DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 368 527 RC 019 546

AUTHOR Stradford, Charmaine W.
TITLE Implementation of a Rural Program To Reduce the Drop-out Rate of 9th- and 10th-Grade At-Risk Students.
PUB DATE Jun 93
NOTE 135p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Agency Cooperation; Coordination; *Dropout Prevention; *High Risk Students; High Schools; Mentors; Parent Participation; *Rural Education; Self Esteem; Small Schools; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Chester County School District SC; *Student Support Services

ABSTRACT

A program was developed to reduce the rising dropout rate of 9th- and 10th-grade students at Lewisville High School, a small rural school in Chester County, South Carolina. In the face of limited financial resources, the program manager coordinated existing services and networked with community agencies. School records, surveys, and questionnaires revealed that 45 students identified as at-risk had a variety of problems, including excessive failing grades, tardiness and absences, discipline problems, lack of self-esteem, and limited participation in school and nonschool activities. Aimed at providing students with success experiences and support services, program components included group and individual counseling sessions, field trips, peer tutoring, community speakers, teacher inservice training, career education, parent workshops, and business mentors. As a result of the program, the school dropout rate decreased from 7.2 percent in 1990-91 to 1.6 percent in June 1993. The target group showed significant decreases from January 1992 to June 1993 in the percentage of grades that were Ds and Fs, and also showed improvement in attitudes towards academics, as measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. Recommendations for maintaining and improving the project are discussed. Appendices include results of student, parent, and teacher surveys; characteristics of potential dropouts; and other information relevant to program implementation. Contains numerous data tables. (LP)

Implementation of a Rural Program to Reduce the Drop-out Rate of 9th- and 10th- Grade At-Risk Students

by

Charmaine W. Stradford
Guidance Director
Lewisville High School
Chester County Schools
Chester, South Carolina

A Major Applied Research Project Report
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders
Nova University

June 1993

Table of Contents

Abstract

Implementation of a Rural Program
to Reduce the Drop-out Rate
of 9th- and 10th- Grade At-Risk Students

This project was designed to implement a program for at-risk students at Lewisville High School in the 9th and 10th grades. Areas of need, which were addressed, included identifying at-risk students based on individual student criteria, providing success experiences for students, exploring support services through businesses and community, and involving parents and teachers through active participation with students.

School records, surveys, and questionnaires revealed that at-risk students had a variety of problems that contributed to their dropping out before completing the 12th grade. These problems included excessive failing grades, tardiness and absences, discipline problems, and limited participation in school and nonschool activities.

The major solution strategy was a comprehensive approach to reduce the drop-out rate. Group sessions, teacher and parent involvement, peer tutoring, and business-partnership mentoring all played a part in keeping students in school.

The school drop-out rate decreased from 7.2% in 1990-1991 to 4.7% in 1991-1992 to 1.6% in June 1993. Absences for the target group were reduced from 72% in January 1992 to 49% in June 1993. The number of D grades dropped from 29% in January 1992 to 15% in June 1993. The number of F grades dropped from 37% in January 1992 to 15% in June 1993. The mean score for the school-academic subtest on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory increased from 8.92 in September 1992 to 11.4 in June 1993.

Chapter 1

Problem and Problem Background

Statement and Primary Evidence of the Problem

During 3 academic years, 1988-1991, the drop-out rate of Lewisville High School students in Grades 9-12 increased 1% each year from 4.2% in 1988 to 7.2% in 1991 as evidenced by attendance reports and student grade records.

Overview of the Problem Setting

Lewisville High School is a small school (297 students in October of 1991) in a rural industrial area in east Chester County in the northern part of South Carolina. Of the 297 students enrolled in October 1991, 115 were in the 9th grade, 56 in the 10th grade, 64 in the 11th grade, and 62 in the 12th grade. The student population was 45% Black and 55% White. All students spoke English.

The assistant principal and the school secretary were responsible for school attendance records. Routine letters were sent when students were absent, and parents received a phone call each day that students were absent. There was an in-school suspension program to reduce loss of student days due to disciplinary actions, but students often got behind in their school work and faced failure.

There was no organized parent-teacher association or parent volunteer group. Efforts to organize one in 1989 were unsuccessful for lack of attendance and interest by parents.

Open House, which was held in September 1991 at Lewisville High School, was attended by 15 parents or fewer. Open House was an annual event held during the month of September or October.

The project manager had the responsibilities for the school guidance program. This included staff development, student guidance and counseling, coordinating the testing program, and many administrative duties.

Evidence of Problem Discrepancy

The project manager became aware of the rising drop-out rate after reviewing a school dropout report, which showed that although the school enrollment declined, the drop-out rate continued to increase. Table 1 shows enrollment and dropout figures for Grades 9-12 from 1985-1986 to 1990-1991 at Lewisville High School. The project manager also noticed that there was no formal procedure for identifying at-risk students.

The number of dropouts at Lewisville High School in 1990-1991 resulted in a loss of state funding because schools received funds on a per-pupil basis. It also resulted in the loss of two teachers who were assigned to other schools because of declining enrollment at Lewisville. Table 1 shows the drop-out rates for Lewisville High School by grade levels. The drop-out rate for Grades 9 and 10 had been greater than Grades 11 and 12 for 4 of 6 years.

Further evidence of the dropout problem was seen in a

Table 1

Enrollment and Dropout Figures for Lewisville High School by Years and Grade

Year	Enrollment	Number of dropouts	Percentage of dropouts	Numbers by grade			
				9	10	11	12
1985-1986	382	14	3.7	4	3	3	4
1986-1987	386	22	5.7	6	4	3	9
1987-1988	380	16	4.2	5	6	4	1
1988-1989	363	17	4.7	7	5	2	3
1989-1990	311	18	5.8	6	7	3	2
1990-1991	277	22	7.2	8	5	3	6

N= 109

target group of 30 students in Grades 9 and 10. A data matrix showed evidence of problems in attendance, failing grades, and low self-esteem (see Appendix A).

A review of attendance reports for the first grading period in the 1991-1992 school year showed that students in the target group missed an average of 4.5 days each during a 45-day grading period. Out of 30 students, 3 had missed over the 10-day maximum allowed by state law for promotion to the next grade; and 30 students missed 58 days from classes due to disciplinary actions. Even though most of these days were spent in the in-school suspension hall, students missed

valuable time in the classroom, which affected their grades (see Appendix A).

The same group of 30 students made 10% of the Ds (26) and 22% of the Fs (51) during the first grading period of the 1991-1992 school year. This accounted for 15% of the total Ds and Fs made by all students during the first grading period (see Appendix A). The group comprised 10% of all students. Table 2 summarizes the number of Ds and Fs made by the target group compared to the total number of Ds and Fs made by all students in the school.

The percentage of Ds and Fs made by the target group was calculated by dividing the total number of Ds and Fs that the

Table 2

Total Number of Ds and Fs by Target Group (August 1991-October 1991)

Group	Number of Ds	%	Number of Fs	%
Target	26	10	51	22
School	278	90	238	78

N=30

target group made by the school total number of Ds and Fs. The school enrollment was 297 students.

The project manager administered the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) to each participant to determine

student attitude toward academics. The SEI was designed to measure evaluative attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family, and personal areas of experience. The SEI was used on a pre/post basis to judge the effectiveness of self-esteem programs. The means for the SEI have generally been in the range of from 70 to 80. Using student position in the group as an index, 33% of the target group fell at or below the mean. The test measured student attitude in four subtests: general self, social self, home-parents, and school academics. The average in the academic area was lowest of the four areas of experiences. One possible cause for low achievement for these students was their low self-concept. The integration of self-esteem activities was added to raise self-esteem in some students and maintain high self-esteem in others (see Appendix A).

Possible Cause Data from the Problem Setting

Rumberger (1987) contended that no one really knows what causes students to drop out of high school. Almost half of all dropouts cited school-related reasons for leaving school, such as disliking school or being expelled or suspended. Although these reasons suggested that students drop out for a variety of reasons, they were unable to reveal the underlying causal factors that led to dropping out. The factors that cause dropouts must be explored before programs can be developed to prevent student dropouts.

Table 3 shows the reasons listed on permanent records of

the 20 students who dropped out of school in the 1990-1991 school year. These records were available from follow-up documentations from the county attendance officers.

Table 3

Number of Responses by Category for Students Who Dropped Out in 1990-1991

Category	Number
1. Work	2
2. Pregnancy	2
3. Expulsion	4
4. No interest	10
5. Family problems	1
6. Other Placement	1

N=20

The reasons that were listed at the time students dropped out of school suggested that students found school boring or missing their needs. The numbers showed that 10 of 20 students dropped out because of school-related reasons.

A survey was conducted in May 1991 to more specifically identify possible causes or reasons for students leaving school before graduation. Survey forms were sent to the parents of all 1990-1991 dropouts. Parent and student survey forms were sent in the same envelope with a self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed (see Appendix B). Of the 20

surveys mailed, 8 student and 8 parent surveys of 20 (40%) were returned. The students cited the following reasons for leaving school: having poor grades, experiencing discipline problems, not being motivated, not receiving school offerings that they needed, working full-time, and disliking the principals. Parents cited the following reasons for their children leaving school: having poor grades, repeating grade levels, working, having problems in school, and getting married. These responses seemed to correspond with the answers given in Table 2 at the time that the students left school (school-related reasons).

Ascher (1987) found ninth grade to be devastating for most students, but it was even more so for those who were at risk. The difficulties of the transition affected most heavily those students who had attendance, discipline, and academic problems. An October 1991 survey (see Appendix C) of 23 teachers, all of whom responded, indicated that 9th and 10th grades would be appropriate grade levels to implement prevention strategies at Lewisville High School. The drop-out rates by grade cited in Table 1 confirmed the need for intervention. Therefore, these grade levels were chosen for a target group.

A data matrix was developed to identify Lewisville High School 9th and 10th grade students who had three or more of the characteristics of potential school dropouts that were listed by the American Association of School Administrators

(1989). The 14 characteristics listed were: age, grade level, academic aptitude, grades, interest in school work, ability to read, parental attitude toward graduation, general adjustment to school, participation in out-of-school activities, school attendance, acceptance by other students, mother's educational level, father's educational level, and health. A beginning group of 30 students in Grades 9 and 10 were identified as meeting at least three of the at-risk criteria (see Appendix A).

Out of the 30 students who were identified as meeting three or more dropout characteristics, 9 repeated first grade. Hill (1989) maintained that children who have been retained even at the kindergarten or first grade level were at risk of dropping out of school. The student data matrix shows that 22 of the 30 students had been retained once, and 4 had been retained in two or more grades. Grade placement and age may have played a major role in the dropout problem.

In October 1991, the 30 students identified as having three or more school dropout characteristics were given a 13-item questionnaire to delve further into their specific reasons for doing poorly in school (see Appendix D).

The 3 categories used to summarize questionnaire responses were: school-related, personal, and economic. School-related were:

1. Fifty-three percent of the students rated school as fair or poor, 30% rated school as good, and 17% rated school

as excellent (Question 1).

2. Students had school friends, but disliked some teachers (Question 2).

3. Ninety percent of 30 students gave positive responses to what they liked about school, but only 7 responses were related to academics (Question 3).

4. Fifty-three percent of 30 students disliked teachers or school work (Question 4).

5. Eighty-six percent of the students felt well-liked by other students (Question 5).

Responses to personal questions were:

1. Parents' and students' expectations after high school were: 42% of parents compared to 53% of students expected students to continue school after high school; 1% of parents compared to 16% of students expected students to enter the military; 16% of parents compared to 13% of students expected students to enter the work force after high school (Questions 6 and 7).

2. Eighty percent of the students did not participate in out-of-school activities (Question 8).

3. Sixty-three percent of the 30 students lived with both parents; 23% lived with relatives; and 13% lived with mothers (Question 10).

Responses to economic questions were:

1. Seventy percent of the students did not work (Question 11).

2. Eighty-seven percent of the mothers finished high school (Question 12).

3. Ninety-seven percent of the fathers finished high school (Question 13).

A majority of the students rated the school fair or poor, and only 7 of 30 students cited academics as something that they liked. Economic hardship did not appear to be a factor. Responses indicated that 87% of the mothers and 97% of the fathers finished high school, and 70% of the students did not work. The lack of economic hardship was also supported by the student data matrix, which shows that only 10 of 30 students received free- or reduced-price lunch (see Appendix A).

Out of 30 students, 11 (one-third) were from single-parent homes (mother), or they lived with grandparents or relatives. This did not seem to be important because there were more students living with both parents. However, a parent survey conducted in October 1991 indicated that parents of the target group had mixed feelings and attitudes about the effectiveness of the school's program in helping their children. The 35 questions on the parent survey were taken from the parent section of the 1991 needs assessment survey that was administered by the state every 3 years to determine school effectiveness. The survey asked parents to rate the school in four areas: positive school climate, frequent monitoring, positive home/school relations, and

school emphasis on academics (see Appendix E). Parent responses to the survey showed that parents disagreed or strongly disagreed most in the areas of monitoring students' progress and academics. Responses in the areas of frequent monitoring indicated that 57% of the parents disagreed or strongly disagreed that students had another chance to learn material (Question 22). Parent responses indicated that 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed that instruction was changed to meet individual student needs (Question 24). In academics, 36% disagreed or strongly disagreed that teachers explained classwork clearly (Question 26). Twenty-seven percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child could do homework by himself (Question 34). The responses indicated that parents were most concerned about what teachers and the school were doing to help their child. Their responses also indicated that they wanted more support in monitoring progress and academics.

The number of failing grades was evidence of negative teacher attitude about making a student feel successful (see Appendix F). The grade distribution report showed that there were 238 failures and 278 Ds from August 1991-October 1991. Years of teacher experience did not seem to be significant. Teachers who had taught for many years gave as many failing grades as beginning teachers.

Another observation was that 56% of the Fs given were given by major subject area teachers such as English or

mathematics. Teachers play a major role in student success. Students who experience problems in English and mathematics seldom find success in other subject areas. Some teachers needed training in understanding the at-risk student before they could help them.

In attempting to identify the possible causes for the increasing number of dropouts at Lewisville High School, the project manager had to develop a strategy for identifying dropouts. After identifying students for the target group, the project manager found four prime causes of students' problems. The first and second possible causes were poor attendance and poor grades as evidenced by the student grade records and school attendance reports. The third possible cause of dropouts at Lewisville High School was lack of student motivation evidenced by the student questionnaire and parent survey.

The fourth cause of students dropping out was the lack of self-esteem. The project manager administered the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory to the 30 target group students in October 1991. The inventory was administered individually. The mean of the distribution of self-esteem scores for the group was found to be 68.7. The mean was comparable to that reported by the adult form of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1991), that found a mean of 66.7 for students ranging in age from 16-19 years old.

Examination of subtest scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory showed that students scored lowest on the school-academics subtest. Table 4 shows the subtest means and the Total Self-Mean.

Table 4

Pretest Mean Scores for Four Subtests and Total Self-Mean Scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory for Project Group 1 and Group 2

Subtests	Group 1 mean	Group 2 mean	Total mean
General self	36.80	38.64	37.72
Social self-peers	12.68	14.86	13.77
Home-parents	10.82	12.16	11.49
School-academics	8.40	9.44	8.92
Total self	68.70	75.10	71.90

N = 58

Notes. Maximum possible scores are as follows: General-self, 52; social self-peers, 16; home-parents, 16; school-academics, 16; and total self, 100.

The scores indicated that self-esteem was not a problem with the target group. However, Eysenck's study (cited in Lawrence, 1987) stated that people react to frustration in terms of their basic personality type so that the introverted student will appear relatively apathetic whereas the extroverted student will appear boastful or arrogant.

Because the target group represented students who were at-risk, the self-esteem inventory scores could compensate for feelings of inferiority. Testing behavior could have been mistaken for high self-esteem.

The school-academics subtest was the lowest of the mean scores, which was an indication that students were most discouraged about their ability to succeed in school. The mean score on the academic subtest was 8.92 of a possible 16.

Parents are the single most important factor in determining a young child's developing self-image. As a child gets older, friends and school will become increasingly important. In the school setting, students are influenced by new situations, activities, and individuals. If a student has low self-esteem, academic demands and school relationships can be problematic (Drescher, 1992). The project manager felt that new experiences and activities could increase the self-esteem in some members of the group.

The results of a study in the state of Maine revealed that rural dropouts rated their schools lower on all items than rural stayers (McCaul, 1988). The lower self-esteem of dropouts may be a result of negative school experiences. Rural dropouts also reported getting a job or not getting along with teachers as their causes for dropping out. Changing the attitudes of at-risk students and building esteem will be difficult and hard to measure, but these are major needs of at-risk students.

