or math, grade-level common assessments, or a reflection of their behaviors.

During the goal-setting time frame, the students received feedback and guidance from their teacher to help encourage or reinforce the direction the student was moving in relation to their progress to achieve the goal. The teachers met with the students a minimum of three times during the goal setting period. The first meeting was when the goals were initially established to ensure the goal made sense, were attainable, and were measurable. Typically, this meeting was held at the beginning of the week to help provide the students with a focus for the week. The second student-teacher meeting was at the midpoint of the goal setting period. During this discussion the teacher provided the necessary feedback, praise, encouragement, or redirection. Of course, the students were free to approach the teacher at any time to address questions or concerns at any point. The final student-teacher meeting was at the conclusion of the goal setting time frame. Students were responsible for reflecting on their efforts and determining if they had achieved the desired goal. The final meeting allowed the teachers to determine if the students accurately assessed their progress and accomplishments. During this final conversation of the goal-setting period, the teacher and student identified the next steps for the student. The final step included creating a new goal or revisiting the previous goal if the desired outcome was not reached. Once this decision was made, the students moved forward with a new GSW and started planning for their next goal. Because the GSW was not a requirement for the students, there were no grades associated with the completion of the GSW or accomplishment of achieving the goal. However, depending

on the nature of the goal which was established by the student, a favorable grade may have been the desired goal.

The final step of the goal-setting process required the teacher to collect the GSW from the students and turn them into the researcher. The researcher reviewed all the GSW to evaluate the students' goals to determine if appropriate goals had been written, identified trends in success or failure of students, monitored the fidelity of teacher implementing the study, and used the results to praise the students when goals were met or worked with students struggling to reach their desired goal.

Teacher Support and Professional Development. Throughout the course of the study, the researcher met with teachers to provide additional support or clarification along the way. However, the researcher did meet with teachers on an individual basis as needed through the duration of the study. At the midpoint of the study, February, the researcher brought the teachers together to allow all teachers to share their thoughts, best practices, problems, or successes.

In addition, the researcher provided the teachers implementing the goal-setting worksheet with articles to support the purpose of their work and efforts with their students. The articles supported the goal setting theory for students at an early age, suggestions for appropriate and timely feedback, theories supporting intrinsic motivation, and advice for action steps for the students as they pursued their goals. For example, the article titled, "Promoting self-determination in Early Elementary School: Teaching self-regulated problem-solving and goal-setting skills," was used to help teachers support students when transferring from the whole-class goals to establishing their independent goals (Palmer & Wehmeyer, 2003).

After the midpoint meeting, the researcher continued having the individual meetings with teachers and shared strategies or suggestions should they benefit the students and provide greater results. Throughout the course of the study, informal meetings were held for teachers who were participating in the study to share their experiences, reflect on the process, and share individual best practices and successes with their colleagues. This was an attempt to increase communication among staff members to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the purpose of goal-setting. In addition, this provided teachers with a forum where they could communicate with other teachers the needs of the students on a regular basis to support the students' learning in other areas.

Sampling

The researcher presented the research question to the teachers in third, fourth, and fifth grade at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year to inform them of their potential involvement in the study. The researcher gave the teachers the option to implement the GSW created for the purpose of the study or continue with their teaching practices from the previous years. As a result of providing the teachers with the choice to implement the GSW, two of the four third grade teachers chose to start the goal setting practice, all three of the fourth grade teachers, and all four of the fifth grade teachers elected to implement the GSW for the purpose of the study. Each teacher who participated in the study also signed a consent form acknowledging their participation in the study (Appendix E).

At the conclusion of the school year, the researcher randomly selected 10 students from each of the classrooms participating in the study. As a result, 20 students from third

grade, 30 students from fourth grade and 40 students from fifth grade were selected. These students were a part of the random sample during the research to provide secondary data for the MAP assessment scores, GMRT scores, and School Climate Survey. These students were not identified to anyone other than the researcher as he had no bias or supervisory role with the students. For the purpose of the research, the students' names were changed to numbers in order to remain anonymous to readers.

Summary and Discussion of Descriptive Statistics: Fall to Spring Climate Survey

Overall, the third grade students' responses on the School Climate Pre-survey were positive with an average score of 4.34 on a 5.0 scale. The responses ranged from an average of 3.61 to 4.87. As a result, the lowest average response was from question number 2 which stemmed from the third grade students thinking their parents did not visit the school regularly. Conversely, the students' highest response was question number 14 which was related their perception of their effort on their work at home.

Table 1.
Third Grade Fall 2011 Survey Results – (Pre-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel safe at my school.	1	3	2	12	20	4.24
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	4	9	8	6	11	3.28
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	1	0	3	12	22	4.42
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	2	8	5	23	4.29
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	1	0	5	11	21	4.34
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	1	0	5	7	25	4.45
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	0	0	2	12	24	4.58
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	0	1	4	12	21	4.39
9. My parents are proud of me.	0	0	3	11	24	4.55
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	1	0	4	10	23	4.42
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	0	0	3	6	29	4.68
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	0	1	2	9	26	4.58
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	0	0	5	33	4.87
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	0	0	3	15	20	4.45
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	3	2	15	5	13	3.61

Table 2.

Third Grade Spring 2012 Survey Results- (Post-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel safe at my school.	1	2	3	11	21	4.29
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	3	6	7	13	9	3.5
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	0	0	3	16	19	4.42
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	0	11	3	24	4.34
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	0	0	7	11	20	4.34
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	0	0	0	11	27	4.71
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	0	0	1	15	22	4.55
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	1	0	7	14	16	4.16
9. My parents are proud of me.	1	0	1	6	30	4.68
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	0	1	1	18	18	4.39
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	0	0	4	9	25	4.55
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	0	1	2	11	24	4.5
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	1	2	8	27	4.58
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	1	1	3	11	22	4.37
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	6	6	11	7	8	3.13

At the end of the 2012 school year, the students took the School Climate Post-survey which was identical to the pre-survey. The average score on the post-survey was a 4.3 on the 5.0 scale. Therefore, based upon the third graders' responses, there was little change in their perception of the school climate from the fall of 2011 and the spring of 2012. One noteworthy result was the decrease in the average score on question number 15 which addressed extrinsic motivation. The average score showed fewer students felt they needed to receive a reward for doing well in the classroom.

School Climate Survey Results: Fourth Grade. The statistical z -test for difference in means was used to determine if there was a difference in means from the pre-survey to the post-survey. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, -0.34, and critical value, -1.96. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the fourth grade students' perception of the building's climate as measured by the School Climate Survey.

Table 3.

Fourth Grade Fall 2011 Survey Results- (Pre-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Not Sure 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Average
1. I feel safe at my school.	0	1	3	26	40	4.56
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	9	17	20	15	9	2.97
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	1	4	6	31	28	4.16
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	0	18	8	44	4.37
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	0	1	19	16	34	4.19
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	0	1	6	15	48	4.57
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	0	0	7	27	36	4.41
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	0	2	11	15	42	4.39
9. My parents are proud of me.	1	0	4	25	40	4.47
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	0	5	12	21	32	4.14
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	0	0	6	11	53	4.67
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	1	0	1	16	52	4.69
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	1	3	22	44	4.56
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	1	0	5	14	50	4.6
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	21	6	15	7	21	3.01

Similar to the third grade students, the fourth grade students who took the School Climate Pre-survey scored toward the higher end of the 5.0 scale with an average of 4.25. Again, the lowest score among the 15 questions was related to the students' perception of their parents' involvement during the school day. The average for question two was a

mere 2.97. The fourth grade students highest score was in reference to their own effort in the classroom. Question 12 received the highest average with a 4.69.

