Successful Preparation for School and the Future:

Creating a Master Student

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Overview of Presentation

• Current Understanding of School & Student

• Concerns about early school leaving from recent study on
  • “Chronic Truancy and the impact of social bonding”

• Open for Discussion

• Closing
Today’s Context:

Current Understanding of school & student

• Past Family Configuration
• Outsourcing of need
• Response to Truancy (absences, programs)
• 60% daytime crimes committed between 8am & 3pm

• Over 75-85% juvenile offenders were formerly chronic truants (Colorado Foundation for Families & Children, 2001)

• Increase arrests for
  – aggravated assault (91%),
  – simple assault (197%),
  – weapons law violations (138%),
  – sex offenses (121%),
  – drug abuse violations (105%),
  – disorderly conduct (116%), and
  – curfew and loitering (126%)
    • (Snyder & Sigmund, 2006)

• More youths than ever before entered the juvenile system in the period of 1980-2003.
  • LOST OF A Future
- Top 5 major school problems

- **1 in every 100** students at-risk of truancy.

- Age 14-16 it is **1 in every 10**

- Of every **10** Black men in prison in 2004, **6** were school dropouts

Children unaccounted for in school system

- **Texas** **140,000** students to truancy per year
- **New York City**, daily average of **150,000** students
- **Los Angeles** loses track of over **62,000** students daily
- **Detroit** truancy investigation rate of over **66,440** per yr
- **Milwaukee** looses track of **4,000** students per day
- **Philadelphia** looses track of **2,500** students per day

27 states = **1,572,179** unaccounted children in the US as of 2006

(Center for School Improvement Policy Studies Boise State University)
Indiana Stats

- 13% -- about 16,000 children -- recorded 10 or more days of unexcused absences in the 2005-06 school year. (Indianapolis Star, April 2007)

- 44% of Lynhurst students were habitual truants in 2005-2006. Highest truancy rate among middle schools in Marion County (Indiana Department of Education)

- Wayne Township -- 1 in 3 students qualify as chronic absentees. (Indianapolis Star, April 2007)

- IPS, 18% of students recorded 10 or more in 2005-2006.
1. School-Related Incidents  
   (Richart, et al. 2003)
2. Zero Tolerance Policies  
   (Richart, 2001)
3. Inadequacies of the School System  
   (Kozol, 2005)
4. Tracking Absences & Absent Children  
   (Montecel, et al., 2004)
5. Student Engagement not Primary Responsibility  
   (George & Alexander, 1993).
6. Inability to meet Student Needs  
   (DeMedio, 1991)
7. Little focus on School Context  
   (Brundrett, 2004)
8. Not engaging Students @ behavioral, cognitive, & emotional levels  
   (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).
2 = Context
Where?, Why?, When?, Who?

Where?
– In middle school and earlier (Roderick, 2003)

Why?
– Students not engaged in school
– Only academic needs – not psychological/social
– Being pre-disposed to violence (Dunlop, 1996)
– Other reasons as explored in the causes & handout

When?
– After leaving supported elementary schools to go fragmented middle schools (Schulenberg et al., 2004)

Who?
– All children
– Mainly Blacks & Hispanics (Clark, 1994)
– Gifted students from ‘dumbed-down’ curriculum (Yecke, 2003)
Polk and Schafer (1972)

if it is “the way institutions relate to young people, and … [their contributions to the] process that creates youthful deviance, then it is these institutions that must be corrected, not the young who are its casualties” (p.7).

Focus:
Area: Middle Schools
4C Focus

Framework

- Social Demographic Variables
- Social Bonding Opportunities
- Perception of Social Bonding
- Chronic Truancy
Population: Principals (schools, children, parents, teachers)
- most informed persons within the school system to provide perceptions

Location: Indiana (time, access, & cost)

Method: Survey [Online] (Availability & Cost)

Why: Explore Social Bonding

Assumption … > class, ethnicity, location &

Hough (2003) called for more research that …
- Enhance understanding of schools’ climate and environment on students’ bond to school and
- Studies that enhance replication and generalizability (survey).
428 schools invited based on those listed on (IDOE) website as of March 2007

45 cases were dropped for various reasons

- 21 returned as undeliverable emails,
- 21 failed to go to their respective respondents due to them being out of office, no longer employed at location, or moved,
- 3 were duplications in the data set, and

144 Responded (45 private & 99 Public)

Of 45 Private Schools

- Less than 25% of their responses were complete. With comments such as:
  1. “To be frank, we do not experience truancy. It may be because parents are fully involved and paying tuition. Also, students seem to enjoy attending school.”
  2. “We do not have any problem with truancy at our school.”

Private schools removed from the sample resulting in study sample of 99 public middle schools

33% Response Rate (302 public schools invited)
School Demographics

Location
- 57% Rural
- 23% Urban
- 19% Suburban

(similar to the population from which the sample was derived)

School size
- 10 – 1,000

Race
- Over 85% white

Mean Class Size
- 24
General Study Findings (Descriptive)

Does Well

- Well at building opportunities for attachment (50%) and involvement (34%) in their school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures of Social Bond</th>
<th>Total % from each rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Attachment</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“great student-ratio, mentoring, provide role models, kind teachers, and safe environment”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Involvement (attendance)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“activities, strong extracurricular programs, sporting events, group gatherings, and field trips”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Belief (rewards etc.)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for Commitment (membership)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Areas for Improvement to build bond

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Valid % per Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Building</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individual meetings,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Survey of student interest,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reaching all kids,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More opportunities to get involved,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reaching out to disengaged students more deliberately,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time with staff, and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be more sensitive to student perception of fairness and equity among others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life Skill Development</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teaching respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Socialization skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Environment Enhancements</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More Parent Involvement</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More Teacher Involvement</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Related Programs</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Who is most responsible for creating social bond?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Total # of respondents for each choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rank 1</td>
<td>Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 2</td>
<td>Student him/herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 3</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 4</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 5</td>
<td>School Principals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank 6</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What contributes the most to chronic truancy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Percent Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family/Parental Influence</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Factors</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home environment</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Abilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rates of chronic truancy is influenced by schools’ social bonding opportunities and principals’ perceptions of students’ social bond to school

- Invest in building school environment
- Invest in school programs and opportunities for students to be
  - Involved, Committed, Attached
  - And to believe in value of school

- Counting absences no longer helps to understand entire picture of truancy
- Black and Hispanic students are not fully supported
- Policies of Exclusion do not help to respond appropriately to truancy