Based on the Coopersmith Inventory, the mean of the target group was higher than the mean for the test (68.7 group mean compared to 66.7 test mean). After considering the research questions on the reliability and validity of esteem assessments, the behavior of different personalities on self-esteem inventories, the influence of school relationships on older students, and the low ranking subtest score in academics on the Coopersmith Inventory, the project manager saw a practical need for the at-risk target group to experience activities that build self-esteem. Lewisville would benefit from a program that builds self-esteem and increases academic success. According to Drescher (1992), the most reliable method of assessing self-esteem is to get to know a student personally.

Literature Documenting the Problem and Possible Causes

Based on the project manager's observations, there was no system developed to identify at-risk students before they reached the age to legally drop out of Lewisville High School. A systematic approach was needed to determine which students were more at risk than others.

Sagor (1990) cited three dominant theories: Being at-risk is the result of clinical pathology; being at-risk is a direct consequence of developmental deficits; and being at-risk is created by imperfections in our organizational structures. If one believed that being at-risk was caused by developmental deficits, then a developmental program would be

recommended to teach the missing or weak skills. If one believed that being at-risk was created by the imperfections of the organization, then making appropriate changes in the organizational structure of the school could alter the self-esteem building capacity of that institution, thereby affecting students interpersonal interactions.

Teacher training and sensitivity to at-risk students were factors that researchers thought would help. Most teachers felt ill-prepared to deal with the problems that were associated with at-risk students. Fitzgerald (1990) observed that teachers spend time and energy with students and should be able to identify specific characteristics identified with the potential school dropout. Teachers play a major role in student self-esteem. Nave (1990) noted that there are many educational practices that are highly correlated with student self-esteem.

Even though involving parents can be an effective step toward keeping students in school, it is one of the most difficult practices to implement successfully, especially at the secondary level. Most of the methods of investigation of parent involvement at the secondary level are exploratory. Parents at the secondary level receive little or no guidance about effective courses of action to consider (Gotts, 1983).

Gotts (1983) also found that parents at the secondary level were not less interested than elementary level parents in how their children were faring in school. His research

revealed a wealth of preschool and elementary studies, whereas scientifically conducted studies at the secondary level were scarce. He stated that principals at this level often generated plans to improve schools' effectiveness in practicing home-school relations.

Lueder (1988), in his strategy referred to as the Situational Involvement Model, assumed that empowered families act out a variety of parenting roles, and they are generally involved with the education of their children. On the other hand, parents of at-risk children felt disconnected and powerless. These families needed special assistance in order for them to become active partners in the education of their children. The project manager had to find ways to involve parents.

Chapter 2

Setting

Demographics and Organization Characteristics

Lewisville High School was part of the Chester, South Carolina, school district. It was in a small rural, industrial area east of Chester County. The Lewisville attendance area, which included Fort Lawn, Richburg, Lando, Edgemoor and parts of Chester, had a population of 30,800 people in 1990.

The school's 1986 10-year evaluation (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 1986) showed the Lewisville attendance area to be 51.9% rural, 39.4% small town and 8.6% suburban. Even though there had been a substantial growth in industry, the unemployment rate was 14.6% for the Lewisville attendance area compared to only 9.5% for Chester County. Surveys from the same evaluation indicated that 24.2% of the student body came from single-parent homes.

The student population at Lewisville High School was 45% Black and 55% White. All students spoke English. The school was small (297 students), which helped to make relationships personal. The faculty and staff included 2 administrators, 18 full-time teachers, 5 part-time teachers, 1 librarian, 1 guidance director, and support personnel.

The faculty was comprised of 16 female and 7 male

teachers. Of the 23 faculty members, 53% held advanced degrees, and the librarian held a doctoral degree. There were only four Black teachers. The librarian, the counselor, and the assistant principal were also Black.

As guidance director, my responsibilities included staff development, coordination of testing, guidance and counseling, student class scheduling, generating report cards, student records, Technology Preparation (Tech-prep) Representative, club sponsor, student-enrichment coordinator, and any other assigned duties.

Culture of the School, School System, and Community

The Chester County School District had 6,500 students in four kindergarten programs, seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools in September 1991. Lewisville High School was one of three high schools in Chester County. Chester High School had 1,300 students and Great Falls High School had 310 students, slightly more than Lewisville's 297 students. Both Lewisville High School and Great Falls High School were 15 or more miles from Chester High School and the central office. This distance caused some duplication of services and limitations on funds that could be used for other programs.

Students from Lewisville High and Great Falls High Schools traveled to the Chester High School for vocational courses. This required one-hour travel time and most of their lunch period for a 2 or 3 hour vocational course. This

put Lewisville (and Great Falls) students at a disadvantage because they lost one unit credit each year in order to take a vocational course.

The South Carolina Employment Security Commission (1990) showed Chester County as having low income. It rated sixth highest in the state for unemployment with a per capita income of $10,607. The Lewisville area was somewhat similar to the county.

The county was supported primarily by the textile industry and agriculture. Economic growth contributors included manufacturers of wood products, fabricated metals, chemicals, glass and glass fiber, communications cable, home furnishings, household products, electronics and construction industries, and distribution centers. Lewisville was fortunate to have most of the new industrial growth in its area. Yet many of the jobs went to people outside the area.

Chester County lay within a 50-mile radius of seven colleges and universities and two technical schools. Those closest were Winthrop College (a 4 year institution), a branch campus of the University of South Carolina, and York Technical College. These institutions provided affordable higher educational needs for many students.

According to the Chester County Financial Director (J. T. Witherspoon, personal communication, May 20, 1991), Chester ranked approximately 14th of 91 school districts in the state in teacher salary supplement. Of the schools'

professional personnel, 70% held advanced degrees. Yet, Chester School District was not viewed by local educational leaders as being as progressive as surrounding school districts based on state comparison reports. Some of the reasons that Chester County was viewed as less progressive were poor school buildings and low educational goals attainment.

Internal Influences of Potential Impact on Intervention

The project manager used a state-administered survey as an indicator of the way teachers felt about Lewisville High School. All schools in South Carolina must conduct a needs assessment to be used in developing the school improvement plan for a 3 year cycle. All teachers must be surveyed; 10-20% of the student body and 10-20% of the parents must be randomly selected to complete the surveys. Each survey had six subgroups to match the six indicators of effective schools (South Carolina Department of Education, 1984) which were: (a) instructional leadership of principal, (b) emphasis on academics, (c) high expectations, (d) positive school learning climate,
(e) frequent monitoring, and (f) positive home-school relations.

Teachers at Lewisville High School had traditionally been supportive of programs that rewarded students. In a 1991 needs assessment survey, 18 of 24 teachers responded that each student had an opportunity for success. Also, 18

of 24 teachers responded that unsuccessful students got extra help from teachers. Teachers were supportive of an "Effort Roll" that was developed in 1990 to encourage students who improved their grades even if they did not make the A/B Honor Roll. I think that teachers will support any effort to improve the well-being of students. If a dropout prevention program was developed, there might be strong support from teachers. Teacher support for the program was a facilitating influence.

An inexperienced administrator was assigned to Lewisville during the 1990-1991 school year. Of the teachers surveyed, 24% responded negatively when questioned about the effectiveness of the overall instructional leadership of the principal, and 50% responded that the principal did not monitor teachers' implementation of curriculum appropriately (South Carolina Department of Education, 1991). This was an indication that teachers wanted to contribute to learning. They could become facilitators, if strategies provided help for students, but the project might become a constraint if teachers viewed it as an added responsibility. The activities of the at-risk project could also become constraints if the administrator became contradicting in decision making and goals setting.

The State Needs Assessment Survey (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1991) was used by school districts in South Carolina to evaluate and develop strategies for

school improvements. Each school received a report from the State Department of Education showing the results. Student responses on the State Needs Assessment Survey (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1991) were taken from a random sample of students in Grades 9-12. A total of 15% of the student body were surveyed (45 students). Table 5 shows a comparison of student surveys from the three high schools in Chester County. Forty-five of 297 students from Lewisville High School, 102 of 310 students from Great Falls High School, and 82 of 1,300 students from Chester High School were asked to complete the survey about their schools. Results on Chester High School did not represent a good comparison to Lewisville High School because of Chester's size and location. Great Falls High School, like Lewisville, was a small, rural high school with similar characteristics. Great Falls' students rated their school higher than Lewisville students on all questions, but there were greater differences in three areas. Lewisville High School students showed fewer positive responses than Great Falls High School students in three areas: (a) the school places emphasis on academics, (b) positive school climate, and (c) positive home-school relationship. These areas were consistent with the possible causes found in the student questionnaire. They were also consistent with student self-evaluation on the SEI subtest on student academics. This could be a constraining factor if the random sample is consistent with the feelings

of most students at Lewisville.

Table 5

Comparison of Student Responses on the 1991 SC Needs Assessment for Lewisville High School (LHS), Great Falls High School (GFHS), and Chester High School (CHS)

Positive Responses	LHS %	GFHS %	CHS %
Principal: positive instructional leader	56	57	58
School places emphasis on academics	58	67	54
School sets high expectations	56	57	45
Positive school climate	29	38	29
Teachers provide monitoring	60	63	50
Positive home-school relationship	39	52	43

One advantage that Lewisville High School enjoyed was its small classes. The average class-teacher ratio was 17 to 1, with many classes as small as 8 to 1. Small classes were advantageous in checking on at-risk students individually. Because of the small enrollment and limited number of sections, at-risk students could not be grouped for group counseling unless they were pulled from classes.

Computer-generated reports for attendance and discipline were helpful in keeping check on targeted students because reports could be updated daily and parents could be notified if students were absent.

The district policy required that students repeat grade levels based on English and mathematics requirements as well as the number of units earned. This policy was also state mandated. Each school district in South Carolina set its own promotion policies under the guidelines of state policy. Chester County required a student to have four units or credits to be promoted from the 9th grade to the 10th. One credit in language arts and one credit in mathematics were included in the four credits. Students who did not earn the necessary number of units repeated the grade level until the units were made up either in summer school or during the next school year. The project manager's observations indicated that a greater number of students repeated 9th grade because of the math and/or English requirement than at any other grade level. There were four students repeating the 9th grade level during the 1991-1992 school year (see Appendix A). If students continue to repeat grade levels, they may become discouraged.

External Influences of Potential Impact on Intervention

The parents of Lewisville High students were concerned about the quality of education for their children. In a 1991 Needs Assessment Survey (South Carolina State Department of Education, 1991) to determine how parents felt about high expectations of the school, 12 of 23 parents agreed that people in Lewisville High School really cared about how much students learn. This bare majority was a temporary

constraining factor, but the project manager felt that parents would cooperate with the school to keep their children in school.

A dropout-prevention program for at-risk students would not cost the taxpayer any extra money. It would involve parents. There were some funds available for such programs in the county budget.

Personnel from the Chester County Schools District Office submitted state grant proposals for funds to sponsor programs for at-risk students on the elementary level and the middle school level. This was evidence that the school and community recognized the dropout problem. The aim of the grants was for the at-risk population to stay in school. Hardly anything was being done on the secondary level for student retention except forced attendance, which did not work after the legal dropout age of 17. It could take years to see the results of an elementary program to prevent dropouts. A high school program was needed.

The surrounding community could be a facilitating factor for materials and personnel who were willing to help. The Ropes course at Winthrop College was a physical, outdoor development course that challenged students to perform problem-solving feats that attempted to build self-esteem. The program got its name from the use of ropes for safety purposes. School Intervention Program (SCIP) was a county school intervention program that assisted all schools with

materials that Lewisville High School could not afford to purchase. York Technical College in Rock Hill, South Carolina, had continuing education courses that might interest students.

A possible facilitating factor was that Lewisville High School was a small school that was surrounded by a growth of industry. All of these plants were within 10 miles of the school.

The Katherine Plant, which employed 900+ people, recently reported that fewer than 50% of their employees had high school diplomas or the reading-thinking skills to compete for jobs that required high technology. Their work force was declining in the skill level required for technology. Their concern was that schools were not productive in teaching reading and mathematics for high technology jobs (D. Miller, personal communication, April 15, 1991).

Representatives of other companies (Springs Mills, Inc., Sequa, The Haddon House, and Schumacker) had visited classes to make students aware of the need for a high school diploma and postsecondary training. Some of these companies had "no diploma-no hire" policies. They wanted to help students stay in school to improve their skills.

Chapter 3

Review of the Literature

Area 1: General Dropout Problem

In her answer to why kids drop out of school, Remmes (1989) said that schools cannot assume the entire responsibility. It is not only unethical, it is demoralizing. Everyone is to blame for a child's failure: parents, employees, teachers, and counselors.

Rose-Gold (1991) said that there are special considerations for program development in small, rural school districts. Large districts have the enrollment numbers to support specialized projects (teen parenting programs, in-school suspension classes, vocational programs, specific issue group counseling). Small schools will need to design a more generic "smorgasbord" approach. The at-risk population will most likely have a wide range of problems; intervention techniques will need to address each individual and yet be general. Rose-Gold's suggested intervention strategies that may work at Lewisville are: (a) networking with outside social service agencies; (b) group counseling in generic-issue groups and recreational outings because of the great distances (miles) that separate students from their friends; (c) family counseling to establish positive home relationships; and (d) academic tutoring-counseling

combinations such as one-on-one peer tutoring, teacher tutoring, or reversal peer tutoring where at-risk students tutor younger children.

Rumberger (1987) stated that different kinds of students drop out for different reasons. A comprehensive strategy will need to address all of these factors. The first strategy would address the academic needs of the students. The second would focus on student need for individual care. The third would involve early identification. Rumberger's strategies included: (a) different programs designed for different types of dropouts; (b) an appropriate mix of educational and noneducational services in each program; (c) accurate and timely identification of students with a high risk of dropping out; and (d) programs designed for early prevention, late prevention, and recovery.

Lewisville High School had neither written policies nor procedures for identifying at-risk students. Rumberger's (1987) comprehensive approach served as a guideline for selecting and developing strategies for working with at-risk students at Lewisville High School.

Finn (1989) described two models for understanding dropping out as a developmental process that may begin in the earliest grades. The frustration-self-esteem model identifies school failure as the starting point in a cycle that may culminate in the student's rejecting, or being rejected, by school. The participation-identification model

focuses on students' involvement in schooling, with both behavioral and emotional components.

According to the frustration-esteem model, the student's impaired self-view results from frustration and embarrassment. Academic self-concept is more highly correlated with achievement and grades than are other aspects of self-concept. The frustration-esteem model does not identify specific school practices that are related to improvement in student grades. There are alternative ways to improve student behavior such as separate schools, revised disciplinary procedures, positive teacher attitudes, teaching practices that involve students in the learning process more than traditional approaches, and curricula tailored to the needs of these students.

The participation-identification model supports the idea that successful students develop a sense of identification with school, and less successful students do not, or not to the same extent. The association of classroom participation with academic performance was supported by research from the Perry Preschool Project (Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart, Barnett, Epstein, and Weikart, 1984) in which children were followed to age 19. The Perry findings indicated that the extent to which a youngster identified with school was related to such behaviors as absenteeism, truancy, dropping out, and delinquency.

A review of existing programs, conducted by the National

Dropout Prevention Center (1991) described several programs. Operation Success was a program in Spartanburg County, South Carolina. Ninth graders who met the dropout profile were identified. Students received intensive counseling services; grades and attendance were reviewed frequently; tutoring services were provided through faculty tutors; mentors were provided through business partnerships; and field trips were planned after each grading period. Evaluation results were not available. The program was not listed in the dropout prevention focus data base as of June 1993.

Central School-Alternative Education was located in Greenwood School District 50, South Carolina (National Dropout Prevention Center, 1991). Students in Grades 9-10 who were experiencing academic problems as evidenced by truancy, drug involvement, suspensions, failing, low self-esteem, physical-sexual-psychological abuse, or economical disadvantage were chosen for this program. Students earned a total of six units each year. Students also engaged in social skill development activities and small group counseling programs. This project is still in the dropout prevention focus data base as of June 1993, but the director of the project could not be reached for evaluation results.

The Collaborative Dropout Prevention Project took place in Memphis, Tennessee (National Dropout Prevention Center, 1991). Students in Grades K-12 were identified by

principals, social workers, teachers, and counselors according to specific criteria such as: (a) identification of dropouts, (b) a re-entry program, (c) early intervention that provided a process of acceleration to erase previous retentions, and (d) a computerized system for tracking and identifying at-risk students. Evaluation results of this project are not available. The project was discontinued in 1991 because it was no longer funded.

The Renaissance Program was a low cost program for 9th graders at A. S. Johnston High School in Austin, Texas (National Dropout Prevention Center, 1991). Ninth graders with below average reading ability, based on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, were registered in reading classes. The program components included activities on stress and time management, motivation, self-esteem, study skills, peer pressure and decision making as well as curriculum support. This project was listed in the dropout prevention focus data base, but there has not been an update since April 1991.