Table 4.

Fourth Grade Spring 2012 Survey Results- (Post-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Not Sure 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Average
1. I feel safe at my school.	2	0	4	27	40	4.41
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	12	22	15	15	9	2.82
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	3	6	13	26	25	3.88
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	1	14	9	49	4.45
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	0	2	24	24	23	3.93
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	1	1	9	22	40	4.36
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	1	2	6	21	43	4.41
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	1	1	8	13	50	4.51
9. My parents are proud of me.	0	0	11	10	52	4.56
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	1	6	11	19	36	4.14
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	1	2	8	10	52	4.51
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	0	1	4	20	48	4.58
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	3	4	24	42	4.44
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	0	0	2	19	52	4.93
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	19	11	16	13	14	2.89

Here again, the average score on the post-survey did not change much from the fall. The average changed from 4.25 to 4.19. Once again, the lowest score was question

number 2 with an average of 2.82. The highest score for the fourth graders was 4.93 which indicated the teachers encouraged the students to do their best on their work.

Table 5.

Fifth Grade Fall 2011 Survey Results- (Pre-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Not Sure 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Average
1. I feel safe at my school.	0	8	20	24	44	4.08
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	4	56	0	28	8	2.79
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	4	8	28	36	20	3.5
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	2	0	15	79	4.78
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	0	4	44	28	20	3.67
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	0	0	12	40	44	4.33
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	0	0	20	60	16	3.96
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	0	0	8	28	60	4.54
9. My parents are proud of me.	0	3	14	28	51	4.32
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	0	4	16	32	44	4.21
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	0	0	4	20	72	4.71
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	0	0	0	48	48	4.5
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	0	4	56	36	4.33
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	0	0	0	20	76	4.79
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	19	8	16	18	35	3.44

School Climate Survey Results: Fifth Grade. The z -test for difference in means was used to determine if there was a difference in means from the pre-survey to the post-survey. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of

comparison of test value, 0.2, and critical value, 1.96. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not an increase in the fifth grade students' perception of the building's climate as measured by the School Climate Survey.

Table 6.

Fifth Grade Spring 2012 Survey Results- (Post-survey)

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total/N
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel safe at my school.	0	0	20	36	36	4.17
2. An adult in my family (or someone that is taking care of me) visits my school often.	16	16	0	28	32	3.48
3. I enjoy learning at my school.	0	12	12	44	24	3.87
4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.	0	0	6	14	72	4.72
5. Students at my school trust the teachers.	0	0	44	20	28	3.83
6. At my school, teachers respect the students.	0	8	12	36	36	4.09
7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.	0	4	12	32	44	4.26
8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.	0	6	11	15	60	4.4
9. My parents are proud of me.	0	0	20	32	40	4.22
10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.	4	16	24	20	28	3.57
11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.	0	0	4	8	80	4.83
12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.	0	0	0	36	56	4.61
13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.	0	4	0	52	36	4.3
14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.	0	0	4	4	84	4.87
15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.	24	4	16	8	40	3.39

The fifth grade students who took the School Climate Pre-survey had an average score of 4.13 which was lower than the third and fourth grade results. Again, the lowest score

came from question number 2. Similar to fourth grade's post-survey, the fifth graders response to question 14 had the highest average score.

The School Climate Post-survey for the fifth graders only slightly changed from the fall of 2011 to the spring of 2012. The overall average score increased from 4.13 to 4.17 over the course of the year. Interestingly, the lowest score was not related to the parents' involvement at school during the day. Rather the lowest score for the post-survey was in regards to the extrinsic rewards for doing well in school which was similar to the third grade post-survey results.

Limitations

With most research, limitations were inevitable, regardless of the planning and preparation. This particular study was no different. In hind sight, this particular study presented limitations which could have been prevented and others that were out of the researcher's control.

First, the group of students who participated in this study was limited to just third, fourth, and fifth graders in one school setting. To provide a more accurate, reliable, and valid picture the results from a larger subject group would have been more appropriate. Incorporating multiple school buildings from multiple diverse socioeconomic backgrounds would have also contributed to the study.

Secondly, not all teachers from the third grade elected to participate in the study. This limited the number of subjects for the study in one particular grade level. The GSW implementation should have been consistent among all grade levels.

Third, and most importantly, there needed to be better accountability for the teachers to ensure they were conducting their portion of the study with fidelity. The

teachers participating in the study turned in the GSW on a regular basis, but the amount of time devoted to each individual conference with the students was left to the dedication and resilience of the teachers.

Fourth, the researcher of this study had strong feelings about how schools should partner their efforts of improving the academic performance of students and increasing the overall school climate of the building. Even though the overall climate was generally good, the researcher felt improvements could always be made until 100% of the students, parents, and staff felt like they belonged, felt safe, and felt the school was a community as determined by the CSC climate survey. The current reality of the building, as indicated by the CSC climate survey, reported there was room for improvement as the overall culture score was 81% and the overall climate score was 69%.

Fifth, the researcher also had a strong belief system which supported intrinsic motivation over extrinsic motivation. Through personal life experiences and professional experiences the value of intrinsic motivation served as a greater benefit. With this thought in mind, the researcher was also aware a percentage of children needed the external motivator to provide influence and motivation to reach a goal.

Finally, the only threat the researcher identified during the study was in the event a student continually failed to achieve their desired goal and their morale and desire to work decreased. However, the study was designed to have teachers review the students' goals to help determine if they made sense, were obtainable, and measurable which would play a factor in the achievement rate of the students.

Summary

The procedures and processes which took place in this study were completely voluntary for the teachers in third, fourth, and fifth grade. The teachers who elected to participate in the study were asked to follow specific steps on a weekly or bi-weekly schedule depending on the timeline established by their individual students.

First, teachers distributed a GSW to each student in their classroom as the initial step in the goal-setting process. After the preliminary stages of conducting whole-class behavioral goals to establish the routine and expectations of the goal-setting procedures, students began to create their own goal and timeline. The choices were academic or behavioral and in one-week or two-week intervals.

Secondly, teachers were required to conference with the students a minimum of three times to help review the goal and establish their action steps. The role of the teachers, at that point, was to determine if the goal set by the student was measurable, appropriate, and relevant for the child.

After the initial conference with the teacher, the student put the action plan into place and began working toward achieving their goal. At the midpoint of the goal-setting period, the teacher and student would conference again to reflect on the progress of achieving the goal and to adjust the action plan or final goal if necessary.

At the conclusion of the goal-setting period the students would self-assess their progress, with the help of their teacher, to determine if the goal was reached. If the goal was achieved, the student and teacher would repeat the goal-setting cycle to generate a new goal. If the student did not achieve the desired outcome, the student and teacher

would work together to establish the next steps to ensure the student reached the intended goal.