Area 2: Student Involvement

The impact of high school size on high school drop-out rate was investigated using the school data of the High School and Beyond Study of the National Center of the Educational Statistics (Pittman & Haughwout). The findings indicated that school size had not been causally linked to the high school drop-out rate in the past, but it had been found to be associated with several characteristics that were

related. Among these factors were student opportunity, level of participation, overall satisfaction with school, and the quality of the school environment. This article reported the research findings of many researchers who debated large/small school effects on the high school drop-out rate. According to the authors, large school settings enlarge the number of individuals who share the same school environment and who compete for the same opportunities to participate in school activities. Small schools provided more activities, and students received a greater diversity of experience. The level of participation was the percentage of students who participated in different activities. Increased participation in school activities reduced the likelihood of a student dropping out of school. Overall satisfaction and quality of school environment were factors that contributed to students staying in school (Pittman & Haughwout, 1987).

DeRidder (1991) noted that being suspended or expelled was one of the top three school-related reasons for dropping out. Receiving poor marks and having to repeat a grade created feelings of alienation and low self-esteem; disciplinary problems tended to result.

Students who had been held back a grade were more likely to drop out than those who had not. The best programs were designed to help students by identifying and remedying problems. What most schools found useful was helping the student to become involved in the learning process positively

through successful experience.

Ruby and Law (1987) found that in a majority of cases, dropping out of school resulted from lack of interest and from academic failure, which developed from negative attitudes. High school students who were identified as potential dropouts had reached 16, the age of decision. Intervention programs should concentrate on keeping the students in school until they have reached their maximum educational potential and/or have acquired the life skills to become productive members of society. Suggested in-school interventions were:

1. Establish alternative programs for students who continue to possess characteristics of the school dropout.

2. Provide a general career educational program.

3. Provide individual counseling opportunities that address specific areas that may increase one's chances of becoming a dropout (p. 16).

Suggested out-of-school interventions are:

1. Offer parent training programs to enhance effective parenting skills and improve home-school communication.

2. Contact community/civic leaders to establish work/study placements.

3. Contact agencies/individuals who are trained to provide intervention programs for specific problems.

4. Establish programs to address needs of students who have dropped out of school (pp. 16-17).

Alderman (1990) stated that experiencing success is not enough to ensure motivation for at-risk students. She developed four "Links" for helping students become successful. These Links developed an increased sense of self-worth. Link 1 was the setting of goals for performance. Link 2 was to develop learning strategies that work. Link 3 was a successful experience (measure of success). Link 4 was attribution for success (attribut success to their personal effort or abilities).

Area 3: Teacher and Parent Involvement

Knowledgeable helpers of at-risk students need to accept and adjust to the trend in education that change, in basic curriculum and many teachers, will take too long for thousands of youth and will lead to counterproductive levels of frustration for concerned helpers. "Small wins" and dropout prevention strategies may work. The basic principle of small wins was that no single strategy will always be successful, but one should be thankful for small accomplishments from dropout prevention strategies. The small wins approach was adopted to set the stage for collaborative efforts between student and mentor. Identify students, have the students set goals, deal with rules, exams, and teachers to reach graduation (Downing & Harrison, Jr., 1990).

Dorrell (1989) stated that 95% of the Missouri schools did not provide in-service training for professional staff

members in the area of dropout prevention. If professional staff members are not actively involved in an attempt to advise and help at-risk students in the educational environment, a valuable asset for dropout prevention is lost.

Addis (1989) said that classroom teachers have the opportunity and responsibility to magnetize individual at-risk students to the school and to minimize the number of dropouts.

Black (1991) cited research about the school's role in student self-esteem. Parents and others in the home have the most influence on a child's self-esteem. Schools have the power to enhance or hinder students' self-esteem through policies, curriculum and instruction, institutional climate, and teacher personality and attitudes. The best way for a school to have a positive effect on students' self-esteem is to foster an environment in which individuals are always respected and valued. Many schools in the Elmira, New York City School District are offering workshops for parents, who have the most influence on their children's self-esteem (Black, 1991).

Chavkin and Williams (1989) stated that the majority of parents from large, medium, and small communities give four reasons for less involvement in high schools: (a) parents may not understand some of the courses taken in high school, (b) teachers don't ask parents to be involved in school as much, (c) there are not as many parent-teacher conferences,

and (d) there are not as many Parent Teacher Association (PTA) activities for high school parents.

Lueder (1988) found parents of at-risk children often feel disconnected and powerless. These families will need special assistance in order for them to become active partners in the education of their children. He suggested that the family, as a supporter, can participate in parent/student/teacher conferences; volunteer to assist teachers, administrators, and children in classrooms; participate in booster clubs, and PTA; organize and conduct campus projects; and chaperone field trips. Sarkees (1989), in agreement with Lueder, suggested that inviting parents of at-risk students to become involved in the education of their children was one approach to improving the chances that these children would stay in school.

Warner (1991) reported that the Indianapolis Public Schools developed a systematic parent involvement program called, "Parents In Touch," that enables parents to stay in touch with the schools and become partners in the education of their children. Suggestions from Warner such as Dial-A-Teacher and Homework Hotline were too expensive for the Lewisville High School program. However, at the high school level, the materials provided by Parents In Touch included a student folder and a course record, which could be kept on each of the participants with teacher assistance. The Parent Focus Series was a parent education program offering 90

special workshops, which schools might request from Parents In Touch. This series could be handled on a smaller scale at Lewisville High School. Community agencies could assist. Workshops could be offered during the day or at night with child care provided.

Area 4: Business Mentors

Smink (1990) said that one caring adult can make a big difference in a young person's life. Mentoring programs take many approaches; some are business or community oriented, others focus on work and careers, still others use school personnel. But their goals are similar--to motivate and equip the student to finish school and plan for the future. Smink described a mentor as any caring person who develops an ongoing, one-on-one relationship with someone in need. The role of a mentor in dropout prevention can be to provide access to and acquaint the student with values, customs, resources, and people of different occupational and social worlds. Mentoring should not be an independent intervention. But, mentoring could be an important tool in an effort to raise self-esteem, increase academic achievement, foster good work habits, explore career options, and ultimately, keep these students in school until graduation.

Incentives were commonly used to promote change. Grades were the most common motivators in an educational setting. Now, incentives play a role in keeping students in school. An analysis by the National Dropout Prevention Center (Seone

& Smink, 1991) revealed that incentives could be grouped according to four basic foci: attendance, education completion, academic achievement, and personal improvement. Incentives aimed at attendance were important because loss of too many school days could affect students' achievement levels and their motivation to stay in school. Some approaches to increase attendance were in operation at Peabody High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Seone & Smink, 1991). Students who did not miss more than one day during the semester could qualify for prizes, such as: stereo tape players, television sets, tote bags, and cash. Peabody High School's attendance rate became among the best in the city. Attendance incentives were also used to encourage students to attend tutoring sessions.

Incentives for education completion encouraged students to complete school in order to pursue higher education or to join the workforce. Eugene Lang's "I Have a Dream Foundation" was an example of such a program. In 1981, Lang promised to pay the college expenses for a sixth-grade class in a Harlem public school (Seoane & Smink, 1991). Many similar programs have spread throughout the United States with sponsorship by wealthy individuals. Many fast-food businesses have joined in offering incentives to students. For example, Burger King and McDonalds offered coupons to area schools to reward academics. Pizza Hut also sponsored "Book It," a literacy program.

Academic achievement incentives motivated students to improve or maintain academic performance. The Goal Card Program was started by the Nuclear Fuel Services of Erwin in Tennessee (Seone & Smink, 1991). During the 1989-1990 school year, this program offered 26,000 students a chance to meet their academic goals. Students in Grades 1 through 12 were eligible. The card holders received discounts from area merchants.

Personal factors, such as teenage pregnancies and unstable home environments, also impacted academic achievement and attendance. One example of a personal improvement incentive was the New Orleans Public School System's operation of a school-based health center (Seone & Smink, 1991). Another program in the Pittsburgh Public Schools used various incentives from cash awards to other awards such as academy jackets for positive behaviors (Seoane & Smink, 1991).

Chapter 4

Methods

The Solution Strategies

Literature reviews and interviews suggested that there are no solutions to preventing students from dropping out of school that will work for every school. The great challenge for educators is how to provide educational experiences positive enough to change the lives of at-risk youth (Wehlage, Rutter, & Turnbaugh, 1987). School size and student characteristics for Lewisville High School convinced the Major Applied Research Project (MARP) manager that a comprehensive approach might work best to prevent at-risk students from leaving school. The emphases for this project were on three major areas that the research has proven helpful in keeping students in school: (a) identifying at-risk students and seeking strategies that work to prevent dropouts, (b) involving teachers and parents, and (c) involving business mentors.

Two cohorts of target students were identified for the project. Students who met 3 or more of 14 characteristics (which were discussed in the possible cause data from the problem setting) were selected for the project. The project manager initially identified 30 students (Group 1) who met 3 or more characteristics of dropouts based on the 14

characteristics.

Stanley, Goldstein, and Bry (1976) suggested that twice as many students as needed for the program be identified. By June 15, 1992, the project manager identified 28 additional students (Group 2) who met three or more characteristics of dropouts. These 28 brought the total number of students in the target group to 58 (see Appendix G).

One of the Group 2 students had repeated first grade. The student data matrix also showed that 7 of the 28 students had been retained once, and two had been retained more than once. Eleven of 28 students received free or reduced-price lunch.

In September 1992, the Group 2 students were given the same 13-item questionnaire as Group 1 students (see Appendix D). Tallies of responses for Group 2 are indicated in brackets in Appendix D. The three categories (school-related, personal, and economic) used to summarize questionnaire responses for Group 2 indicated that these students had school-related and personal problems.

Parents' surveys (see Appendix E) were sent to parents of Group 2. Eighteen of 28 (65%) parent surveys were returned. A comparison of Group 1 and Group 2 indicated that Group 1, based on the number of characteristics that they met, were more at risk than Group 2.

The project manager focused change in three areas as suggested by the problem discrepancy and possible cause

analysis: (a) improved student attendance, (b) improved student grades, and (c) enhanced student self-esteem through parent/teacher involvement.

Activities, group sessions, and projects were conducted during the school day because students have limited resources and opportunities to participate in anything outside of school as evidenced by the student questionnaire in Appendix D. Surveys from teachers indicated a concern and willingness to improve student participation. Finn (1989) cited developing a sense of identification and participation with the school as a means of keeping students interested in school.

Rumberger (1987) stated that students have different reasons for dropping out of school. The student matrix showed reasons for students not being successful in school. The comprehensive approach gave the project manager and others the challenge of finding ways to deal with individual problems that students had. A prescribed individual plan for each student was a possible solution to improving grades. The target group made 22% of all Fs and 10% of all Ds during the first school grading period. Peer tutoring and business mentors assisted in helping students work on basic skills. A computer lab, housed in the library, allowed students to work independently. The only limitation on scheduling students for more assistance was that students had no free time from classes. Study hall assignments were few because there was

no one to monitor students; therefore, students were assigned more classes. Using community volunteers was possible, but limited.

Considering the limited funds at Lewisville and recent state funding cuts, the most advantageous funding strategy for a program for at-risk students was to use available resources. Still, the individual attention given to parents and students had appeal to an alienated group.

A comprehensive approach to dropout prevention was needed to meet the individual and varied needs of each student. Students at Lewisville were assisted through group and individual counseling sessions on generic-issue subjects as recommended by Rose-Gold (1991). Field trip experiences and project participation helped to enhance self-esteem. Constant monitoring of attendance, discipline, and academic progress was a requisite. Because teachers play a major role in keeping students in school, teacher in-service training was continuous. Teachers also served as advisors as well as participants in the Adopt-A-Student Program. Parents participated through workshops and personal contacts. Community and support services assisted in informing parents about resources that were available to them. Business personnel acted as mentors and speakers.

Implementation Design

Objectives

Terminal Objective 1: As a result of project

implementation, the school-wide dropout rate will decrease from 7.2% in 1990-1991 to 6.0% in 1991-1992 and 4.0% in June of 1993.

Process Objective 1: By the end of the first nine weeks of the 1991-1992 school year, a system for identifying at-risk students will be established.

Process Objective 2: By June 1993, parents of targeted at-risk students will respond that they are better informed about the school.

Process Objective 3: After in-service training, Lewisville's teachers will be able to identify the characteristics, causes, and problems of at-risk students as evidenced by teacher in-service evaluation.

Process Objective 4: By June 1993, students will participate in a minimum of three field trips.

Process Objective 5: By June 1993, at least three business partners will commit to mentorship of the program for at-risk students.

Terminal Objective 2: As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, a review of the fourth grading period (June 1993) will show a reduction in the number of target group absences from 33% in January 1992 to 23% in June 1993 based on school attendance reports.

Process Objective 1: Monitor school attendance reports daily.

Process Objective 2: Establish incentives and rewards

for improved school attendance.

Terminal Objective 3: As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, a review of the fourth grading period (June 1993) will show a reduction in the number of target group Ds and Fs from 15% in January 1992 to 10% in June 1993 based on the school grade report.

Process Objective 1: Arrange peer tutoring for students.

Process Objective 2: Establish incentives and rewards for improved grades.

Process Objective 3: Closely monitor grades at 45-day intervals with feedbacks to students and parents.

Process Objective 4: Set up and direct parent-teacher conferences.

Terminal Objective 4: Self-esteem: As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, participants will increase the school-academic subtest mean on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory from 8.92 to 11.0.

Process Objective 1: By October, a Prescribed Evaluation Plan (PEP) profile will be developed for each student.

Process Objective 2: Volunteer teachers will choose a student from the target group to offer support and friendship through the Adopt-A-Student Program.

Process Objective 3: Students will attend small group sessions with community speakers.

Process Objective 4: Students will participate in state-sponsored workshops and projects.

Process Objective 5: Parents will contribute to student self-esteem by attending parent workshops and teacher/counselor contacts.

Limitations

The project manager's biggest limitations were money and time. There had been budget cuts in most school districts, which limited appropriations for special programs. The time limitations were overcome with strict time management, but unexpected responsibilities altered the project manager's plans. Some students chose not to participate after the program began.

Chapter 5

Results

Overview of Problem and Setting

During 3 academic years 1988-1989 to 1990-1991, the drop-out rate at Lewisville High School increased 1% each year from 4.2% in 1988-1989 to 7.2% in 1990-1991 as evidenced by attendance reports and student grade records.

Lewisville High School is a small school (297 students) in a rural, industrial area in east Chester County, South Carolina. The student population was 45% Black and 55% White. All students spoke English. The faculty and staff included 2 administrators, 18 full-time teachers, 5 part-time teachers, 1 librarian, 1 guidance director, and support personnel.

Original Action Plan

The purpose of the project was to implement a program for at-risk students in the 9th and 10th grades at Lewisville High School. A comprehensive approach was used to implement this program with the following objectives:

1. Lower the 7.2% school drop-out rate in 1990-1991 to a drop-out rate of 6.0% in 1991-1992 and 4.0% in June 1993.

2. Reduce the absences of the target group from 33% in 1990-1991 to 23% in June 1993.

3. Reduce the target group's number of Ds and Fs from

15% to 10%.

4. Increase the target group's school-academic subtest mean on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory from 8.92 to 11.0.

The program strategies included group and individual sessions with students, teacher and parent involvement, peer tutoring, and business-partnership mentoring. The target group was 9th- and 10th- grade students who had characteristics of potential high school dropouts.

The project implementation phase began January 1992 and continued until June 1993.

Chronology of Implementation Activities

In January 1992, the project manager used enrollment and dropout figures (see Table 1) as evidence that Lewisville High School needed intervention to decrease the number of students who dropped out each year.

Preliminary preparation was done the semester before the project began. Parent/student survey letters (see Appendix B) were sent in May 1991 to students who dropped out of school during the previous year (1990-1991) to determine their reasons for dropping out of school. Data gathered through the use of this survey are reported in Table 3. During the months of August 1991-October 1991, the project manager evaluated 9th- and 10th- grade student records to identify at-risk students. Thirty students were identified for Group 1. The student matrix was formed to

summarize the characteristics of Group 1 students (see Appendix A).

In November 1991, the summary results for at-risk Group 1 were used as a basis for selling teachers on the project. Although the teachers were open-minded about the prospect of improving attendance, grades, and self-esteem of at-risk students, some expressed concern about the amount of time involved for teachers. The project manager assured them that this would be a cooperative effort from many people.

With verbal assurance that teachers would assist with the project, the project manager surveyed teachers (see Appendix C) to get more ideas that would improve project strategies. This survey produced the following list of ideas that might benefit students: (a) abide by strict attendance laws, (b) lobby to stop employment of students after 10 p.m., (c) place students in small classes with upbeat instruction, (d) provide a stronger vocational program, (e) provide rewards, (f) educate teachers on how to motivate and improve self-esteem, and (g) identify at-risk students earlier.