The researcher's role in this process was to provide support for the students and teachers throughout the entire goal-setting process. The researcher also collected and reviewed each student's GSW at the conclusion of the goal setting period to monitor the success rate of the students reaching their desired goal.

In addition to supporting the teachers and students during this study, the researcher collected, recorded, and analyzed academic and behavioral data from previous years through the conclusion of the study. More specifically, the analysis of the academic and behavioral data was compared from the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 school years.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Data

The purpose of this chapter was to provide an analysis of the climate data and academic data at Green Elementary from 2008 through 2012. This chapter included a description of the climate and academic data prior to the researcher's study compared to the results of the implementation of the GSW. In addition, the chapter provided a description of the subjects involved in the study's school environment. Finally, the chapter addressed each hypothesis relative to the data collected from the survey instruments or the standardized academic tests.

The building's CSC team, which included the researcher of this study, dedicated several days to review the CSC climate survey data to identify the strengths and areas for growth for the building. Based upon the 2010-2011 school year, and the three previous year's climate data, the CSC team and the researcher decided there was a need to improve the school's climate in the specific area of students' overall sense of belonging and sense of school as a community. The team's decision was made because there was not consistency in the data over the last four years. The results of the CSC climate survey fluctuated each year. Minimal academic gains were being made. The CSC team and the leadership team felt something needed to be implemented to help improve the overall climate of the building and the academic performance on standardized tests.

In addition to the direct attention to improving the school climate, academic progress on standardized tests was also a key focus when the administrative team was creating SMART goals and preparing for the upcoming school year due to the demands of NLCB.

Data Collection

The researcher investigated the longitudinal data of the building to gain perspective of the last three years performance. The data included results from the CSC climate survey, the MAP test in areas of Communication Arts and Mathematics, and the total reading NCE scores from the GMRT for third, fourth, and fifth graders from the 2008-2009 school year until the 2010-2011 school year. In addition to the specific academic data and the climate data, the researcher compared two non-academic indicators from 2008-2009 through 2010-2011. The students' daily attendance and the number of behavioral office referrals were also compared.

Results: Null Hypothesis # 1a

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of Belonging. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students' level of sense of belonging as measured by the CSC climate survey for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

As previously indicated, Green Elementary's CSC climate scores fluctuated each year. In addition, the results from the 2011 CSC climate survey indicated Green Elementary was not consistently above the district average. See Table 1.

As Table 1 indicated, Green Elementary's mean scores on the Students' Feelings of Belonging section of the CSC climate survey did not increase each year, nor did the average score consistently exceed the district average.

Table 7.

*CSC Climate Survey – Students’ Feelings of Belonging
Green Elementary Compared to District Results 2008-2012*

Year	Green Elementary Mean	Standard Deviation	N
2008-2009	71.24	18.999	161
2009-2010	65.48	18.59	228
2010-2011	72.89	15.759	194
2011-2012	70.32	15.845	237

Year	District Mean	Standard Deviation	N
2008-2009	70.18	17.52	3227
2009-2010	71.85	17.425	4003
2010-2011	71.39	17.981	4114
2011-2012	70.03	17.638	3490

The mean score for each section of the CSC climate survey was based on a four-point scale. When the students took the survey they would respond with a score of zero through four with four being the highest score possible. An average score was calculated from each respond and then converted to a percentage. A score of 100 would be the maximum score a section could receive on the CSC climate survey.

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of Belonging: Third Grade. The researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the third grade students’ perception of their sense of belonging during the final year of implementation and study, compared to their perceptions during the first year of the study. Based on the results, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, -0.14, and critical value, -1.96. Therefore the data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Thus, there was not a significant increase in the

perception of the third-grade students' sense of belonging as measured by CSC climate survey.

The results from the Sense of Belonging section of the CSC climate survey taken by third-grade students from 2008-2012 are displayed in Table 2.

CSC Climate Survey – Sense of Belonging: Fourth Grade. Again, the researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fourth-grade students' perception of their sense of belonging during the final year of implementation and study. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, -1.17, and critical value, -1.96. Therefore the data did support the alternate hypothesis. Thus, there was not a significant increase in the perception of the fourth-grade students' sense of belonging as measured by the CSC climate survey.

The results from the Sense of Belonging section of the CSC climate survey taken by fourth-grade students from 2009-2012 are displayed in Table 2.

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of Belonging: Fifth Grade. The researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fifth grade students' perception of their sense of belonging during the final year of implementation and study, compared to their perceptions during the first year of the study. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, -1.02, and critical value, -1.96. Therefore the data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Thus, there was not a significant increase in the fifth grade students' sense of belonging as measured by the CSC climate survey.

The results from the Sense of Belonging section of the CSC climate survey taken by fifth grade students from 2008-2012 are displayed in Table 2.

Table 8.

*CSC Climate Survey – Students’ Feelings of Belonging
Green Elementary 2008-2012*

Grade	Year	Mean	Standard	N
3 rd	2008-2009	78.03	15.784	66
	2009-2010	69.41	18.493	76
	2010-2011	74.77	14.562	65
	2011-2012	74.42	13.978	77
4 th	2008-2009	66.94	18.897	93
	2009-2010	67.13	16.466	68
	2010-2011	75.15	17.144	67
	2011-2012	71.88	15.529	72
5 th	2008-2009	47.5	53.033	2
	2009-2010	60.6	19.41	84
	2010-2011	68.47	14.699	62
	2011-2012	65.86	16.161	87

As previously stated, the participants of the study were in the third, fourth, and fifth grade. The researcher believed the GSW and student-teacher conferences would have a positive effect on the CSC climate survey. When, in fact, for all three grade levels the Students’ Feelings of Belonging percentages decreased a small amount from the 2010-2011 school year to the 2011-2012 school year.

The third graders who participated in the GSW implementation and student-teacher conferences resulted in a slight .35% decrease in the third-grade students’ perception of their feelings of belonging.

The fourth graders who participated in the GSW implementation and student-teacher conferences resulted in a 3.27% decrease in the fourth-grade students' perception of their feelings of belonging. This was the largest decrease among all three grade levels.

The fifth graders who also participated in the GSW implementation and student-teacher conferences resulted in a 2.6% decrease. In addition, the fifth-grade students also had the lowest of all three grade levels.

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of Belonging: Third-Fifth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the students' perception of their sense of belonging in grades 3 through 5 throughout the four-year period. As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected because of comparison of the test value, 0.99, and critical value, 3.49. Therefore the data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Thus, there was not a significant increase in the students' sense of belonging as measured by the CSC climate survey when combining all grades into one sample and comparing year-to-year.

As results in Table 3 indicated, there was no statistical change from the spring of 2009 and the spring of 2012 on the CSC climate survey in the area of Sense of Belonging for the students in the third, fourth, and fifth grades.

Table 9.