The project manager sought to reduce the drop-out rate by emphasizing three major areas that research had proven helpful in keeping students in school: (a) student-focused activities, (b) teacher and parent strategies, and (c) business-mentor strategies. The following is a chronology of implementation activities in each area. Many activities were continued throughout the period of the project.

Area 1: Student-Focused Activities

Each at-risk student is a unique individual with unique barriers to school success. These students do not respond well to impersonal programs (Hamby, 1989). They do respond to individualized, personally delivered solutions.

The school principal and the project manager sent letters to parents to ask their permission for students to participate. This was necessary because students would be seen by people who were not members of the school staff. Parents were informed that students would work with mentors, hear speakers, go on trips, and participate in special activities (see Appendix H).

PEP Club

The PEP Club was organized in January 1992 and continued through June 1993. Instead of calling the group at-risk; a PEP Club was started to form a cohesive group that would work toward the project objectives. This activity was originally listed as a process for reducing the drop-out rates, however, the project manager placed it under Terminal Objective 4, which states that participants will show improved self-esteem. The club proved to be an avenue for grouping students for meetings and presenting speakers who stressed self-improvement or self-esteem.

The idea of the PEP Club originated from the acronym IEP (Individualized Education Plan), which is a well-known format used to write strategies for individualized instruction for

handicapped students. At-risk students with varied problems needed the same individualized help that handicapped students receive. The PEP Club served as an appropriate setting for peer discussions and support groups. The major goal of PEP was to provide students a place to discuss problems and concerns. Group meetings provided students with information and skills for decision making and problem solving. Visiting speakers were the group leaders for the PEP Club because each speaker was trained in a specific area of interest. Groups conducted at Lewisville High School dealt with topics related to self-esteem.

Speakers

Five speakers were selected to present information that was relevant to at-risk students. They were chosen from the military, technical schools, and the work force because students from Lewisville High School traditionally choose one of these options after finishing high school. Teachers and students were given written notice of these sessions. Student participation was always 80% to 100% mainly because the sessions were held during the school day.

On January 23, 1992, Army Sergeants Outlaw and McKnight presented a session that was prepared by the US Army for 9th-and 10th-grade students. The videotaped presentation on "Tough Decisions" encouraged students to make career choices early in their middle school years, then work to accomplish their goals by taking the necessary courses in high school.

The United States Army sponsored Tough Decisions as a public service to help counselors convince students to stay in school, stay away from drugs, work hard, and earn their high school diplomas. The Army's standards for admission require a high school diploma, and it accepts no one who has anything to do with drugs. Many Lewisville High School graduates choose the military after graduation. The project manager felt that the military would be a facilitator for encouraging students to remain in school.

The videotape featured Rick Mahorn, forward for the Philadelphia 76ers of the National Basketball Association. Mahorn gave the introduction, but the impact of the sessions was made by teenagers. Five videotaped students gave testimonials about their problems in school. The problems that the students presented were:

1. Chris, who dropped out because he wanted to work.
2. Michelle, a student who had low self-esteem.
3. Kathy, who had difficulties attending school while pregnant.
4. James, who faced a difficult drug problem.
5. Carlos, who felt that school was irrelevant.

Each of the testimonials communicated goals to students. Students had the opportunity to discuss similar problems with the Army Sergeants. They were also invited to discuss concerns on a one-on-one session with the counselor or someone else in the school. The videotape session ended with

a statement of determination that at-risk students would gain insight from learning that other students had been in similar, difficult situations and had overcome serious problems to finish high school.

In March 1992, Wade Small, an admissions recruiter from York Technical College, spoke to students about striving to be better at whatever they choose to do in life. Mr. Small is recognized locally as a motivational speaker. He encouraged students to improve their grades and attendance with future goals in mind. Students received a personal invitation to attend York Technical College.

In April 1992, Mr. Kalvin Seabrook, a World Champion boxer, from Charlotte, North Carolina, demonstrated his boxing skills for the students. He showed them some of the basic rules of boxing and allowed them to examine his equipment. After he displayed his Bantamweight belt, he discussed his career in advertising. As he stressed the importance of staying in school, he gave students a hypothetical life situation. He asked students what they thought he would do if he had been physically disabled while boxing professionally. With enthusiasm, he told of his determination to finish high school and receive special training so that he could support his family when his boxing career was over. Students were fascinated with the glamour of his boxing career. Mr. Seabrook was living proof that lasting careers take hard work and education.

In November 1992, Mr. Wylie Cornwell, a paraplegic heavyweight power lifter who travels worldwide, demonstrated his skills before stressing the importance of education. Mr. Cornwell, paralyzed from the waist down, refused to give in to his handicap. He chose to accomplish his goals. Students were impressed by Mr. Cornwell's determination. Students were asked to question their own determination.

One impressive outcome of the PEP Club was that students took responsibility for their conduct. Students freely exchanged ideas and suggestions on how to handle problems that ranged from discipline to improving grades. This approach to problem solving placed the responsibility for solving problems on the student, instead of administrators and counselors who usually must seek strategies to solve student problems. Students had more control over decisions that affected them.

Walz (1987) suggested that students who drop out of school have had countless experiences that have depreciated their sense of self-esteem. Schools, therefore, need to attempt to provide successful academic experiences for all students. Walz stated that it is difficult for students to maintain positive self-esteem when their school performance is poor, and it is unlikely that students who leave school with lowered self-esteem will be able to rise to the challenges of the outside world. Achieving a positive sense of self is certainly one of the most valuable by-products of

the school experience, and all schools should give this goal highest priority in every program they devise.

Peer Tutoring

The goal of peer tutoring was to improve student grades. Peer tutoring began in September 1992 and continued through June 1993. The project manager met with 12 students from the 11th and 12th grades who were selected because of their academic success (B+ and above grade average) and their availability to assist other students during their study halls. Munn (1992) observed that peer tutoring empowers students to acknowledge and share their feelings and experiences with each other. Brigman and Earley's (1990) Peer Helping: A Training Guide was used to train tutors to help other students.

Training of the 12 students included sessions in understanding behavior, communication skills, and tutoring/study skills. Students were assigned as teacher aides to classrooms where targeted students could benefit most. Teachers welcomed the tutorial help, and they assigned tutors to students in the target group who were most in need of tutoring. Monthly meetings with the peer tutors were held to discuss progress and concerns. Peers served as tutors and mentors in classrooms. Students in the target groups received individual tutoring from the peer tutors in the classroom, in study halls, and after school. The greatest advantage of peer tutoring was in the classroom where

students were a captive audience.

The Educational Talent Search Program paid two of the tutors minimum wage to work with the afterschool tutorial program.

Educational Talent Search

The Educational Talent Search (ETS) Program was not in the original plans for the project. During an information meeting in April 1992, the project manager realized that the ETS program would involve students in activities that the school could not afford. The project manager pledged support for the program with intentions of coordinating ETS with the project for at-risk students. The Educational Talent Search program served three counties (Chester, Lancaster, and York). Although programs differed in each school, there was a cooperative effort to use student activities. ETS served as a support for the Lewisville High School program for at-risk students. ETS worked in conjunction with the project manager to provide services to address the needs of at-risk students.

An ETS coordinator was responsible for the weekly operation of the program. The coordinator visited Lewisville each week as a resource person and facilitator for all ETS activities. The project manager was responsible for cooperative implementation and management of activities within Lewisville High School. The project manager welcomed the opportunity to involve 90% of the at-risk students in the program. Limitations such as income criteria prevented some

students from joining the program.

The overall goal of Educational Talent Search was to provide a program of academic support and counseling services that would be a foundation for continuing education after graduating from high school. The program consisted of guidance and counseling sessions, an afterschool tutorial and enrichment component, college and worksite trips, a wide range of workshops, and special activities.

The program was funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Under the program guidelines, two-thirds of the participants must meet requirements for academic or economic need and be potential, first-generation college students. The rest of the students did not have to meet all of these requirements. York Technical College was the host institution and sponsor of the program. The program was designed to assist 750 youth and adults from York, Chester, and Lancaster counties.

The afterschool tutoring program sponsored by Educational Talent Search began in September 1992 and continued through May 1993. The program was supervised by a retired, certified mathematics teacher and two hourly paid tutors from Lewisville High School. The afterschool classes met at Lewisville High School 2 days each week for 2 hours each day from September 1992 through May 1993. Only 8 of the at-risk students participated in the afterschool part of the program. Few students attended the afterschool tutoring

program because most did not have transportation home.

There were 10 college visitations during the school year. College visitations gave students a chance to hear about college entrance requirements, college costs, and college life. Most of the college visitations were limited to junior and senior student participants. Students also visited other places during the summer. A local newspaper office in Rock Hill demonstrated writing skills required to be a news writer. Duke Power Explorium in Charlotte, North Carolina, provided hands-on science experiences. Career Day in Columbia, South Carolina, sponsored colleges and career representatives throughout the state. Approximately 50% of the target group were able to make these trips, which were not financially possible through the Chester County School System.

From November 1992 until January 1993, the project manager worked to keep students interested in the Educational Talent Search Program after the coordinator of the program resigned for personal reasons. The Educational Search Program provided major activities for the at-risk students, which could not otherwise be provided by the project manager. Its continuance was important! The project manager focused on more individual activities until a new coordinator for the Talent Search Program was hired in January 1993. A structured curriculum was started to make contact with all students in the project on a routine schedule like the ETS

coordinator.

Because other project components were working smoothly, the project manager assumed the responsibilities of working with the 58 targeted students in small groups. A curriculum, Career Choices: An Interdisciplinary Curriculum for High Schools and College (Bingham, Stryker, Freidman, and Light, 1990), was selected to show students the relevance of school in different course areas. At-risk students were scheduled for sessions from study halls or elective courses. The sessions lasted from November 1992 through January 1993, until the ETS coordinator was hired. Career Choices is a multipurpose text that can be used in many ways. The project manager chose to use it with at-risk students because the integrated career education/language arts program makes education relevant to students who have been turned off by academics and allows them to see themselves as important individuals with potential.

The career focus was achieved through literary works. For example, "The Gift of the Magi," by O. Henry (Bingham, at al, 1990), was used to explore the myth that money can make you happy. Students read the story for literary background. They listed rich people, such as Donald Trump and Madonna, who were not entirely happy. They found magazine articles or wrote papers on interviews with a wealthy person. The final activity in each lesson dealt with the individual and the rewards of an investment in education and the payoffs of

education. These and other activities gave students experiences in: (a) identifying the author's point of view and identifying themes of literary works, (b) writing brief narrative and descriptive papers, (c) making inferences from stories followed by questions and exercises that develop skills in using the stated idea, and (d) problem solving by looking at the pros and cons of choices, and decision making by looking at their strengths and weaknesses while keeping long-term goals in mind.

On May 20, 1993, the project manager coordinated "Career Share," a year-end program sponsored by Educational Talent Search to award student participants for the year. This program included students from four other schools who had also participated in Talent Search. Nine of the at-risk target group participated in organizing, coordinating, and carrying out the program. Visitors from 21 career areas attended to discuss their careers. The careers represented were dentist, mortician, pharmacist, policeman, plant manager, teacher, minister, salesperson, banker, army, navy, marine, college admissions recruiter, secretary, doctor, artist, employee relations manager, safety patrol, accountant, nurse, and automechanic.

Field Trips

Students participated in three field trips: the Law Enforcement Workshop in Columbia, York Technical College in Rock Hill, and Chester Career Center in Chester.

On March 20, 1992, five targeted students attended the South Carolina Bar Student Citizenship Conference in Columbia, South Carolina. Attendance at the conference was limited to six students and two sponsors. The purpose of the conference was to combine a group of at-risk and model students for a day and present them with ideas they can carry back to improve their school and community. The social studies teacher, who helped sponsored the trip, and the school principal agreed with the project manager that a group of at-risk students could present the materials to their peers when they returned. Students could chose to attend 3 topic sessions from a list of 14. The workshops were held in the South Carolina State Museum, which also offered a historical tour of Black churches in South Carolina and a display of motor engines. The conference included topics such as capital punishment, sexual harassment, abuse and neglect, date rape, and student mediation. Upon their return, students presented information on the sessions that they attended to at least 25 other students. The principal and teachers agreed to provide workshop participants an opportunity to make their presentations. All of the students presented to at least one class of their peers. The project manager was not available to sit in on all sessions, but the session on "Don't Lose a Friend to Drugs" was informative. The presenter handed out copies of brochures and discussed the material in reference to a drug preventive club in

Lewisville High School. All students presented at least once, and two presented to more than one group. Teachers reported that students were positive in their presentations. The social studies teacher who cosponsored the trip shared her observation that these students seemed to appreciate the trip because they had never been included in activities that gave them responsibilities. Surely this trip was great for their self-esteem.

On April 7, 1992, 28 target students, in addition to all juniors and seniors at Lewisville High School, visited York Technical College in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The tour gave students the opportunity to see career options that were available to them. Students listened to admissions information before they toured the buildings and grounds. They had the opportunity to spend time with teachers and students in three programs of study offered by the college: (a) the Business, Computer, Arts and Sciences Division, (b) the Health and Human Services Division, and (c) the Industrial and Engineering Technology Division. Student questions indicated that they were interested in specific areas of training. York Technical College has an open admissions policy and a continuing education program that may interest students who want an alternative to high school.

In May 1992, all 10th graders visited the Chester Career Center. Ninth graders from the target group were permitted to tour with the 10th graders, which made a total of 23

target students who went on the trip. Every student in the target group had a session with the project manager to look through classroom textbooks for each vocational course offered at the career center. The purpose of this session was to give the student a chance to look closely at career training at the vocational school. Students were directed to use resources available to them. Lewisville has "SIGI Plus" software, which is a personal interest inventory, and "SCOIS", a software that provides information on careers and colleges. These resources could help students make better choices when choosing a career.

Area 2: Teacher/Parent Strategies

Teacher Activities

In January 1992, the Lewisville High School staff participated in the first in-service workshop in identifying at-risk students. The workshop was organized by the project manager and was presented in one afternoon during the regularly scheduled teachers' meeting. Actual contents of the training included a handout and discussion of the 14 characteristics of at-risk students (see Appendix I). At the close of the presentation, the project manager assessed understanding of the project purpose through an informal question-and-answer session. The reaction to the workshop was positive as evidenced by responses to an in-service evaluation form used after the workshop.

On February 4, 1992, five teachers, all of whom taught

students in the target group, visited a program for at-risk students in Chesterfield County. These teachers taught 9th-and 10th-grade English; resources classes, which provide extra academic help to students; and computers. The State Department of Education dropout prevention team sponsored trips to schools in South Carolina that had won state financial grants for their programs. Chesterfield High School had received a $350,000 state grant to serve at-risk students. The project manager chose a school of similar size and characteristics to Lewisville High School for a visitation. After approval from the county superintendent and Lewisville High School principal, the application was submitted and travel/substitute teachers were paid for by the state. A district office person, who is responsible for grant writing, accompanied the group to Chesterfield High School.

On February 6, 1992, the five English teachers reported to other faculty members that there were many activities that Lewisville High School could initiate without funds.

Teachers have a great influence on student self-esteem through instruction, personality, and attitudes. The project manager wanted to change teachers' attitudes toward students. Argyle (cited in Lawrence, 1987) observed that teachers who have status in the eyes of their students and have a warm relationship with students are more likely to affect the self-esteem of their students.

On February 10, 1992, the Adopt-A-Student Program was started so that teachers could give individual attention to students. Adopt-A-Student involved students receiving self-esteem enhancement activities from a teacher and/or staff member on a regular basis.

Personal contact occurs in schools everyday, and in every school there is one adult who is important to a particular student. The Adopt-A-Student concept strengthens the chance of student success in academic areas. The project manager passed out a form with the names of participating students listed on the bottom (see Appendix K). From the list, teachers were allowed to choose one or more students that they wished to adopt and lend moral support. Teachers and staff members met with students during lunch and during preparation periods. Students were not taken out of classrooms.

Teacher training for the Adopt-A-Student program was based on a list of suggested behaviors and responsibilities that the project manager provided. The list included the helpful hints and activities to get teachers started (see Appendix J). For example, teachers remembered students with birthday cards and personal comments about their improved grades. Teachers were not limited to these suggestions.

Teachers were asked to keep one thought in mind as they worked with students: Learning would not occur if a student had problems or concerns that were not being addressed.

Teachers who understood that student problems and conflicts led to disruptive behavior and inhibited academic progress would more than likely become participants.

The message must have been clear. Sixteen teachers and staff participated in the program, adopting all 30 students in Group 1. The project manager decided not to extend the program to Group 2 because there were more students in Group 1 than there were teachers and staff. When members of Group 1 left the school permanently, slots for Group 2 participants became available.

Parent Activities

Five parent workshops had been outlined for the project. These workshops were to be conducted by McCorkle, the Clemson Extension Service agent for Chester County. McCorkle had done many workshops of this type with community groups in Chester County, but never in the Lewisville area. The workshop series titles were: (a) Review of My Adolescece; (b) Evolution: Developmental Stages of Adolescence; (c) Nemesis: Challenges, Pressures, and Risks; (d) Evaluation: Values, Goals, and Decisions; and (e) Conflict Resolution. There was much care taken in planning these workshops because of Lewisville's small attendance at night functions. The presenter and the project manager decided to sponsor one workshop to see if parents would attend before scheduling other workshop dates.

The first workshop took place February 10, 1992. This

month was chosen as the most convenient time after Christmas and before statewide testing began in March. The agenda for the workshop was outlined briefly and sent home by students in the project group. Only three parents attended. The workshop presenter could not see any mistakes made in planning. She felt that parents were not coming out at night because of other commitments, or they were not concerned about the adolescent issue at the time. Other workshops were not scheduled. The project manager sought another strategy to supplement parent communication.

Parents asked for help. The project manager used Mega Skills: How Families Can Help Children Succeed in School and Beyond (Rich, 1988). Mega Skills provided activities for parents and children that supplemented and reinforced school work. The activities assisted parents in finding new ways to teach their children motivation, responsibility, caring, and confidence. Most activities were designed for school children between 4 and 12 years of age. Other activities such as helping students feel more at home, making it easier for single parents, and parents and students looking to each other for help, were applicable to any age.

After telephone conversations with parents about their children, selected activities were sent to parents. The 9 parents, who used activities from Mega Skills, reported that they communicated with their children more. The project manager cannot attribute any differences to the program

curriculum except that parents and students spoke of their awareness of the needs of other family members.

The number of parent-teacher conferences held for members of the target group increased from 14 to 53. Teachers and parents met to discuss strategies that might work with individual students. Most of the conferences were held to discuss improvement of grades. These conferences were held immediately after school or during the teachers' preparation period.

Area 3: Business-Mentor Strategies

As a kickoff for the mentor program, the project manager attended a 5:00 p.m. orientation meeting on August 27, 1992, for new members of the PALS/Mentoring Program. PALS (no acronym) is a business/industry partnership that organized employees of local businesses and industries to act as a special friend to a young person by spending quality time with him or her, sharing valuable experience, and modeling an understanding and caring way of dealing with others.

Personnel managers, interested employees, school counselors, and community people were invited to hear a presentation on the PALS program. Businesses that had committed to support the program were introduced. Then, counselors were introduced as the program coordinators for their schools. Mentors were told that they could choose the school, but not the child that they would mentor. After the orientation, employees signed up to participate and scheduled

a time for training from the business/industry partnership. The mentors had to contact the counselor of the school where they wished to work. Mentors wore a special button to identify them when they were in the schools.

Although the PALS Program was well established in areas surrounding Chester County, it began in Chester County during the spring of the 1991-1992 school year. In its second year, businesses looked for improvement and expansion of the program. Participating businesses in Chester County allowed employees 30 minutes each week to meet with their students. Participants were required to complete mentor training and commit to be a mentor for 8 months. PALS provided training for all mentors. The project manager matched students with mentors, provided information about the students, and did follow-up surveys.

One problem was evident. The Lewisville area schools did not have as many volunteers as the Chester County city schools. To eliminate this problem, the project manager organized a visiting team, which included two other Lewisville area counselors, to recruit mentors. Principals from each school allowed counselors to visit local companies to give a presentation on our schools. The counselor visits made in September 1992 resulted in only four mentors for Lewisville High School. Many mentors chose to work with younger children because they felt more comfortable with them. Lewisville Elementary School recruited 35 mentors and

Lewisville Middle School recruited 15 mentors. Unfortunately, the rules state that mentors may not follow a student to his new school assignment. Because of this rule, the project manager did not feel optimistic about getting more mentors in future years.

The four mentors who committed to Lewisville High School managed to visit each week from September 1992 through March 1993. By February 1993, the mentors' visits were sporadic because their job priorities limited their visits. They apologized to students when they could not come.

All mentors noted on their year-end evaluations that their employer was committed verbally, but not financially when the work load was increased. Students and mentors attended a cookout on May 11, 1993. This activity was sponsored by PALS.

Results of Implementation

This section describes an analysis of the data collected for the four terminal objectives that were identified when the project began. Processes that were employed are also discussed.

Of the 58 students who were involved in the project initially, 10 moved and 3 dropped out of school, reducing the sample size to 45 (78%) (see Table 6).

As a result of project implementation, the school-wide drop-out rate will decrease from 7.2% in 1990-1991 to 6.0% in 1991-1992 and 4.0% in June of 1993.

Table 6

Numbers and Percents of Participants Completing the Dropout Prevention Project

Group	Number beginning	Number completing	Percent completing
1	30	19	63
2	28	26	93
Totals	58	45	78

Terminal Objective 1

The school attendance records were used to collect the data for Terminal Objective 1. From January 1992 through June 1993, targeted 9th-and 10th-grade students, who accounted for 33% of the absences and 22% of the failing grades when the project began, participated in activities that were designed to prevent dropping out of high school. Terminal Objective 1 was developed to show the decrease in the school drop-out rates after implementation of a dropout program that targeted at-risk students.

The actual reductions in dropout percentages far exceeded the projected percentages. The projected percentages forecasted a 1% yearly decrease in the drop-out rate. The project manager projected a 2% decrease in the school drop-out rate each year. The project manager believes that the project-related activities in which identified at-risk students were involved accounted for the lowered

drop-out rates. Table 7 shows the drop-out rate for Lewisville High School during the 18-month span of the project.

Table 7

Enrollment and Dropout Figures for 1990-1991, 1991-1992, and 1992-1993 at Lewisville High School

Year	Enrollment	Number of dropouts	Projected dropouts(%)	Actual dropouts(%)
1990-1991	277	20	7.2	7.2
1991-1992	297	14	6.0	4.7
1992-1993	310	5	4.0	1.6

Three of the students who dropped out of the project were from the target group. The first student stated that he dropped out because he hated school. Even though his grades had improved, he decided that he preferred to work. The second student worked while pursuing his General Equivalency Diploma (GED) at York Technical College. He requested a permission letter to take the test because he was under the required age for taking it. He has not reported his results. The third student was the oldest in the target groups. He was almost 20 years old when he entered the 10th grade. He stated that his interests did not include high school.

Process Objective 1

By the end of the first 9 weeks of the 1991-1992 school

year, a system for identifying at-risk students will be established.

A system for identifying at-risk students was established by using a profile sheet to identify students with at-risk characteristics. After identifying targeted students, the profile sheet was kept in a notebook for future reference and discussion with teachers (see Appendix L). Research (Lloyd, 1978; Stroup & Robins, 1972) suggested that timely intervention is important. Identification of high-risk students in elementary and junior high school would provide more time for teachers/counselors to intervene and address the needs of kids early. Early identification and intervention strategies helped students stay in school.

Process Objective 2

By June 1993, parents of targeted at-risk students will respond that they are better informed about the school.

Parents were surveyed with a parent survey checklist (see Appendix M). Parents were informed about their child in the following ways: telephone calls, "Happy Grams," mailed interim reports with messages and schedules, reports cards, and parent/teacher conferences. Parents returned 39 of 45 checklists, and 70% of the parents surveyed indicated that they had been informed about their child at least once in the past year. Parents (80%) indicated they were better informed about the school. This was an improvement over the average report card response to which parents were accustomed.

Parents were also encouraged to assist with learning Mega Skills tips.

Involvement by parents of at-risk students should be redefined. Involvement should be measured by levels of commitment and participation. Some parents are not "joiners," though they may care deeply about their child's education. Activities for parents should include low-commitment opportunities (Vandegrift & Greene, 1993). This may be the case at Lewisville High School. Parents responded to the communications from the school but still did not participate when they were asked to come to the school.

Process Objective 3

After in-service training, Lewisville's teachers will be able to identify the characteristics, causes, and problems of at-risk students as evidenced by teacher in-service evaluation.

A teacher survey was used to see if teachers could identify the characteristics of at-risk students (see Appendix N). Five factors that were not associated with at-risk students were added to see if teachers could identify the correct answers. Eighteen of 23 teachers (78%) participated in the summative evaluation. To determine how many of the 14 characteristics teachers could identify, the number of correct responses were tallied. The percentage of correct answers were calculated by dividing the number of responses by the number of returned surveys. The results

showed that 100% of the teachers surveyed could identify characteristics of potential dropouts.

Interestingly, 2 of 18 teachers also selected "low teacher morale," which is not usually considered a characteristic of potential dropouts, as a characteristic of dropout students. For a summary of these responses see Appendix N.

Process Objective 4

By June 1993, students will participate in a minimum of three field trips.

Students participated in three field trips. This process objective was realized with the help of invitations from schools, who provided transportation and lunch. Teachers and coaches volunteered to chaperone students. Students responded favorably to all field trips. Students ranked the field trips in order of their preference as follows: (a) York Technical College, (b) Chester Vocational School, and (c) the state-sponsored workshop. Their comments about each trip were favorable. It is possible that the state-sponsored workshop received the lowest ranking because only six students attended (see Appendix O). Students wanted to visit local businesses.

Process Objective 5

By June 1993, at least three business partners will commit to mentorship of the program for at-risk students.

This process objective was not realized. Only one business partner, The Haddon House, a distributor for exotic

foods, actually participated in the mentor program for at-risk students. Conversation with representatives of local companies and mentor evaluation sheets revealed that mentors preferred working with elementary school children.

Four employees from The Haddon House began to work with students at Lewisville in September 1992. There was no financial contribution from the Haddon House; however, the 30 minutes each week that was spent with students was a loss for the company. Mentors were within one mile of the school, which made it accessible. The school visitation log showed that the mentors were consistent. Each mentor spent a total of 25 hours with each student from September 1992 through March 1993. Student activities with mentors included basketball games, career sharing (one female mentor was an ex-marine), and tutoring (one student received help with a correspondence course for graduation).

Mentors were asked to evaluate the mentor program twice within the year (see Appendix P). The evaluation cited job responsibilities as their reason for stopping in March 1993. Even though they wanted to continue, their company's commitment to the mentor program was not a priority.

Terminal Objective 2

As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, a review of the fourth grading period (June 1993) attendance will show a reduction in the number of target group absences from 33% in January 1992 to 23% in June

1993 based on the school attendance reports.

Results for this objective are summarized in Table 7, which shows the number of students, the number of absences, and percentages of absences for the 1991-1992 school year as well as for the 1992-1993 school year. After tallying the number of absences for the target group, the project manager compared the number of absences for the target group to the number of absences for the total school.

Percentages were calculated by adding the number of absences for each group, then dividing them by the number of absences for the school. This gave the percentage of absences made by each group.

The results showed that there was a decrease in the number of absences for Group 1 and Group 2. Group 2, which was the larger group after intervention, showed the greater reduction in absences. At-risk students who completed the project had a total of 294 (135+159) absences for the first grading period in 1991-1992 and 210 (97+113) absences by June 1993. This was a decrease from 72% to 49% in the absences. There was a corresponding increase in the percentage of absences for nonparticipants.

Process Objective 1

Monitor school attendance reports daily.

The school secretary called each day to check reasons for students' absences. A letter was sent to parents after 3 days, 5 days, and each time a student missed a day

Table 8

Summary of Preintervention and Postintervention Numbers and Percentages of Absences for Participants in the Project

	1991-1992			1992-1993			Difference
Group	N	Absences		N	Absences		
		N	%		N	%	%
1	30	135	32.92	19	97	22.7	10
2	28	159	38.78	26	113	26.5	12
NP	239	116	28.29	265	217	50.8	-23
Total	297	410	100	310	427	100	

Note: NP= Nonparticipants

thereafter. A parent conference with the principal, assistant principal, or the counselor was required after the seventh day. The project manager was alerted when a member of the target group was absent. The district attendance officer said that Lewisville performed the task of checking on students better than any other school. Students behavioral change can be contributed to close monitoring of student attendance with immediate intervention.

Process Objective 2

Establish incentives and rewards for improved school attendance.

Students received Happy Grams and Burger King certificates as incentives and rewards for improved

attendance. All students received some type of incentive at the end of each 9 weeks grading period. A total of 43 rewards were given to 28 students from January 1992-June 1992. Sixty-four rewards were given to 45 students from September 1992-June 1993. See Appendix T for a sample of a Happy Gram.

Terminal Objective 3

As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, a review of the fourth grading period (June 1993) grades will show a reduction in the number of target group Ds and Fs from 15% in January 1992 to 10% in June 1993, based on the school grade report.

Table 9 shows the results for Terminal Objective 3. The percentages in Table 9 were calculated by adding the number of Ds and Fs for each group. The percentages were compared to the total number of Ds and Fs made by the entire student body.

At-risk students who completed the project had a total of 88 (51+37) failing grades during the first grading period in 1991-1992 and 28 (14+14) failing grades by June 1993. This was a decrease from 37% to 15% in the failures. The same students had a total of 81 (26+55) Ds during the first grading period in 1991-1992 and 62 (27+35) Ds by June 1993. This was a decrease from 29% to 15% in the D grades..

Process Objective 1

Arrange peer tutoring for students.

Table 9

Summary of Preintervention and Postintervention Numbers and Percentages of Ds and Fs for Participants in the Project

	1991-1992				1992-1993			
	Ds		Fs		Ds		Fs	
Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	26	10	51	21	27	6.6	14	7.7
2	55	20	37	16	35	8.6	14	7.7
NP	197	70	150	63	345	84.8	154	84.6
Total	278	100	238	100	407	100	182	100

Note: NP=Nonparticipants

Peer tutors evaluated the students that they tutored to provide feedback to teachers. A summary of comments from this evaluation were summarized in Appendix S. Tutoring sessions lasted from 15 to 30 minutes. Reasons given for tutoring sessions were: (a) low test grades, (b) reads slowly, (c) needs help with reading comprehension, and (d) has trouble with adding and subtracting fractions.

All (100%) of the target students were tutored in the classroom at least twice each week, but only 17% of the target students stayed for afterschool tutoring, which was held 2 days each week. Transportation home was a problem for most students; therefore the classroom tutoring was a

necessesity for grade improvement. Students could receive help even if they could not stay after school.

Process Objective 2

Establish incentives and rewards for improved grades.

Student accomplishments and abilities were highlighted with Happy Grams and Burger King certificates. See Appendix T for an example of the Happy Gram that was sent to parents when students showed any type of accomplishment.

Process Objective 3

Closely monitor grades at 45-day intervals with feedback to students and parents.

A grade report was generated each 9 weeks to show the names of students with grades of D and F. This report was helpful in monitoring student grades for intervention and incentives.

Process Objective 4

Set up and direct parent-teacher conferences.

There were 53 parent-teacher conferences for at-risk students from January 1992 through June 1993. There were 40 teacher-initiated conferences, and 13 parent initiated conferences. The number of parent-teacher conferences was outstanding compared to 14 conferences during the previous yea.. Regular conferences took place Monday through Thursday, from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.. Many conferences were scheduled during teachers' preparation period to accommodate the parent. The form in Appendix U was used to record all

conferences.

Terminal Objective 1

Self-esteem: As a result of project implementation, from January 1992 to June 1993, participants will increase the school-academic subtest mean on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory from 8.92 to 11.0.

The self-esteem objective was included to test whether student self-esteem could be influenced by involvement from parents, teachers, and the school. Table 10 shows pre- and posttest means. See Appendixes Q and R for individual student scores.

The goal of a 2.08 point increase of the mean score on the school-academic subtest on the Coopersmith Inventory was achieved. The mean score was increased from 8.92 to 11.4. There was an increase for all subtests except for the social self-peers subtest for Group 2, which decreased slightly. The school-academic subtest showed the greatest gain.

Process Objective 1

By October, a PEP profile will be developed for each student.

Appendix L shows the profile. It contains student information on each student that identifies indicators of potential dropouts: (a) student test scores, (b) grades repeated, (c) free or reduced-price lunch, (d) mother and father levels of education, (e) self-esteem inventory scores, (f) guardian information, (g) other information that may be

used to determine the needs of the students.

Table 10

Pre- and Posttest Mean Scores for Four Subtests and Total Self Mean Scores on the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory for Project Group 1 and Group 2

	Group 1		Group 2		Total groups	
Subtests	Pre Mean	Post Mean	Pre Mean	Post Mean	Pre Mean	Post Mean
General self	36.80	37.60	38.64	38.60	37.72	38.10
Social self-peers	12.68	13.72	14.86	14.86	13.77	14.29
Home-parents	10.82	12.20	12.16	12.60	11.49	12.40
School-academics	8.40	10.60	9.44	12.20	8.92	11.40
Total self	68.70	74.12	75.10	78.31	71.90	76.21

Process Objective 2

Volunteer teachers will choose a student from the target group to offer support and friendship through the Adopt-A-Student Program.