CSC Climate Survey: Sense of Belonging- Four Year Comparison

ANOVA: Single Factor
SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
2009	4	263.71	65.9275	171.7637
2010	4	262.62	65.655	13.9531
2011	4	291.28	72.82	9.386267
2012	4	285.48	71.37	22.77507

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	163.3026	3	54.43419	0.99935	0.426489	3.490295
Within Groups	653.6344	12	54.46953			
Total	816.9369	15				

Results: Null Hypothesis # 1b

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of School as Community

The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students’ level of sense of school as a community as measured by the CSC climate survey for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

Table 10.

*CSC Climate Survey – Students’ Sense of School as a Community
Green Elementary Compared to the District Results 2008-2012*

Year	Green Elementary Mean	Standard Deviation	N
2008-2009	71.02	19.398	161
2009-2010	63.11	19.195	228
2010-2011	72.58	16.234	194
2011-2012	71.73	17.604	237

Year	District Mean	Standard Deviation	N
2008-2009	70.64	18.586	3227
2009-2010	72.16	19.002	4003
2010-2011	71.64	19.409	4114
2011-2012	71.01	18.765	3490

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of School as Community: Third Grade. The researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the third-grade students’ sense of school as a community during the final year of implementation and study, compared to their perceptions during the first year of the study. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, 1.26, and critical value, 1.96. Therefore the data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Thus, there was not a significant increase in the third grade students’ perception of the sense of school as a community as measured by the CSC climate survey.

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of School as Community: Fourth Grade. Here again, the researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a

statistical difference in the fourth grade students' sense of school as a community during the final year of implementation and study, compared to their perceptions during the first year of the study. The researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, 1.04, and critical value, 1.96. Thus, the researcher did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the fourth grade students' perception of the sense of school as a community as measured by the CSC climate survey.

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of School as Community: Fifth Grade. The researcher used the z -test for difference in means to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fifth grade students' sense of school as a community during the final year of implementation and study, compared to their perceptions during the first year of the study. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, 0.33, and critical value, 1.96. The alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the fifth-grade students' perception of the sense of school as a community as measured by the CSC climate survey.

The third-grade students increased their average score on the Students' Sense of School as Community section of the CSC climate survey from the spring of 2011 to the spring of 2012.

The fourth-grade students who participated in the study showed a decrease of 3.11% in their Sense of School as a Community from the 2010-2011 school year to the 2011-2012 school year.

The fifth graders who participated in the study showed a minimal decrease of .9% in their Sense of School as a Community from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012.

Table 11.

*CSC Climate Survey – Students’ Sense of School as a Community
Green Elementary 2008-2012*

Grade	Year	Mean	Standard	N
3 rd	2008-2009	76.29	16.809	66
	2009-2010	70.86	20.5	76
	2010-2011	75.08	14.537	65
	2011-2012	78.18	14.553	77
	Year	Mean	Standard	N
4 th	2008-2009	68.01	19.451	93
	2009-2010	62.72	16.401	68
	2010-2011	75.75	17.392	67
	2011-2012	72.64	17.702	72
	Year	Mean	Standard	N
5 th	2008-2009	37.5	45.962	2
	2009-2010	56.43	17.623	84
	2010-2011	66.53	15.165	62
	2011-2012	65.63	17.814	87

CSC Climate Survey- Sense of School as a Community: Third-Fifth Grade.

The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the scores for students in grades 3 through 5 throughout the four-year period in the area of Sense of School as a Community. The null hypothesis was not rejected because of the comparison test value, 1.13, and critical value, 3.49. Thus, the data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students’

perception of the Sense of School as a Community as measured by the CSC climate survey when combining all grades into one sample and comparing year-to-year.

Table 12.

CSC Climate Survey: Sense of School as a Community- Four Year Comparison

ANOVA: Single Factor
SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
2009	4	252.82	63.205	305.3755
2010	4	253.12	63.28	34.90713
2011	4	289.94	72.485	17.62177
2012	4	288.18	72.045	26.41457

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	326.0205	3	108.6735	1.1311	0.37556	3.4903
Within Groups	1152.957	12	96.07974			
Total	1478.977	15				

Results: Null Hypothesis # 2

School Climate Survey Results (pre versus post). The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student-teacher conferences will not increase the school climate level as measured by the School Climate Survey from fall to spring for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. As previously mentioned, the School Climate Survey was created by the researcher for the purpose of identifying the potential change in the students’ perspective of their school’s climate from the fall of 2011 to the spring of 2012.

School Climate Survey Results: Third Grade. To determine if there was a difference in mean from the pre-survey to the post-survey, the researcher used the z-test for difference in means. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis

because of comparison of test value, -0.27, and critical value, -1.96. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the third grade students' perception of the building's climate as measured by School Climate Survey.

School Climate Survey Results: Third-Fifth Grade. The z -test for difference in means was used to determine if there was a difference in means from the pre-survey to the post-survey for the combined sample of third, fourth, and fifth grade students. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of test value, -0.02, and critical value, -1.96. The data did not support alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' perception of the building's climate as measured by the School Climate Survey.

The School Climate Survey which was taken in the fall of 2011 and again in the spring of 2012 did not show the desired gains due to the implementation of the GSW. However, the students' responses from the fall to spring did show observable signs of improvement in the students' perception of the school's climate in key areas which the researcher could use for future study. Specifically, the students' response to needing extrinsic motivators decreased in all three grade levels from the pre-survey to the post-survey.

Results: Null Hypothesis # 3

MAP Communication Arts Results. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students' academic performance on the MAP Communication Arts assessments for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The implementation of the GSW and student-teacher conferences were also predicted to increase the third, fourth, and fifth-grade students' academic performance on the MAP for the Communication Arts and Mathematics tests. For the purpose of this study, the Science portion of the MAP, which only fifth graders completed, was not included in the data. The tables displayed the results from the 2008-2009 school year through the 2011-2012 school year.

MAP Communication Arts Results: Third Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the third-grade students' scores on the MAP Communication Arts test for any one year throughout a three-year period. As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected because of the comparison of the test value, 1.62, and critical value, 2.66. So, the data did not support the alternate hypothesis

Table 13.

MAP Communication Arts Scores for Third Graders from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	39	25336	649.641	1019.552		
2010	39	25877	663.512	1023.467		
2011	39	25321	649.256	1209.775		
2012	39	25626	657.076	1189.283		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	5398.513	3	1799.504	1.620417	0.186979	2.664107
Within Groups	168798.9	152	1110.519			
Total	174197.4	155				

. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' MAP Communication Arts score as measured by the MAP over the three year period for students in the third grade, in year-to-year comparison.

MAP Communication Arts Results: Fourth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fourth-grade students' scores on the MAP Communication Arts test for any one year throughout a three-year period. The researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 1.24, and critical value, 2.66. Thus, the alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' MAP Communication Arts score as measured by the MAP for fourth-grade students over the three-year period, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 14.

MAP Communication Arts Scores for Fourth Graders from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor
SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
2009	39	26054	668.0513	682.6289
2010	39	26532	680.3077	1304.85
2011	39	26510	679.7436	1189.775
2012	39	26365	676.0256	829.2362

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	3734.224	3	1244.741	1.242725	0.296308	2.664107
Within Groups	152246.6	152	1001.622			
Total	155980.8	155				

MAP Communication Arts Results: Fifth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in fifth-grade students' scores on the MAP Communication Arts test for any one year throughout a three-year period. The null hypothesis was rejected because of comparison of test value, 2.78, and critical value, 2.66. The data did support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was a significant difference in the students' MAP Communication Arts score as measured by the MAP for fifth-grade students over the three-year period in year-to-year comparison.

Table 15.

MAP Communication Arts Scores for Fifth-Grade Students from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	38	26063	685.8684	616.874		
2010	38	26540	698.4211	420.736		
2011	38	26017	684.6579	832.717		
2012	38	26452	696.1053	812.961		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	5601.7368	3	1867.246	2.78351	0.0429	2.6657
Within Groups	99281.736	148	670.8225			
Total	104883.47	151				

A z -test for difference in means was conducted to determine if there was a noticeable difference in means from 2009 to 2012. Since the test value of -1.56 was larger than the critical value of -1.96, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis. There was no difference in mean values for Grade 5 MAP Communication Arts scores when comparing 2009 to 2012.

Table 16.

Grade 5 MAP Communication Arts Scores when Comparing 2009 to 2012

z-test: Two Sample for Means

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	686.692308	696.333333
Known Variance	616.87	812.96
Observations	39	39
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Z	-1.5922576	
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.11132683	
z Critical two-tail	1.95996398	

A *z*-test was also conducted to determine if there was a difference in mean between 2010 and 2011. Since the test value of 2.70 was larger than the critical value of 1.95, the researcher did reject the null hypothesis. There was a significant difference in mean values for Grade 5 MAP Communication Arts scores when comparing 2010 to 2011. The 2010 average scores were larger than the 2011, which indicates a significant decrease.

Table 17.

Grade 5 MAP Communication Arts Scores when Comparing 2010 to 2011

z-test: Two Sample for Means

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	697.846154	682.538462
Known Variance	420.73	832.71
Observations	39	39
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Z	2.70016468	
P(Z<=z) two-tail	0.00693052	
z Critical two-tail	1.95996398	

MAP Communication Arts Results: Third-Fifth Grade. To determine if there was a statistical difference among the third, fourth, and fifth grade students for any one year throughout three years on the MAP Communication Arts tests, the researcher used the ANOVA test. The relevance for this information would provide the researcher with a better perspective as to how the students were achieving on the MAP as a whole group. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected because of the comparison of the test value, 3.59, and critical value, 2.62. Thus, the alternate hypothesis was supported. Therefore, there was a significant difference in the students' MAP Communication Arts score as measured by the MAP for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade over three years, for the combined sample of third, fourth, and fifth grade, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 18.

MAP Communication Arts Scores for Third-Fifth Graders from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
2009	120	80170	668.083	969.2030		
2010	120	81660	680.5	1093.798		
2011	120	80428	670.233	1310.264		
2012	120	81280	677.333	1191.451		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	12306.025	3	4102.008	3.59453	0.01362	2.62363
Within Groups	543201.3	476	1141.179			
Total	555507.325	479				

MAP Mathematics Results. The null hypothesis was: the implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the

students' academic performance on the MAP Mathematics assessments for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

MAP Mathematics Results: Third Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the third-grade students' score on the MAP Mathematics test for any one year throughout a three-year period. The results indicated not to reject the null hypothesis because of comparison of the test value, 0.65, and critical value, 2.66. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the third-grade students' MAP Mathematics score as measured by the MAP, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 19.

MAP Mathematics Scores for Third-Grade Students from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	39	24632	631.5897	1296.669		
2010	39	25005	641.1538	1416.87		
2011	39	24912	638.7692	1770.024		
2012	39	24673	632.641	681.2362		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	2533.359	3	844.453	0.654006	0.58162	2.664107
Within Groups	196262.4	152	1291.2			
Total	198795.8	155				

MAP Mathematics Results: Fourth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fourth-grade students' results on the MAP Mathematics test for any one year throughout a three-year period. The result was to not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 0.66,

and critical value, 2.66. Thus, the data did not support the alternate hypothesis.

Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' MAP Mathematics score as measured by MAP for students in the fourth grade over the three-year period, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 20.

MAP Mathematics Scores for Fourth-Grade Students from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	40	26521	663.025	612.4353		
2010	40	26460	661.5	1328.974		
2011	40	26580	664.5	1090.821		
2012	40	26224	655.6	624.3487		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	1826.51875	3	608.839	0.666021	0.57412	2.66256
Within Groups	142606.575	156	914.144			
Total	144433.093	159				

MAP Mathematics Results: Fifth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fifth grade students' results on the MAP Mathematics test for any one year throughout a three-year period. Once again, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 2.01, and critical value, 2.66. As a result, the alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' MAP Mathematics score as measured by the MAP for students in the fifth grade over the three-year period, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 21.

MAP Mathematics Scores for Fifth Grade from 2009-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	40	27238	680.95	1052.921		
2010	40	27889	697.225	784.6917		
2011	40	27224	680.6	2253.733		
2012	40	27647	691.175	1171.687		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	7943.725	3	2647.90	2.01245	0.11444	2.6625
Within Groups	205258.25	156	1315.75			
Total	213201.97	159				

MAP Mathematics Results: Third-Fifth Grade. To determine if there was a statistical difference among the third, fourth, and fifth grade students for any one year throughout a three-year period on the MAP Mathematics test, an ANOVA test was used. The relevance for this information would provide the researcher with a better perspective as to how the students were achieving on the MAP as a whole group. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 0.93, and critical value, 2.62. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not an increase in the students' MAP Mathematics score as measured by the MAP for the combined sample of students in third, fourth, and fifth grade, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 22.

MAP Mathematics Scores for Third-Fifth Graders from 2009-2012

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2009	119	78391	658.74789	1385.0545		
2010	119	79354	666.84033	1695.5590		
2011	119	78716	661.47899	1972.8957		
2012	119	78544	660.03361	1396.3886		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	4514.98	3	1504.993	0.9333441	0.42437	2.62379
Within Groups	761088	472	1612.4745			
Total	765602.9	475				

Results: Null Hypothesis #4

Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT). The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the students' academic performance on the GMRT for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The fourth hypothesis the researcher made would increase the third, fourth, and fifth grade students' academic performance on the GMRT. Unfortunately, due to the limitations with data storage warehouse, results for the GMRT could only be gathered from 2009-2010 through the 2011-2012 school years. Therefore, only three years of data is included in the comparison, rather than four years. The students' total reading Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) was used to determine if academic gains in the area of reading were made from year to year. The GMRT also provided other scores such as total reading percentile ranking (PR) and total reading standard score. The NCE was used because these scores were suitable for computing averages.

As a special note of attention, the GMRT scores for third grade were the only standardized test scores taken the previous year as they did not participate in the MAP testing in the spring. This was secondary data.

Gates MacGinitie Results: Third-Grade. The ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference in third-grade students on the GMRT for any one year throughout a three-year period. As a result, the researcher did not reject null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 0.28, and critical value, 3.07. The alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students’ NCE score as measured by GMRT for the third-grade students, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 23.