Of the 23 teachers, 16 participated as an adoptive teacher to one or more students (see Appendix K for response form). Teachers were given a 16-item suggestion list to get them involved with students (see Appendix J). Some of the teacher-student activities were birthday cards, individual help when the student's schedule matched the teacher's free

period, gifts, verbal praises, and other special attention. Some teachers contacted students' parents to discuss the student.

Process Objective 3

Students will attend small group sessions with community speakers.

All 45 students attended four group sessions, which emphasized self-esteem. The sessions were with Sergeants Outlaw and McKnight, Army educators; Mr. Wade Small, a college admissions recruiter; Mr. Seabrooks, a Bantamweight boxing champion; and Mr. Cromwell, a World Champion weight lifter.

The Choices session, a career education/language arts program for at-risk students, gave students a chance to take risks and experience success. The group sessions gave the project manager the idea that teachers could contribute to the self-worth and adjustment of students. One person cannot be responsible for enhancing a student's self-esteem. It might be worthwhile and practical for teachers to teach self-esteem enhancement as well as improve student academic skills.

Process Objective 4

Students will participate in state-sponsored workshops and projects.

Six students were chosen to attend the state-sponsored workshop in Columbia, South Carolina. Students chose three

workshops to attend out of a possible 14. Upon returning to school, the students shared the information with classmates in their regular class settings.

Process Objective 5

Parents will contribute to student self-esteem by attending parent workshops and teacher/counselor contacts.

This process objective was not achieved because of the lack of attendance as described earlier.

Summary of Accomplishments

Major accomplishments took place from January 1992 through June 1993. Attendance data indicated that the drop-out rate at Lewisville High School was increasing 1% each school year. The intent of the project was to reduce the drop-out rate of 9th-and 10th-grade students at Lewisville High School through a comprehensive approach that involved teachers/parents, peer tutors, and business-partnership mentors. There were no specific activities that worked for all students.

Specific details of project achievements are listed below:

1. The school drop-out rate decreased from 7.2% to 1.6%.

2. Absences for Group 1 were reduced from 32.9% to 22.7% of total school absences. The absences for Group 2 were reduced from 38.8% to 26.5%.

3. The number of Ds and F made by at-risk students decreased even more than the absences. Group 1 reduced the

number of Ds from 10% to 6.6% and Fs from 21% to 14% of total school Ds and Fs. Group 2 showed the greater decrease from 20% Ds to 8.6% Ds and Fs from 16% to 7.7%.

4. Self-esteem mean scores for the school-academic subtest increased from 8.92 to 11.4.

5. Only three targeted students dropped out of school.

Several accomplishments were expressed by staff members involved in the project. During an interview with the project coordinator of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Program, (B. Mayes, personal communication, June 4, 1993), the project manager found out that the at-risk project objectives helped convince district office staff that Lewisville needed a remediation program. The at-risk identification matrix showed that a great number of students had not passed the South Carolina Exit Exam or they showed weaknesses in the areas that would cause them to fail when they took the test in the 10th grade.

Eleven of 45 at-risk students attended a summer reading/mathematics remediation program at Lewisville. The summer program had been operating in Chester County for 2 years with only one Lewisville High School student in the program because of the distance that he had to travel to Chester. The project for at-risk students sparked an interest in what the summer project could do for Lewisville's students if it was held in the Lewisville area. In March 1993, the project manager approached three teachers who

expressed an interest in the program. With the help of district office personnel, Lewisville was given permission to hire a coordinator and four teachers to work with students for 6 weeks from June 14, 1993 to July 28, 1993. There were 60 students in the program, 11 of whom were in the target group. Students attended school from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. each weekday. The program coordinator said that all materials used for the program would remain in the school. Students were also paid $3.00 per hour to attend. It is too soon to evaluate the program.

In an interview with the In-School Suspension Supervisor, similar comments were made, "This year was different. Students who usually spent weeks in the in-school suspension had minor infractions of the school rules. Let's keep them involved!" (C. McCrorey, personal communication, April 9, 1993).

Discussion

Dropout prevention is a time-consuming undertaking; therefore, there should be a total commitment from administration, staff, parents, community, and students in order to have a successful program. Student involvement with everyone that effects the school system could reduce the number of school dropouts by improving student grades, attendance, and self-esteem through active school participation. Networking or coordinating services that already existed in the school and community produced results

for at-risk students.

Results were consistent with Rose-Gold's (1991) research concerning the "smorgasbord" approach to working with at-risk students in a rural district. Networking with outside services such as Educational Talent Search, business mentors, and community speakers provided the activities that students needed for the mixture of educational and noneducational services mentioned by Rumberger (1987). Networking also explained Finn's (1989) frustration-esteem model in which the student's self-view results from frustration and embarrassment. Finn's participation-identification model also explained the need for student participation to identify with the school.

Increased student participation in school activities, as discussed by Pittman and Haughwout (1987), proved to be most beneficial. Field trips, tutorial sessions, speakers, and Adopt-A-Student were activities that helped reduce the likelihood of a student dropping out of school.

Convincing the principal and some teachers that this was a worthwhile project allowed the project manager to use interpersonal skills by involving the principal and teachers in activities. Some teachers were reluctant to venture into the project unless they saw results. Therefore, the project manager had to be flexible and adapt plans when planned activities were not progressing on schedule.

The attempt to organize teacher in-service training was

a negative aspect of the project. Teachers had work schedules that allowed 30 minutes for lunch and 55 minutes for planning lessons. The most convenient time to plan teacher in-service training was during scheduled teachers' meetings; this was not supported by the principal.

Because at-risk students benefit from clearly stated and widely disseminated classroom and school goals, the school administrator must assist by setting program priorities. Even though the school administrator was supportive in allowing time for student intervention, there was less commitment to adjusting his routine to allow training sessions for teachers.

Dorrell (1989) believed that teachers have a responsibility to advise and help at-risk students. Addis (1989) said that teachers have the opportunity and responsibility to magnetize individual at-risk students. Black (1991) said that schools have the power to enhance or hinder students' self-esteem through teacher personality and attitudes. Teachers demonstrated their responsibility for students through involvement in the Adopt-A-Student program, which formed a cohesive support group for at-risk students. The key to teacher interaction with at-risk students will depend on teachers overcoming their traditional roles as classroom teachers. They must realize that children come with more problems than they did years ago. The continuation of the project for at-risk students might depend on whether

or not teachers have adequate time to perform additional duties. Students needed to feel that their success was important. There was a positive relationship between teachers and students.

An important inference to be drawn from this project is that parents of at-risk high school students wanted to be involved in their child's education. The research by Gotts (1983) and Vandegrift and Greene (1993) disputed the assumption that parents were disinterested. Gotts found that only 1.6% to 3.3% of parents did not wish to know about a child's problems at school. Vandegrift and Greene defined parent involvement in four categories. They were: (a) the parents who were both supportive and willing to participate; (b) parents who were not "joiners," but preferred a low commitment opportunity; (c) parents who paid lip service by attending events, but who were not supportive at home; and (d) parents who were unsupportive and did not participate. It appeared that parents of at-risk students at Lewisville fell into categories (a) and (b) as evidenced by the 53 parent/teacher conferences held for 26 at-risk students. Parents of high school at-risk students appeared to have strong interest in how their children were doing in school. Parents also preferred the school to notify them when the school wished for them to become involved. The results for parents at Lewisville High School were consistent with the literature findings.

Attempts to involve parents through parent workshops proved to be a negative aspect of the project, possibly because of the parent involvement category of Lewisville's parents mentioned above. Another possibility was their distance from the school, timing of the workshops, and prior commitments. Activities requiring less commitment, such as newsletters, telephone calls, and parent/teacher conferences should work best with parents.

The mentors' program was a positive aspect of the program. As Smink (1990) suggested, one caring adult can make a difference in a young person's life. The four mentors who worked with Lewisville's students were caring and supportive with students. Getting enough mentors for a one-on-one relationship with students was difficult in the rural Lewisville area.

Incentives for grades and attendance were not the most stimulating factor in preventing school dropouts at Lewisville. Students were motivated by other factors such as trips, speakers, and teachers. Incentives will have to be more inviting by including items that teenagers want such as T-shirts, audio equipment, movie passes, or pizza parties.

The Adopt-A-Student program and the Peer Tutoring program worked best for the greatest number of students. These parts of the program probably worked best because they were available to students at school. Parent workshops and teacher in-service training were limited, but should be

Chapter 6

Discussion

Recommendations

This dropout prevention project should be maintained with modifications. Positive changes occurred in attendance, grades, parent/teacher communication, student self-esteem, and overall drop-out rates. The first recommendation is that future dropout prevention programs involve a long-range plan that is updated yearly with input from teachers, parents, and students.

The second recommendation for improving this project is to identify students who are at-risk of dropping out of school as early as elementary school. A school district that is committed to educating children should realize that students must be in school physically and mentally in order to achieve. The school should make every effort to eliminate students' problems before they reach the legal dropout age.

During the course of the project, the project manager observed several modifications that should be made each year when a new group of students are identified. The identification process is still too time consuming for one counselor. A computer program would be helpful in keeping information on each student. The project manager plans to use technology to establish a tracking system for at-risk

students within the school district. A computer program could be developed as an addition to the school district's attendance system. Information about potential at-risk students could be started in the elementary school and continued throughout the high school years with implementation of intervention strategies appropriate for the child's age.

The third recommendation is to coordinate school and county services. Someone should be responsible for coordinating various programs and resources. Social and health service agencies can do more for students through the schools. These services could focus on each child's needs. Students at Lewisville are neglected both because they are high school age and because they live in a rural setting.

The fourth recommendation is that the at-risk program should be expanded with emphasis on (a) teacher training, (b) student/teacher communication, and (c) parent involvement. The daily school schedule could be adjusted so that all teachers and students have time to work together outside of the classroom. At-risk students need more than the regular classroom association. Teacher ownership in the project can be a determining factor in student response to intervention.

Work to get parents involved, even if the involvement is limited. If one thing does not work, try something new until something works around parents' work schedules. Parents who

have school-age children have "work and support" as their priority. In many instances, grandparents can act as liaison for working parents. Grandparents have more time for their grandchildren than they had for their children.

The method of obtaining information from parents about their attitudes and perceptions should be improved. The parents of at-risk children often have less than a high school education. The task of completing a 3 page questionnaire may be difficult, thus resulting in random answers. A better system of collecting information about the home is needed.

Parental involvement was lacking even though parents called to check on their child's progress. Communication with parents of at-risk students must be continued through written messages.

The fifth recommendation is to concentrate on one terminal objective as the major focus of the program until it becomes a part of the curriculum. Once students and teachers participate in an activity until it becomes part of the routine, other activities may be added to strengthen the program. Teachers must be willing to carry out the program; therefore, the project manager suggests that school personnel attempting to replicate this project form teacher team groups to focus on fewer students in smaller groups. For example, one teacher team could focus on improving one major area of an at-risk group such as grades. Another group of teachers

could concentrate their efforts on improving attendance.

Implications

For other educators who want to use the findings of this project in their settings, the project manager recommends all of the strategies. The project plans can be used in any environment. One should remember that no one approach works for all students and all schools. An evaluation of individual students' needs will indicate which approach might work best in each setting.

Dissemination

The results of this project for at-risk students can best be used to illustrate to schools with limited resources and limited time what can be done to encourage teenagers to stay in school. Future plans for student dropout prevention will continue with a more detailed concentration on each of the terminal objectives. The comprehensive approach showed what activities would work to reduce dropouts.

References

Addis, H. B., Jr., (1989). Dropout prevention strategies for the classroom teacher. Columbia, SC: The South Carolina Education Association, 16-17.

Alderman, M. K. (1990). Motivation for at-risk students. Educational Leadership, 48(1), 27-30.

American Association of School Administrators. (1989). Students at-risk: Problems and solutions. Arlington, VA.

Ascher, C. (1987). The ninth grade--a precarious time for the potential dropout. (ERIC No. 34). New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 284 922)

Berrueta-Clement, J. R., Schweinhart, L. J., Barnett, W. S., Epstein, A. S., & Weikart, D. F. (1984). Changed lives: The effects of the Perry preschool program on youths through age 19. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope.

Bingham, M., Stryker, S., Freidman, R., & Light, L. (1990). Career choices: An interdisciplinary curriculum for high schools and college. Santa Barbara, CA: Able Publishing.

Black, S. (1991). Self-esteem sense and nonsense. The American School Board Journal, 178(7), 27-29.

Brigman, G., & Earley, B. (1990). Peer helping: A training guide. Portland, ME: Walch.

Chavkin, N. F., & Williams, D. L. (1989). Community size and parent involvement in education. The Clearing House, pp. 159-162.

Coopersmith, S. (1991). Self-esteem inventories. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

DeRidder, L. M. (1991). How suspension and expulsion contribute to dropping out. The Education Digest, 56, 44-47.

Dorrell, L. D. (1989). At-risk students need our commitment. NAASP Bulletin, 73(513), 81-82.

Downing, J., & Harrison, Jr., T. C. (1990). Dropout prevention: A practical approach. School Counselor,

38(1), 67-74.

Drescher, J. (1992). Promoting healthy self-esteem in children. The Bureau for At-Risk Youth. New York: Huntington.

Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. Review of Educational Research, 59(2), 117-142.

Fitzgerald, J. (1990). Students at risk: Are secondary teachers able to identify potential school dropouts? Education, 111(2), 226-229.

Gotts, E. E. (1983). School-home communications at the secondary level. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 231 037)

Hamby, J. V. (1989). Taking risks for at-risk kids. Paper presented at the National At-Risk Youth Conference, Charleston, SC. pp. 10-14.

Hill, K. G. (1989). Grade retention and dropping out of school. San Francisco, CA: American Educational Research Association. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service NO. ED 309 546)

Lawrence, D. (1987). Enhancing self-esteem in the classroom. London: Chapman.

Lloyd, D. N. (1978). Prediction of school failure from the third-grade data. Educational and Psychology Measurement, 38, pp. 1193-1200.

Lueder, D. (1988). Reaching and empowering at-risk families. Rock Hill, SC: Winthrop College.

McCaul, E. (1988, April 27). Rural public school dropouts: Data from high school and beyond. Paper presented at the annual conference of the New England Education Research Organization. Rockland, ME: (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 309 914)

Munn, M. (1992). Student assistance program makes a difference.. The National Dropout Prevention Newsletter, p. 1.

National Dropout Prevention Center. (1991). South Carolina Directory of Contacts and Programs in Dropout Prevention. Clemson, SC.

Nave, B. (1990). Self-esteem: The key to student success.

(A series of solutions and strategies). Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Pittman, R. B., & Haughwout, P. (1987). Influence of high school size on drop-out rate. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 9(4), 337-343.

Remmes, B. B. (1989). Why kids drop out. Newsweek, pp. 10-11.

Rich, D. (1988). Mega skills: How families can help children succeed in school and beyond. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rose-Gold, M. S. (1991). Intervention strategies for counseling at-risk adolescents in rural school districts. The School Counselor, 39(2), 122-126.

Ruby, T., & Law, R. (1987, March). School dropouts--why does the problem prevail. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of School Psychologists. New Orleans, LA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 289 095)

Rumberger, R. W. (1987). High school dropouts: A review of issues and evidence. Review of Educational Research, 57(2), 101-121.

Sagor, R. (1990). Theory driven assessment for at-risk prevention programs. High School Journal, 74, 64-72.

Sarkees, M. D. (1989). Developing effective assistance programs for parents of at-risk students. The Journal, 17(2), 19-21.

Seoane, M., & Smink, J. (1991). Incentives and education. Solutions and strategies. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

Smink, J. (1990). Mentoring programs for at-risk youth. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.

South Carolina Department of Education. (1984). Education improvement act: Indicators of effective schools. Columbia, SC: Office of Leadership and School Improvement.

South Carolina Department of Education. (1986). Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Columbia, SC: School and Community Report.

South Carolina Department of Education. (1991). South

Carolina needs assessment survey. Unpublished manuscript.

South Carolina Employment Security Commission. (1990). South Carolina economic securities statistics. Columbia, SC: Labor Market Information Division.

Stroup, A. L., & Robins, S. N. (1972). Elementary school predictors of high school drop-out among black males. Sociology of Education, 45, pp. 212-222.

Stanley, H., Goldstein, A., & Bry, B. (1976). Program manual for the early secondary intervention program. West Long Branch, NJ: Narcotics Council. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 230 893)

Vandegrift, J. A., & Greene, A. L. (1993). Involving parents of the at-risk: Rethinking definitions. Education Digest, 58(8), 18-21.

Walz, G. R. (1987). Combating the school dropout problem: Proactive strategies for school counselors. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 287 112)

Warner, I. (1991). Parents in touch: District leadership for parent involvement. Phi Delta Kappan, pp. 372-383.

Wehlage, G., Rutter, R. A., & Turnbaugh, A. (1987). A program model for at-risk high school students. In W. T. Denton (Ed.), Dropouts, Pushouts, and Other Casualties (155-157). Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa.

Appendixes

Appendix A

Group 1 Student Matrix

9th- and 10th- Grade Students With Three or More Characteristics of Dropouts as of October 1991

Student	AGE	G	RG	L	T	GFN	F	A/T	Dis	Pre-SEI
6011	17	9		R		1F	GM	0/0		40
5743	16	9	1		R	3D/2F	BP	7/3	1	36
4876	15	9	1		MW	1F	M	2/1		80
3095	15	9	3		M	2D	BP	0/1		72
9385	15	9	3	F	RW	1F	BP	3/6		72
2837	17	9	9		W	1D/2F	BP	6/9		56
5874	16	9	8,9			3F	GM	13/3	4	68
0745	16	9	9			1D/1F	R	0/4		72
1324	14	9		F		1D/4F	GM	5/1	3	50
9688	16	9				1D/3F	BP	1/1	5	68
2946	15	9	1	F	N/A	3F	BP	8/0		60
0911	15	9	1	F	MRW	1D/2F	BP	0/6		80
6343	17	9	9	F		1D	M	3/1		76
9520	16	9	8			1D/1F	R	7/3	1	92
2741	14	9		F	N/A	1D/2F	BP	5/0	4	48
1982	15	9			RW	1D/1F	M	1/6		56
3874	14	9		F		1D/3F	BP	2/4	15	92
9500	15	9	1,3		RWM	1D/3F	M	6/3	4	56
3629	18	10	1,8,9		MW	1D/1F	BP	11/6		88
1234	16	10	10			2D/2F	BP	8/2		44
7092	16	10	1	F		1D	BP	0/5		84
4872	16	10		F	W	1D	BP	0/3		84
2742	15	10			RM	1D/1F	BP	9/8	8	48
2574	16	10	1		MW	5F	BP	5/5	6	72
8853	16	10	9			2D/1F	GF	5/2		76
6191	17	10	9,10			1F	BP	3/0		92
5948	17	10	10			1D	GM	10/5	1	80
2276	16	10	10			5F	BP	9/8	4	68
9571	16	10	3			1F	BP	4/5		84
1776	16	10	1			1D/1F	BP	2/9	2	68

Notes:
G= Present grade level
RG = Repeated grade
T = Test score failed (R-reading, M-math, W-writing) L= Lunch (Free-F, Reduced-R)
GFN= Grade first nine weeks (1991-92)
F= Family
BP=Both parents
GM= Grandmother
GF= Grandfather
M= Mother
R= Relative

A/T= Absences/Tardies through 1/9/92
Dis= Days out of class because of discipline
Pre-SEI= Total score for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory;
First quartile range from 84-92
Median quartile range from 56-80
Bottom quartile range from 36-56
Group Mean is 68.7
1986 corresponding norm for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory is 66.7

Appendix B

STUDENT SURVEY FORM

Lewisville High School would like for you to answer questions on this survey form. The survey will be used to help the school learn more about students who leave school before completion. Thank you for your help.

Charmaine W. Stradford
Guidance Director

---

1. Check all the reasons for leaving school that apply to you.
   ___Poor grades
   ___School was not teaching me what I wanted to know
   ___I wanted to work full-time
   ___I was pregnant
   ___I had several discipline problems
   ___Disliked teachers
   ___Disliked administration
   ___other (please explain)_____

2. I think that my choice to leave school was:
   ___a good choice
   ___a bad choice

3. Did your parents encourage you to stay in school?
   ___yes
   ___no

4. Would you leave school if you had to make that decision again?
   ___yes
   ___no

5. I would not have left school if the school had:
   ___a wider variety of courses
   ___more vocational courses at my school
   ___more school activities (clubs & sports)
   ___special consideration for my learning style
   ___not asked me to repeat my last grade
   ___other (please explain)_____

6. Did either of your parents leave school early?
   ___yes ___no Which parent? ___mother ___father

7. Check the educational level of each parent.

	Father	Mother
Elementary school (1-6 grades)	_____	_____
Middle school (7-8 grades)	_____	_____
High school 10th	_____	_____
11th	_____	_____
12th	_____	_____
Technical school	_____	_____
College	_____	_____

8. Has your attitude about school changed since you left?
___yes ___no If so, how?_____

Thank you for your help. Please return with parent survey in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Appendix B

PARENT SURVEY FORM

Lewisville High School is seeking information about students who do not complete high school. As you complete this form, think about _____. Another form is included for your child to answer. Please mail the forms back to us.

Charmaine W. Stradford
Guidance Director

Ray Anderson
Principal

---

1. My child left school because: (check as many as apply)
   ___he/she wanted to get married
   ___he/she wanted to work full-time
   ___he/she had poor grades or repeated grades
   ___school was not meeting my child's needs
   ___other (please explain)_____

2. I encouraged my child to stay in school.
   ___yes
   ___no

3. I think my child should:
   ___return to school
   ___take evening courses (Adult Education)
   ___take the GED examination to get a high school diploma
   ___other (please explain)_____

4. I think more schooling would help my child get a better job.
   ___yes
   ___no

5. What would have helped keep your child in school?
   ___more school activities for him/her to be involved
   ___more vocational courses at his/her school
   ___a special teacher to help him/her with studies
   ___a wider variety of courses
   ___other (please explain)_____

Please give your child's address if different from yours.
Address_____
City, State, Zip_____
Thank you for your help. Please return in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Appendix C

TEACHER SURVEY
LEWISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The answers to these questions will be used to develop a program to help curb the number of dropouts at Lewisville High School. Please answer with a sincere, helpful attitude. Thank you for your help.

What secondary grade level do you feel should be a focus group for dropout prevention strategies?

(Circle all that apply)	9 (18)	10 (10)	11 (4)	12 (5)	Tallies

What profile should be used to identify potential dropouts at Lewisville? (Check all that apply)

Students who:

____20____repeat grades
_____5____are from single-parent homes
_____7____are from low income families
____18____are not motivated
____11____have multiple discipline problems
____11____have substance abuse problems
_____9____have low standardized test scores in reading
_____7____have poor student/parent relationships
____16____have low self-esteem

What strategies would you suggest to improve attendance and/or academic performance at Lewisville High School?

1. Abide by strict attendance laws (2 responses)
2. Lobby to stop employment of students after 10 p.m.
3. Place students in small classes with upbeat instruction
4. Provide a stronger vocational program (2 responses)
5. Provide rewards for achievement
6. Educate teachers on how to motivate and improve self-esteem (2 responses)
7. Identify students earlier

Number of responses = 23

Appendix D

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
(Summary)

This questionnaire is designed to gather information about you so that Lewisville High School can continue to improve on the educational services that we presently offer our students.

Student Name: _____

1. Rate your overall interest in school. (Circle one)

   Excellent (5) [17] Good (9) [8] Fair (12) [3] Poor (4) [0]

2. How do you feel about school? (Circle one)

   A. Do you have many friends? Yes (29) [25] No (1) [3]

   B. Are your friends in school? Yes (24) [26] NO (6) [2]

   C. Do you feel that teachers treat everyone fairly? Yes (9) [22] No (21) [6]

3. What do you like about school?

   Break and lunch (4) [6]
   meeting girls (2)
   activities (3) [5] [6]
   making friends (5) [1]
   it's better than home (1)
   hanging out (1) [2]
   everything (1)
   3:00 p.m. (1)
   school subjects (6)
   sports (5) [8]
   trying to learn (1)

4. What do you dislike about school?

   too much homework (4) [7]
   everything (1)
   detentions (1) [3]
   ISS (4) [16]
   violence (1)
   classes are too long (1)
   that I am behind in my classes (2)
   the assistant principal [1]
   teachers (7) [3]
   Ms. Nelson (2)
   nothing (2) [1]
   shop (2)
   reports (2)
   work (1)

5. Do you feel that you are well-liked by other students?
   Yes (25) [21] No (4) Undecided (1) [7]

6. What do your parent(s) expect you to do after high school?

   technical school (2) [5]
   army (3) [4]
   move out (2)
   don't know (3) [1]
   college (10) [13]
   work (5)
   play sports (3)
   get a better education (2) [3]

7. What will <u>you</u> do after high school?

technical school (2) [4]	college (14) [17]
army (2)	navy (3)
move out (2)	become an artist (1)
don't know (2)	work on the farm (1)
work (4)	

8. In what activities do you participate out-of-school?

none (24) [18]	movies (1)
church choir (3)	boxing in summer (1)
basketball at YMCA (1)	

9. Do you work? If so, how many hours each week?

Do not work (21) [3]	21 hours/week (1)
Work weekends only (2)	32 hours/week (1)
16 hours/week (1)	25 hours/week (1)
18 hours /week (1)	30 hours/week (1)
20 hours/week (1) [3]	

10. Do you live with one parent? If so, which? Mother or Father

both parents? (19; Mother only=4) [17]
a relative? (7 including grandparents
a guardian? (0) [1 lives alone]

11. How many brothers/sisters do you have?
(Used to determine position in family)

12. What is your mother's educational level? (Circle one)

Elementary	High School	College
(0) [2]	(26) [14]	(4) [2]

13. What is your father's educational level?

Elementary	High School	College
(0) [0]	(29) [17[	(1) [1]

N=(30)
N=[21]
Note:
( ) = Tally of responses for at-risk Group 1 as of October 1991
[ ] = Tally of responses for Group 2 as of September 1992

Appendix E
LEWISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL (PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES)

Please respond to the following statements by circling the answer that best describes how you feel about the school that your child attends. Use the codes given below.

Strongly Disagree = SD
Disagree = D
Don't Know = DK
Agree = A
Strongly Agree = SA

POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE (Average for SD & D = 2.2%)

1. The school building is neat, clean, and comfortable.

	SD	D	DK	A	SA
(# responses)	0	0	6	16	0

2. My child is excited about learning.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	2	4	10	6

3. My child takes pride in keeping the building attractive.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	0	7	10	4	

4. My child enjoys being part of this school.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
2	0	2	8	10

5. Teachers in this school treat students fairly.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
2	4	4	12	0

6. Student work is displayed in the school.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	0	6	8	4	

7. People feel safe at this school.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
2	0	2	16	2

8. This school has clear, uniform rules for all students.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
2	0	3	12	4	

9. Students seem free from too much pressure in classrooms.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
4	2	5	6	4	

10. Teachers deal with discipline problems early with quick, firm responses.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	2	7	10	2	

POSITIVE HOME/SCHOOL RELATIONS (Average for SD & D = .8%)

11. It is a pleasure to have my child attend this school.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	0	4	12	6

12. Parents are welcome in this school.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	0	4	14	4

13. Students progress is reported to parents at conferences.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	2	2	12	6

14. Parents are involved in major decisions concerning students.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	0	1	14	6	

15. The principal encouraged parents to take part in school activities.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	0	5	10	6	

16. This school has an "Open House" each year.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	0	3	10	8	

17. The school sponsors activities such as open meetings and news releases to inform the community of the school's goals.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	0	4	12	4	

18. Parents receive complete and accurate explanations of test results.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	2	3	12	4	

19. Parents and students are actively involved in the school's advisory relations.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	4	4	10	2	

FREQUENT MONITORING (Average for SD & D = 6%)

20. Students' work is graded and returned promptly.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	2	3	14	2	

21. Teachers explain students' test scores to parents.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
0	4	3	14	0	

22. If a student fails a test, he has another chance to learn the materials.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-1
2	10	6	3	0	

23. Teachers use test results to decide what should be taught.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	6	8	8	0

24. Instruction is changed as needed to meet the needs of individual students.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	8	2	10	0	

25. Students usually understand what will be on tests.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	4	2	14	0	

ACADEMICS (Average for SD & D = 4.1%)

26. Teachers explain classwork clearly.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	8	2	10	2

27. Teachers explain homework clearly.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
2	0	6	12	2

28. Teachers check the homework my child does.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	4	4	12	2

29. My child's homework is returned to him.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	4	8	8	2

30. Teachers have good classroom control.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	4	6	10	2

31. Enough time is spent on basic skills.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	5	7	10	0

32. My child takes part in classroom activities.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	4	8	6	2	

33. My child has homework to do.

SD	D	DK	A	SA	Omitted-2
0	4	2	14	0	

34. My child can do his homework by himself.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
2	4	2	14	0

35. My child knows the classroom rules.

SD	D	DK	A	SA
0	0	4	14	4

Number returns: 22 (73%)

Source: South Carolina Needs Assessment Survey 1991

Appendix F

Teacher Matrix

Teacher	Race	Gender	Yrs Ex.	Dg	Subj. Taught	(1990-1991) # F	(10/91) # F	# F (6/93)
1	B	F	16	B	BIO/PE	11	9	12
2	W	F	7	B	FOODS/HOME ECO	5	18	20
*3	W	F	3	B	ART I	1	3	3
4	W	F	21	B	FR./ENG	5	7	9
5	W	F	16	M	ENG10/SS	4	9	9
6	W	F	3	M	MATH	12	10	8
7	W	F	6	B	ENG12/10	12	12	10
*8	W	M	22	M	BIO/PE	2	3	4
9	W	F	1	B	SPE EDU	0	7	0
10	B	F	7	B	TYP/ACCT/BUS	5	7	7
*11	W	M	4	B	MUSIC/BAND	1	0	1
*12	W	M	16	M	VOC SHOP	0	0	0
*13	W	F	4	B	CHORUS	0	0	0
14	B	M	16	M	BIO	5	13	1
15	B	F	17	M	COMPUT/MATH	6	9	11
16	W	M	6	B	DR EDU/PE/WGEO	2	6	0
17	W	F	20	M	ENG9/10	17	47	19
18	W	M	1	B	US HIS/WGEO	N/A	2	0
19	W	F	16	M	GOV/ECON	30	19	25
20	W	M	0	B	ENG11	N/A	13	5
21	W	F	21	M	CHEM/BIO/PHYS	9	8	10
22	W	F	7	M	ALG/GEOM/BMATH	12	17	22
23	W	F	22	B	G.MATH/PRECAL	18	19	5

* = Part-time teachers
Dg = Degree earned by teacher: Bachelor's or Master's
N/A = Teacher was not employed that year

Appendix G
GROUP 2 STUDENT MATRIX

Cohorts of 9th- and 10th- Grade Students With Three or More Characteristics of Dropouts as of June 1992

Student	Age	G	RG	L	T	Final Grade	F	A/T
1352	14	9			R	1D/2F	BP	5/1
2462	15	9				4D	M	2/0
3572	15	9				3D	BP	3/4
4682	15	9		R		2D	M	6/3
5792	15	9		F	RM	1D/3F	M	2/4
6802	14	9			RM	2D	BP	4/2
1232	18	9	9,9			1D/1F	O	9/5
2342	16	9		F	RM	2D/1F	BP	4/2
3452	15	9		F		1D/4F	BP	6/1
4562	14	9		R	RW	2D	BP	4/2
5672	14	9				2D	BP	4/1
6782	15	9			MW	3D	M	3/1
7892	15	9	9			1D/4F	BP	10/8
8902	17	10	4	F		2D/2F	BP	3/2
9012	17	10	1	F	RMW	4D	M	4/1
8232	16	9	9			3D	M	3/1
7342	14	9				3D/1F	M	1/4
6452	15	9		F		1D/1F	BP	1/2
7122	14	9		R		2D/3F	BP	4/1
6122	15	9	9		M	/1F	M	34/8
5142	15	9			RM	2D/1F	BP	7/2
4812	16	9				2D/1F	BP	2/8
3712	15	9	9			3D/2F	BP	15/8
2712	15	9		R	RMW	1D/2F	BP	6/2
6192	15	9				3D	BP	3/7
4262	14	9			RW	1D/3F	BP	2/1
2012	16	9	9,9			3D/3F	BP	5/8
4702	15	9	9	R		/4F	F	8/7

Notes:
G = Present grade level
RG = Repeated grade
T = Test score failed (R-reading, M-math, W-writing)
L = Lunch (F-free, R-reduced)
F = Family
BP= Both Parents
GM= Grandmother
GF= Grandfather
M= Mother
F=Father
R=Relative
O-Orphan
Final Grade = Final grades for 1991-1992 school year
E/M = Grades in English/Mathematics for school year
A/T = Absences/Tardies for 1991-1992 school year

Appendix H

Letter to Parents of AT-Risk Students

January 1992

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In an effort to increase the number of students graduating from school and to narrow the achievement gap between students, Lewisville High School has developed a list of behavioral patterns or characteristics that may be found in those students who are at risk of leaving school before they graduate. Students who demonstrate three or more of these characteristics are selected to take part in special programs and receive services at school, which are above and beyond the programs and services provided in the regular classroom.