Average GMRT NCE for Third Graders from 2010-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2010	40	2695	67.375	318.599		
2011	40	2659	66.475	551.435		
2012	40	2569	64.225	230.076		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	210.6	2	105.3	0.2875	0.7509	3.0737
Within Groups	42904.32	117	366.703			
Total	43114.93	119				

Gates MacGinitie Results: Fourth Grade. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fourth grade students’ GMRT score for any one year throughout a three-year period. As a result, the researcher did not

reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 1.47, and critical value, 3.07. The alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' NCE score as measured by GMRT for the fourth-grade students, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 24.

Average GMRT NCE for Fourth-Grade Students from 2010-2012

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
53	39	2404	61.64102564	402.6046		
46	39	2641	67.71794872	335.6815		
80	39	2360	60.51282051	455.4143		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	1171.504274	2	585.7521368	1.472108	0.233769	3.075853
Within Groups	45360.61538	114	397.900135			
Total	46532.11966	116				

Gates MacGinitie Results: Fifth Grade. Again, an ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference in the fifth-grade students' score on the GMRT for any one year throughout a three-year period. The researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 1.75, and critical value, 3.07. As a result, the alternate hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' NCE score as measured by the GMRT for the fifth-grade students, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 25.

Average GMRT NCE for Fifth-Grade Students from 2010-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2010	40	2609	65.225	319.87115		
2011	40	2397	59.925	334.73782		
2012	40	2683	67.075	288.27628		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	1101.8	2	550.9	1.7528114	0.177806	3.073763
Within Groups	36772.525	117	314.2950855			
Total	37874.325	119				

Gates MacGinitie Results: Third-Fifth Grade. To determine if there was a statistical difference among the third, fourth, and fifth grade students for any one year throughout a three-year period on the GMRT the researcher used an ANOVA test.

Table 26.

Average GMRT NCE from 2010-2012

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2010	120	7761	64.675	344.5237		
2011	120	7743	64.525	412.2347		
2012	120	7692	64.1	324.6286		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	21.35	2	10.675	0.029615	0.970822	3.021012
Within Groups	128685.1	357	360.4623			
Total	128706.4	359				

As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 0.02, and critical value, 3.02. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the students' GMRT NCE as measured by the GMRT for the combined sample of students in third, fourth, and fifth grade, in year-to-year comparison.

Results: Null Hypothesis #5

Non-Academic Indicator- Attendance Rates. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will not increase the attendance rates for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The researcher's next hypothesis predicted there would be an increase to the third, fourth and fifth grade students' average daily attendance. The overall attendance rate for Green Elementary had not been a huge area of concern over the last four years. However, for the purpose of the study, the researcher believed the intentional focus on increasing the students' sense of belong, along with the desire to increase the students' intrinsic motivation, the average daily attendance for students participating in the study would increase during the year of the study.

The tables below displayed the average daily attendance for the same students' over a three-year period. Table 27 showed the daily attendance rate for the same group of students over a three-year period. For example, the attendance rate was tracked for the same group students from third grade through fifth grade. Because the focus of this study only involved the third, fourth, and fifth grade students during the 2011-2012 school year, the researcher displayed the attendance rate for this group of students over the course of a three-year period. Each group of students was identified by the students' current grade

level. Group A represented fifth grade, Group B was represented for fourth grade, and Group C represented third grade. As the table indicated, over the course of a three-year period, the average daily attendance for each group of students did, in fact, increase small amount, observably.

Table 27.

Average Daily Attendance by Cohort Groups from 2009-2012

Year	Cohort A	Attendance Rate
2009-2010	3 rd	96.49%
2010-2011	4 th	96.92%
2011-2012	5 th	97.13%

Year	Cohort B	Attendance Rate
2009-2010	2 nd	96.42%
2010-2011	3 rd	96.75%
2011-2012	4 th	97.15%

Year	Cohort C	Attendance Rate
2009-2010	1 st	96.67%
2010-2011	2 nd	96.78%
2011-2012	3 rd	97.25%

Table 28 showed the average attendance rate for the third, fourth, and fifth grades over the course of a three-year period. This table compared different groups of students in their respected grade levels during a three-year span. Similar to Table 27, the amount of change in the students' average daily attendance increased slightly over the three-year period.

Table 28.

Average Daily Attendance for Third-Fifth Grade from 2009-2012

Year	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade
2009-2010	96.70%	96.24%	96.63%
2010-2011	96.75%	96.92%	96.75%
2011-2012	97.25%	97.15%	97.13%

Attendance Rates: Third-Fifth Grade Cohort Group. Third grade students were followed through their fourth and fifth grade years to compare attendance rates as a cohort group. The researcher used the ANOVA test to determine if there was a statistical difference in third-grade students' attendance rate over a three-year period. The null hypothesis was not rejected because of the comparison of the test value, 0.10, and critical value, 5.14. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in third-grade students' average daily attendance over the three-year period, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 29.

Attendance Rate for Cohort Group

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
Third	3	290.7	96.9	0.0949		
Fourth	3	290.32	96.77333	0.133633		
Fifth	3	290.54	96.84667	0.106433		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	0.0242	2	0.01213	0.10866	0.8987	5.1432
Within Groups	0.6699	6	0.111656			
Total	0.6942	8				

Attendance Rates: Third-Fifth Grade. Third, fourth, and fifth grade students were selected to compare attendance as separate grade-level groups. To determine if there was a statistical difference in the average daily attendance for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade for any one year throughout a three-year period, the ANOVA test was used. The researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 0.09, and critical value, 5.14. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant change in the students' average daily attendance over a three-year period, for a sample of combined grades, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 30.

Average Attendance Rates by Grade Level from 2009-2012

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
Third	3	290.7	96.9	0.0925		
Fourth	3	290.31	96.77	0.2239		
Fifth	3	290.51	96.8366	0.068133		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	0.025356	2	0.01267	0.098908	0.90727	5.143253
Within Groups	0.769067	6	0.128178			
Total	0.794422	8				

Results: Null Hypothesis #6

Non-Academic Indicator- Discipline Office Referral Results. The implementation of GSW combined with consistent student and teacher conferences will

not reduce the number of discipline referrals for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The researcher also predicted there to be a decrease in the number of discipline incidents for students in third, fourth and fifth grade. The highlight of the study came from the results of the number of discipline referrals over the course of a four-year period. There was an observable decrease in the number of office referrals from the 2010-2011 school year and the 2011-2012 school year. Table 19 illustrated the number of office referrals over the four-year period.

Table 31.

Office Referrals by Grade Level from 2009-2012

Grade Level	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Third Grade	27	7	24	6
Fourth Grade	61	32	52	7
Fifth Grade	44	36	88	43

Table 32 showed the comparison of the same students over a three-year period, third grade through fifth grade, similar to the attendance report in Table 31. Again, there was an observable decrease in discipline referrals from the 2010-2011 school-year to the 2011-2012 school-year.

Table 32.

Office Referrals by Cohort Group from 2009-2012

Year	Group A	Group B	Group C
2009-2010	7 (3rd)	34(2nd)	20(1st)
2010-2011	52(4th)	24(3rd)	45(2nd)
2011-2012	43(5th)	7(4th)	6(3rd)

Discipline Office Referral Results- Same Students. Third graders were followed as a cohort group through their fourth and fifth grade years to compare the number of discipline office referrals over the three-year period. The ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference in the number of office referrals for the same students who participated in the study over a four-year period. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 1.55, and critical value, 5.14. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the number of office referrals for the students who participated in the study, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 33.

Number of Office Referrals for Cohort Groups

ANOVA SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2011-2012	3	56	18.66667	444.3333		
2010-2011	3	121	40.33333	212.3333		
2009-2010	3	61	20.33333	182.3333		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	872.2222	2	436.1111	1.559396	0.284867	5.143253
Within Groups	1678	6	279.6667			
Total	2550.222	8				

Discipline Office Referral Results- Third-Fifth Grade. Third, fourth, and fifth graders were selected to compare the number of discipline office referrals from the 2008-2009 school year to the 2011-2012 school year. The ANOVA test was used to determine if there was a statistical difference in the number of office referrals for the students who

participated in the study over a four-year period. As a result, the researcher did not reject the null hypothesis because of the comparison of the test value, 1.65, and critical value, 4.06. The data did not support the alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there was not a significant increase in the number of office referrals for the students who participated in the study, for a combined sample of students, in year-to-year comparison.

Table 34.

Average Number of Office Referrals from 2008-2012

ANOVA: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>		
2008-2009	3	132	44	289		
2009-2010	3	75	25	247		
2010-2011	3	164	54.6667	1029.33		
2011-2012	3	56	18.6667	444.333		
ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	2499.58	3	833.194	1.65837	0.25201	4.06618
Within Groups	4019.33	8	502.417			
Total	6518.92	11				

Summary

The overall summary of the results indicated little or no statistical gains or losses in the areas of students’ sense of belonging and students’ sense of school as a community for the students in the study. None of the non-academic indicators, attendance rate or discipline office referrals, showed a statistical change. In the area of academic performance, only the MAP Communication Arts assessment indicated a statistical improvement. Otherwise, there was no increase to the academic performance due to the

intentional focus on curricular or behavioral goal-setting, self-monitoring, and teacher-student conferences.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to help the administration, students, staff, and parents of Green Elementary begin a journey to increase the overall school climate with a direct focus on improving the students' sense of belonging, sense of school as a community, and academic achievement through the implementation of GSW for students in third, fourth, and fifth grade. Further, it was equally important for students to understand and value the need to be their own advocate as they pursued their personal goals in school and in life. As a result of the implementation of the GSW, the desired results of improving the overall sense of belonging, the sense of school as a community, and academic improvement were not met. There was minimal fluctuation in the data collected to determine if this study had a relevant impact on the students.

The final chapter was divided into three sections. The first section provided a summary which described the purpose and design of the study. In addition, an analysis of the statistical data was provided. Secondly, a discussion of the recommendations for practice and future study were presented. Finally, the researcher included the conclusions drawn from the findings of the study.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was not to provide a quick fix to all the educational problems or societal issues in education in the United States. Rather, the purpose of the study was to put an intentional focus on the climate and culture of the building through a closely monitored goal-setting process between students and teachers to improve their individual academic performance and improve the overall climate of the building.

Through a close partnership between students in third, fourth, and fifth grade and their teachers, the students utilized the GSW to help navigate their progress toward a behavioral or academic goal which they set for themselves. The intent was to increase the students' sense of belonging, improve the school's sense of school as a community, and raise academic performance on the two standardized tests (MAP and the GMRT). In addition, there were non-academic indicators which were also identified as key aspects when discussing a building's climate. For this study, the average daily attendance and number of office referrals were also analyzed.

Analysis of Data

Data for this research was gathered in two formats, survey and assessment. More specifically, the climate data was collected from the CSC climate survey and the School Climate survey which was taken by students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade and staff members. The academic information was retrieved from the data warehouse collection site for the researcher's school district. The data needed to address the non-academic indicators were collected from a system called Infinite Campus. Infinite Campus is a system used to maintain student attendance, grades, behavior, schedules, family contacts and transportation information.

With only one year of implementation of the direct focus on the GSW, there was not significant evidence to support a drastic change in the overall climate of the building or academic performance. Knowing a drastic change in a building's climate was highly unlikely; the researcher did expect to see more of an impact on the targeted data points for the research.

Based upon observation within the school after the completion of the study, there was a heightened sense of awareness about the climate and a continued effort to implement goal-setting in all the classrooms and in all grade levels. The overall positive feeling within the school has improved and given promise to a continued effort to improve the climate and student academic performance.

Conclusions

The results of the CSC climate survey and the School Climate survey were not at all what the researcher forecasted to happen as a result of the implementation of goal-setting the way in which it was designed. Granted, the fact there was no statistical difference in the results was not catastrophic, but a disappointment nonetheless. The evidence of the study showed there was still work to be done in the area of improving the school's climate and improving academic performance. After reflecting on the research and the steps taken, the researcher would make recommendations and changes as the building continues to move forward to increase the overall school climate and academic performance of all students.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher believed changes can be made to improve the goal-setting process to create a better learning environment for all students to feel like they belong and achieve to their highest potential. In addition, the researcher provided steps to increase the level of work environment satisfaction to provide a better place to work for the entire staff.

Since the conclusion of the research, the building has taken the initial steps to further support the work of the research. The staff has launched an effort to comprehend the principles presented in *The Leader in Me* by Stephan Covey and implement the 7

Habits of Highly Effective People also presented in Stephan Covey's work. The staff has engaged in a book study, attended *Leadership Days*, and begun to utilize the *7 Habits* in their classrooms. As the building principal, the researcher has conducted a book study with the parent community and started incorporating information about *The Leader in Me* in the communication to the parents to build a stronger connection to the parent community.

The Leader In Me provided educators and parents key examples of how the "7 Habits" can be implemented into the school or home environment to increase leadership skills, intrinsic motivation, problem solving skills, academic performance, and an overall more positive outlook on life (Covey, 2008). In the book, Covey (2008) refers to A.B. Combs Elementary School as the first building to implement the "7 Habits" into the school environment due to the persistence and vision of the principal Muriel Summers. To help further explain the need to foster a positive school climate and culture which does not revolve solely around testing and builds well-rounded children, she stated in the book, "If we are putting all our efforts on the almighty test score alone, I am quite afraid that we are going to create a generation of children who know how to do nothing but take a test well" (Covey, 2008, p. 9).

Covey (2008) identified the "7 Habits" as; Be Proactive, Think Win-Win, First Things First, Seek First to Understand Then Be Understood, Begin with the End in Mind, Synergize, and Sharpen the Saw. Though the program has not been completely implemented into the building, other schools in the district and around the world were having great success in student performance in all areas.

Specifically tied to the study, the researcher believed changes needed to be made with the goal-setting process. The first adjustment to the goal-setting process would be to involve the entire building to include all grades from kindergarten to fifth grade. Research supported the implementation of goal-setting at an early age. Because the researcher had success in other buildings with goal-setting for an entire building, this change was definitely feasible. As the entire staff and student body worked together on establishing goals and worked toward achieving their desired outcomes, there was a collaborative effort of support and shared responsibility as students and teachers learned the process. The benefits of an entire building with the same intentional focus on goal-setting could generate an increased feeling of belonging, a greater sense of community, and increase the academic performance for all students.