The additional services and programs provided these students include, but are not limited to counseling services on self-esteem, peer tutoring, and other activities that involve parent and community participation. Students also have a chance to participate in educational field trips and group counseling sessions.

This letter is to verify your permission for your child to enter an in-school program and to acknowledge that you are aware of the program.

I give my permission for my child,_____, to participate in this additional in-school program.

_____ Date:_____
Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Should you have questions or concerns regarding this letter, please contact Mrs. Charmaine W. Stradford at 789-5131.

Sincerely,

Ray N. Anderson
Principal

Appendix I

Characteristics of A Potential School Dropout

1. Age. Student is 2 or more years older than his or her classmates.

2. Grade level. Student is one or more years behind in grade level.

3. Academic aptitude. Student has an IQ of 90 or below.

4. Grades. Student has made D's or F's in two or more subjects in the current or previous year.

5. Interest in school work. Student shows little interest in schoolwork. Examples: does not do homework, says he or she does not like school, does not respond in class.

6. Ability to read. Student is 2 or more years below reading level.

7. Parental attitude toward graduation. Parent(s) do not care whether student finishes school.

8. General adjustment to school. Student has a negative feeling toward school, indicates he or she has few or no friends, believes teachers are not fair.

9. Participation in out-of-school activities. Students does not belong to out-of-school organizations such as Boy Scouts, 4-H, church groups.

10. School attendance. Student has record of chronic absenteeism - is absent 10 or more days per year from school.

11. Acceptance by other students. Student perceives that he or she is not liked by other students and has no personal friends.

12. Mother's educational level. Mother dropped out of school at Grade 8 or earlier.

13. Father's educational level. Father dropped out of school at Grade 8 or earlier.

14. Health. Student is often absent due to ill health or tires easily in school.

Source: "Students At-Risk: Problems and Solutions," American Association of School Administators, Arlington, Virginia, 1989.

Appendix J

THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTED BEHAVIORS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ADOPT-A-STUDENT TEACHERS SEEM TO BE IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS:

1. GAIN THE STUDENT'S ATTENTION, CONFIDENCE, AND TRUST THROUGH CONSISTENT, POSITIVE INTERACTION.

2. GET TO KNOW THE STUDENT WELL. BECOME AN AT-SCHOOL FRIEND TO THE STUDENT. SHOW HIM/HER PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC ATTENTION AND INTEREST.

3. KEEP A CLOSE WATCH OVER THIS STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN ALL CLASSES. ENCOURAGE HIM OR HER AND ATTEMPT TO ASSIST WITH ANY PROBLEMS.

4. OFFER PRAISE AND REINFORCEMENT WHENEVER YOUR ADOPTED STUDENT PERFORMS WELL IN ANY CLASS OR MAINTAINS A GOOD ATTENDANCE OR DISCIPLINARY PATTERN.

5. HELP THE STUDENT TO ANTICIPATE COMING EVENTS IN ALL CLASSES SUCH AS TESTS, EXAMS, AND DEADLINES AND TO BE PREPARED FOR THESE EVENTS.

6. BE AWARE OF THE STUDENT'S ROUTINE HOMEWORK LOAD, MONITOR AND ENCOURAGE COMPLETION OF HOMEWORK AND ASSIST IF NECESSARY.

7. BE AWARE OF TEST GRADES AND RESPOND TO AND REVIEW TEST SCORES WITH THE STUDENT.

8. ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE STUDENT'S PARENTS OR GUARDIANS AND WITH THE HOME ENVIRONMENT. KEEP THE HOME INFORMED OF SCHOOL PROGRESS. REPRESENT THE SCHOOL TO THE STUDENT'S HOME.

9. ANTICIPATE SPECIAL NEEDS THE STUDENT MAY HAVE AND HELP THE STUDENT FIND WAYS TO FILL THESE NEEDS. (EXAMPLE: TRANSPORTATION TO A SCHOOL ACTIVITY, PICTURE MONEY, ETC.)

10. HELP THE STUDENT ACHIEVE A REALISTIC OUTLOOK TOWARD HIS OR HER FUTURE, EDUCATION PLANS, CAREER GOALS, ETC.

11. RECOGNIZE SPECIAL OCCASIONS FOR THE STUDENT. (EXAMPLE: BIRTHDAY, ONE MONTH WITH NO ABSENCES, ETC.)

12. HELP THE STUDENT TO GAIN NEEDED EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURE. (EXAMPLE: OUTINGS, RECREATION OPPORTUNITY, ETC.)

13. ATTEMPT TO STEER THE STUDENT TOWARD SOME INTERESTING, CONSTRUCTIVE EXTRA-CURRICULAR SCHOOL ACTIVITY. HELP THE STUDENT OVERCOME OBSTACLES TO PARTICIPATION IN THESE

ACTIVITIES.

14. BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL FOR THE STUDENT.

15. HAVE THE STUDENT ASSIST YOU WITH ROUTINE TASKS.

16. BE AWARE OF AND REACT TO DISCIPLINARY SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE STUDENT.

Appendix K

ADOPT-A-STUDENT
TEACHER RESPONSE FORM

_____NAME

I WILL CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN LHS ADOPT-A-STUDENT PROGRAM

CONSIDER THESE CHARACTERISTICS OF A STUDENT YOU WOULD CONSIDER WORKING WITH:

-A STUDENT THAT I TEACH

-A STUDENT I DO NOT TEACH

-FEMALE

-MALE

-GRADES 9 OR 10

-A STUDENT WITH ECONOMIC NEED

-A STUDENT IN NEED OF A PARENT FIGURE

-OTHER INTERESTS_____

_____

_____

_____NAME

STUDENT THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ADOPT

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Appendix L

LEWISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
AT-RISK STUDENT PROFILE

STUDENT_____DOB: _____

PRESENT GRADE:_____ GRADE(S) REPEATED:_____

LUNCH: FREE___ REDUCED___ N/A_____

BSAP: MATH_____ READING_____ WRITING _____

STANFORD TOTAL BATTERY:_____

SELF-ESTEEM:_____

ENGLISH GRADE:_____MATH GRADE:_____

LAST YR. ABSENCES:_____ABSENCES TO DATE:_____

AGE:_____ SEX:_____RACE:_____

PARENTS:_____ ADDRESS:_____

TELEPHONE:_____ CUSTODY STATUS:_____

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF FATHER:_____

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF MOTHER:_____

OTHER NOTES:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix M

Summative Parent Evaluation Checklist

Part I
Place a check next to the response to let us know how well we are communicating with you.

	Number of Times		
	1-3	4-6	7-9
Home-School Communications			
1. I was contacted about my child.	27	9	2
2. I received happy notes.	33	3	
3. I received telephone calls from a teacher.	12	27	
4. I had a conference with the teacher about my child.	23	16	
5. I had a conference with the counselor about my child.	39		
Frequent Monitoring			
1. I saw my child's report card this year.	39		
2. I saw my child's interim report.	39		
3. Someone called me about my child's attendance.	39		
4. Someone called me about my child's grades.	24	15	

Part II
1. Do you feel that you are better informed about your school? Yes or No or Comments
(31 yes) (8 no)

2. Do you feel that the school is helping your child? Yes or No or Comments
(29 yes) (10 no)

Number of checklists returned=39
Note:
Number of responses are indicated

Appendix N

Teacher Checklist Evaluation

Please check all characteristics that you can identify as those of potential dropouts.

100_Failing grades

_X__Working mother

100_Poor attendance

100_Parental attitude toward graduation

_X__Low teacher morale

100_Academic aptitude

_X__Weird clothes

100_Acceptance

100_Poor health

100_Lack of interest in school

100_Ability to read

100_Older than classmates

_X__Shyness

100_Participation in out-of-school activities

100_Low student morale

100_Below grade level

100_Mother's educational level

100_Father's educational level

100_Poor adjustment to school

Number of responses = 18 (78%)
x = Not characteristic of dropout students
100 = The percent of teachers who answered correctly

Appendix O
Student Rating Sheets for Field Trips

Rate the trip that was most interesting to you by placing a 1 next to your first choice, 2 next to your second, and 3 next to your third choice.

_____York Technical College

_____Chester Career Center

_____State Law Enforcement trip

Would you like to make any comments concerning the program?

What other field trips would you recommend?
Would like to tour businesses
Would like more field trips

Summary of Results:

York Technical College	28 students attended	Ranked #1
Chester Career Center	23 students attended	Ranked #2
State Law Enforcement	6 students attended	Ranked #3

Appendix P
The Upstate Tri-County Round Table
and
The Chester County School District

PROGRESS REPORT FOR PAL/MENTOR PROGRAM

Date: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

Student's Name: _____

* Where did meeting occur?_School library, guidance office, conference room, gymnasium_____

* List any activities of meeting:_Tutoring (1), talking (4), playing basketball (2), going on picnic (4), exchanging Christmas cards (4), sending notes (4)_____

* List any problems encountered:___None_(4)_____

_____

_____

* Does student appear to enjoy your friendship?__Yes_(4)____

_____

_____

* As program matures, list any progress you feel the student has made:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Mentor)
Please send to Guidance Counselor no less than once a month.
Retain copy for your files.

Appendix P
The Upstate Tri-County Round Table
and
The Chester County School District

REVIEW FOR PAL/MENTOR PROGRAM

FOR YEAR__1992-1993_____

Mentor's Name:_____

Student's Name:_____

* How often did you meet with PAL?__30 minutes each week____

_____

* What type of activities occurred at your meetings?_Talks (4), basketball games (2), picnics (4), Christmas cards (4)

* Do you feel that your PAL made some progress during the year?__Yes (3) Not sure (1)_____

If yes, what type of progress?_____

_____

* What did you enjoy the most about the program?_Hearing what teenagers do for fun_____

* What did you not like about the program?_Not permitted to leave job when workload increased (4)_____

* In your opinion, what could be done to improve the program?

Visit students twice each week (2)_____

* Would you consider being a mentor next year?__Yes (4)_____

(Mentor)
* Please complete before the end of the school year and send to: Charmaine W. Stradford
Lewisville High School
Hwy 9
Richburg SC 29729

Appendix Q
Group 1 Summary

Summary of Grades, Attendance, and Self-Esteem Mean Scores for At-Risk Group as of June 1993

Student #	A/T	FA/T	First Nine Wks Grade	Final Grade	Pre-SEI	Post-SEI
5743	7/3	7/10	3D/2F	--/2F	36	52
4876	2/1	7/5	1F	1D	80	84
3090	O/1	2/1	2D	2D	72	90
9385	3/6	7/4	1F	4D	72	72
1324	5/1	2/1	1D/4F	--	50	64
9688	1/1	8/12	1D/3F	--	68	78
0911	0/6	9/8	1D/2F	4D	80	80
6343	3/1	7/10	1D	--	76	80
9520	7/3	6/3	1D/1F	2D/2F	92	92
2741	5/0	5/9	1D/2F	2D/2F	48	64
1982	1/6	5/3	1D/1F	2D	56	60
9500	6/3	6/3	1D/3F	1D/3F	56	48
7092	0/5	8/7	1D	3D/1F	84	76
4872	0/3	4/1	1D	2D/2F	84	88
2742	9/8	0/10	1D/1F	1D	48	64
2574	5/5	3/2	5F	1D/1F	72	76
8853	5/2	7/2	2D/1F	1D	76	80
6191	3/0	2/7	1F	1D	92	92
1776	2/9	2/7	1D/1F	/1F	68	68

Notes:
A/T = Absences/Tardies through 1/9/92
FA/T = Absences/Tardies through June 1993
First Nine Wks Grade = Grade first nine weeks (1991-1992)
Final Grade = Final grade through June 1993
Pre-SEI = Pre-implementation score for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory
Post-SEI = Post-implementation score for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory

Appendix R
Group 2 Summary

Summary of Grades, Attendance, and Self-Esteem Mean Scores for At-Risk Cohort Group as of June 1993

Student #	A/T	FA/T	1992 Grades	1993 Grades	Pre-SEI	Post SEI
1352	5/1	1/11	1D/2F	1D/2F	92	92
2462	2/0	5/5	4D	2D	88	92
3572	3/4	2/3	3D	/1F	92	92
4682	6/3	0/2	2D	1D	80	80
5792	2/4	5/8	1D/3F	/2F	56	60
6802	4/2	7/2	2D	1D	72	72
1232	9/5	6/10	1D/1F	3D/1F	60	64
2342	4/2	5/3	2D/1F	1D	68	76
3452	6/1	2/0	1D/4F	1D/2F	56	64
4562	4/2	0/6	2D	3D/	72	76
5672	4/1	0/7	2D	1D	92	88
6782	3/1	8/1	3D	3D	76	72
7892	10/8	6/2	1D/4F	1D	92	88
8902	3/2	8/14	2D/2F	2D/3F	76	72
9012	4/1	7/6	4D	1D	92	92
8232	3/1	6/7	3D	1D/1F	32	40
7342	1/4	9/11	3D/1F	4D/1F	76	76
6452	1/2	9/16	1D/1F	1D	80	80
7122	4/1	8/5	2D/3F	1D/1F	96	96
5142	7/2	5/3	2D/1F	--/--	60	84
4812	2/8	4/1	2D/1F	1D/	60	74
2712	6/2	2/1	1D/2F	1D	92	92
6192	3/7	1/4	3D	2D	88	92
4262	2/1	3/5	1D/3F	--/--	78	78
2012	5/8	2/10	3D/3F	--/--	64	72
4702	8/7	2/5	/4F	3D	64	72

Note:
A/T = Absences/Tardies through June 1992
FA/T = Final Absences/Tardies through June 1993
Pre-SEI = Pre-implementation score for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory as of September 1992
Post-SEI = Post-implementation score for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory as of June 1993

Appendix S

Tutoring Session Evaluation

How long did the tutoring session last?_____

Did the student complete the assigned work?_____

Did the student have any difficulties with the assignment?

_____

If yes, please indicate any problem areas:

_____

_____

_____

Do you feel the student could benefit from additional sessions?

If yes, why _____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Tutor's Name Date

Please return this form to the referring teacher's box.

Summary of Results:
Number of students tutored - 45

Tutoring sessions lasted from 15 to 30 minutes

Reasons given for tutoring sessions
low test grades, reads slowly, needs help with comprehension, cannot understand adding and subtracting fractions

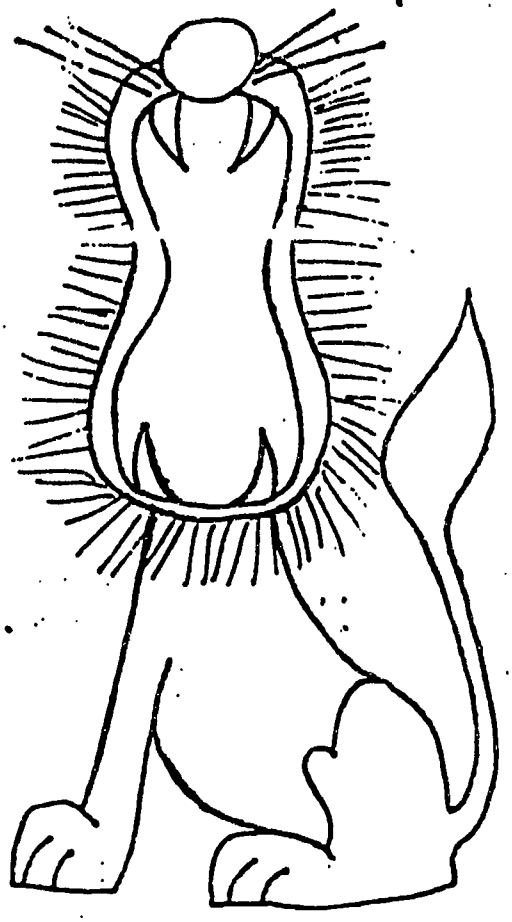
Source of questions: Tutoring Success! Anderson School District One and the National Dropout Prevention Center, South Carolina

Appendix T

Sample of Achievement Correspondence

(Happy Gram)

The Lions Are Roaring For You!



Congratulations For Your Efforts And Achievements!

Appendix U

Parent/Teacher Conference Sheet

Student Name_____Date_____Time____Place____

Reason for Conference_____

Teacher(s)	Subject Taught

Summary of Parent/Teacher Conferences

Number of conferences held for target group	53
Number of different students involved	26
Number of conferences initiated by teachers	40
Number of conferences initiated by parents	13