As the instructional leader of the building, the researcher would put more responsibility upon himself to ensure students and teachers were spending the adequate amount of time conferencing about the goal and the path to reach the desired outcome. This adjustment would include more assistance with aligning goals to Common Core Standards, involvement creating their action plan, and more support after assessment of the goal. The change would require the researcher to spend more time in one-on-one situations with students and teachers. This adjustment would generate more buy-in and commitment for both students and staff. Throughout the study, the researcher identified one of the limitations of the study was the amount of time he was able to speak individually with students without disrupting the instruction of the teacher. This was one aspect of the process overlooked and underestimated. The researcher did spend a great

deal of time in the classrooms, just not discussing goals with students without feeling like instruction was disrupting the teacher.

The third change the researcher would make with the goal-setting process would more directly involve the staff. As building principal, the researcher, would require the teachers to take an active role in the goal-setting process and create goals for themselves as individuals. The personal goals would be discussed and monitored by their accountability partner, but not have an impact on their evaluations.

Recommendations

The relevance of the study was to examine the intentional focus on goal-setting for students in the third, fourth, and fifth grade to improve the overall school climate and student success (academic, attendance, and behavioral). The design of the study included regularly set independent goals by the students, increased student-teacher interaction, and self-assessment by the students to increase the students' sense of belonging, sense of school as a community, attendance rate, and behavior referrals. Unfortunately, results of the study did not show a statistical difference in the targeted areas to improve the school climate and student success. However, "most educators would endorse everyone's need to be valued, heard, successful, and included" (Bluestein, 2011, p. 30).

The challenging pursuit to provide a positive learning environment where all students perceive themselves as welcomed, safe, respected, valued, and a contributing member of their school setting will be a continuous effort for educators for years, possibly decades, to come. As long as educators, like the dedicated individuals at the school study site, continue to put children's needs in the forefront of their efforts, positive gains will be made in our endeavor to ensure all students have a strong sense of

belonging, feel like they are part caring community, and make impressive academic strides. “And in the end, our schools- indeed our civilization- will only be as good, as caring, and as positive as the efforts and intentions of the individuals in them. (Bluestein, 2011, p. 34).

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Appendices
Appendix A

My Goal-Setting Worksheet

Student Name: _____ Grade _____

Teacher: _____ Student Number _____

Time Frame of Goal: one week two weeks concept/skill

Begin Date: _____ End Date: _____

My Goal:

Math Reading Writing Science Social Studies Behavioral

Action Plan: (What am I going to do to achieve the goal I have set for myself?)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Conference with Teacher:

- Conference One Date- _____
- Conference Two Date- _____
- Conference Three Date- _____

Did I Meet My Goal? YES NOT YET

Now What?

Appendix B

Primary Think Sheet

Think Sheet

Pri

Student Name _____

Date _____

Grade _____

Location: _____



 What were you doing that caused the problem?



Why are you causing the problem?



What will you do next time to be a Greater Gator?

Teacher Conversation

My choice impact: My Personal Safety

Safety of Others

My Learning

Learning of Others

Do you think the consequence should be the next time there is a problem?

the Green Pines Expectation you did NOT practice: Be Responsible Be Respectful Be Safe Do My Best

Teacher Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Office

Yellow - Teacher

Pink - Home

2012-2013

Appendix C

Intermediate Think Sheet

Green Think Sheet

Student Name: _____
Teacher: _____

Date: _____
Grade: _____

1. Please circle the Green Pines Expectation(s) you did NOT practice.

Be Respectful Be Responsible Be Safe Do Your Best

2. Please circle the Character Trait(s) you did NOT display.

Cooperation Patience Respect Responsibility Courage Honesty Self-Control Effort

3. Please circle the area where the problem took place.

Classroom Hallway Playground Restroom Cafeteria Library Bus Assembly

4. Did your choice impact the safety or learning of others or yourself? Please circle one.

My Personal Safety Safety of Others My Learning Learning of Others

5. What did you do? What choice did you make which did NOT meet our Green Pines Expectations?

6. How did your actions impact the safety or learning of others or yourself?

7. What can you do to become a Greater Gator? How can you make sure this will not happen again?

Student Signature _____

Parent Signature _____

Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree

4. I will continue my education at a community college or university.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

5. Students at my school trust the teachers.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

6. At my school, teachers respect the students.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

7. My teachers make me feel good about myself.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

8. My teachers care whether I am successful or not.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

9. My parents are proud of me.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

10. At my school, teachers are fair to everyone.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

11. If I work hard in school, I will be a successful adult.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

12. At school, I try my best on all of my assignments and tests.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree 😊

Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree

13. At home, I try my best on all of my homework.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree ☺️

14. My teacher encourages me to do my best on all my assignments and tests.

☹️ Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree ☺️

15. At school, I should be rewarded with prizes for doing well on assignments and tests.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Not Sure Agree Strongly Agree

COMMENTS:

Appendix E

Teacher Consent Form

Teacher Consent Form
Green Elementary
School District

Project Title:

Will the intentional focus on curricular and behavioral goal-setting, self-monitoring, and teacher-student conferences increase the overall school climate and academic achievement?

Description:

With the purpose of increasing self-motivation, sense of belonging and academic achievement, an intentional focus on academic and behavioral goal-setting has been designed. This study will seek to measure its effectiveness on the overall school climate and academic performance.

Hypothesis:

Students in third, fourth and fifth grade who regularly set academic or behavioral goals, self-monitor their progress and assess their efforts, and maintain consistent conversation with their teacher will:

- 1- raise the school's Caring School Community Climate score in the area of feelings of belonging
- 2- raise the school's Caring School Community Climate score in the area of sense of school as a community
- 3- increase their academic performance on standardized tests (MAP and GMRT)

This form signifies my understanding of RESEARCHER'S NAME intent to complete research at Green Elementary School in the School District. I understand that this research is in conjunction with the completion of his doctoral degree from Lindenwood University.

By signing this form I agree to the following requirements to assist in acquiring the necessary data and implementing the required steps in order to complete the intended research.

Please initial in the blank.

_____ I understand this is a completely voluntary commitment.

_____ I understand my responsibilities include the following: assist students in setting weekly or bi-weekly goals, conferencing with the students a minimum of three times per week to discuss their progress on their goal, helping students design a plan of action to obtain their goal, helping students determine if they have achieved their goal at the end of the designated time period, and keeping communication open with RESEARCHER'S NAME throughout the course of study which is November 2011 – May 2012.

Staff Member Name: (printed) _____ Grade Level: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Vitae

Paul Godwin earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education from Harris-Stowe State College in 1999. Mr. Godwin then earned his Master's degree in Educational Administration in 2007 from Lindenwood University and his anticipated graduation from Lindenwood University's Doctoral Program in Educational Administration in December, 2013.

During his career in education, Mr. Godwin served as a classroom teacher for 10 years at the elementary, middle, and high school level. He served as an assistant principal for two years, and is currently serving in his third year as principal in a suburban school in the mid-west.