

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Theses and Dissertations

7-25-2011

Leading change in a traditional teaching environment: establishing positive student behaviors through proactive classroom management

Ann Toth

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Toth, Ann, "Leading change in a traditional teaching environment: establishing positive student behaviors through proactive classroom management" (2011). *Theses and Dissertations*. 319.
<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/319>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact graduateresearch@rowan.edu.

**LEADING CHANGE IN A TRADITIONAL TEACHING ENVIRONMENT:
ESTABLISHING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIORS THROUGH
PROACTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

by
Ann Toth

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For a degree of
Doctor of Education
At
Rowan University
May, 2011

Dissertation Chair: Maria Sudeck, Ph.D.

© 2011 Ann Toth

Dedication

To my parents, Charles and Barbara Stout, thank you for your unwavering faith in my ability to achieve my dreams. Your support has encouraged me to, “reach for the stars, even the stars that I think are out of reach.” You are both extraordinary parents and I am so thankful for your unconditional love which has allowed me to discover life, grow intellectually, and become the person that I am today.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my chairperson, Dr. Maria Sudeck, for her guidance and patience while I journeyed on the dissertation path. Dr. Sudeck, thank you for your continual support for my project and generously sharing your knowledge.

To my family, Steve my husband, Megan and Julia my daughters, thank you for standing by me while I spent numerous weekends reading and attached to my laptop typing. You have made many sacrifices so that I could concentrate on my schoolwork. Thank you with all my heart.

Finally, to my parents, Charles and Barbara Stout, you are truly the “Builder of Dreams.” You have always provided me with the tools to be successful in life. Thank you for giving me the chance to fulfill my dream of attaining a doctorate degree.

Abstract

Ann Toth

LEADING CHANGE IN A TRADITIONAL TEACHING ENVIRONMENT: ESTABLISHING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIORS THROUGH PROACTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

2010/2011

Maria Sudeck, Ph.D.
Educational Leadership

Disruptive student behaviors in the classroom jeopardize the learning environment in schools across the United States (Conroy, Sutherland, Snyder, & Marsh 2008; Crum, 2004). Presently, most schools apply a reactionary punitive discipline system in hopes of changing these disruptive student behaviors (Glasser, 1998; Havill, 2004; Jenkins, 1994; Kohn, 2006). At the Long Middle School, the present initiative is to change the teachers' approach from controlling their students' behaviors to building relationships, facilitating intrinsic motivation for appropriate student behaviors, and teaching self-management skills through a proactive classroom management approach in conjunction with a learning team model. The purpose of this research was to develop the learning community concept through the implementation of a proactive classroom management model, which would transform the classroom learning environment for students and teachers from one that is reactionary and punitive, to one that is proactive and intrinsically motivating. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with volunteer participants. A survey questionnaire determined the staff's current knowledge about proactive classroom management. A focus group revealed the impact that a workshop had on changing the teachers' classroom management techniques to proactive as well as

infused with the learning community concept. A personal journal provided credibility for the study's findings.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	v
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	x
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Context.....	1
Conceptual Framework.....	4
Significance of Study.....	6
Research Questions.....	10
Definition of Terms.....	13
Limitations of the Study.....	14
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	18
Acquiring Classroom Management Skills	18
Classroom Management that Fosters Academic and Social Skills.....	20
Learning Community Concept.....	21
Choice Theory and the Learning-team Model	22
Learning Teams Complement Proactive Classroom Management Techniques	24
Proactive Classroom Management	25
Classwide Peer-assisted Self-management Classroom Management Techniques	27
Classwide Peer Tutoring Classroom Management Techniques.....	28

Table of Contents (Continued)

Discipline Without Stress Classroom Management Techniques29

Beyond Punishment and Rewards30

Character Education Compliments Proactive Classroom Management31

Students Making Meaning of School and Classroom Rules33

Conclusion34

Chapter 3 Methodology39

 Overview for Methodology.....39

 Research Design39

 Data Collection Strategies42

 Participants.....46

 Change Theory Implementation47

 Research Cycles49

 Data Analysis51

 Conclusion52

Chapter 4 Findings.....54

 Context of the Study54

 Data Sources56

 Analysis of Data.....59

 Semi-Structured Interviews59

 Survey Questionnaire.....68

 Focus Group.....75

 Personal Journal77

Discussion.....81

Table of Contents (Continued)

Impact of Findings	83
The Study’s Limitations, Biases, Assumptions, and Insights.....	86
Limitations	86
Biases	87
Assumptions and Insights	87
Implications for the Study’s Theoretical Framework	88
Conclusion	89
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Implications.....	91
The Research.....	91
Proactive Classroom Management	92
Teacher’s Attitudes	93
Climate of Teacher/Student Relationships.....	94
Leadership Traits	94
Implications for Proactive Classroom Management Practice	95
The Change Process	97
Leadership.....	99
Future Research Studies.....	103
References.....	105
Appendix A Teacher Semi-structured Interview Protocol.....	111
Appendix B Survey Questionnaire	112
Appendix C Teacher Focus Group Questions	115
Appendix D Personal Journal	116

List of Figures

Figure	Page
Figure 1 Leadership Traits Documented in the Personal Journal	78

List of Tables

Table		Page
Table 1	Triangulation Mix	58
Table 2	Experiences That Impacted the Participants to Become a Teacher	61
Table 3	Experience in Middle School.....	62
Table 4	Teacher Practices for Developing a Relationship with Students.....	63
Table 5	Factors That Influence a Teacher’s Classroom Management Practice.....	64
Table 6	Techniques for Addressing Disruptive Student Behaviors in the Classroom...65	
Table 7	Influences for Positive Student Behaviors in the Classroom.....	66
Table 8	Characteristics of the Perfect Student.....	66
Table 9	Factors for Increasing Student Intrinsic Motivation for Learning and Responsible Learning Behaviors	67
Table 10	Does the Middle School’s Culture Promote Positive Student Behaviors?	68
Table 11	Section 1 Participants’ Responses	70
Table 12	Section 2 Importance of Each Choice in the Classroom	72
Table 13	Section 3 Participants’ Definition for Proactive Classroom Management	73
Table 14	Participants’ Perceptions Regarding Professional Development and Classroom Management.....	74
Table 15	Section 4 Teachers’ Preference for Professional Development.....	75
Table 16	Characteristics of Proactive Classroom Management Techniques.....	80

Chapter 1

Introduction

Context

Disruptive student behaviors in the classroom compromise the learning environment in schools across the United States (Conroy, Sutherland, & Snyder, 2008; Crum, 2004). Research has determined that today's schools are working with an archaic system for changing student behaviors (Glasser, 1998; Havill, 2004; Jenkins, 1994; Kohn, 1999, 2006). The teacher's response to their students' inappropriate behaviors needs to encompass the psychological, social, and academic needs of their students (Baker, 2005; Glasser, 1998; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Marshall, 2007). Additionally, a majority of teachers manage inappropriate student behaviors through a reactive approach, which involves manipulation and coercion (Farmer et al., 2006; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Little & Akin-Little, 2008; Tierno, 1991). A reactive approach to inappropriate student behaviors involves the student displaying an inappropriate behavior and the teacher reacting to the behavior with a punishment. Teachers need to change their approach from externally controlling their students' behaviors to building relationships and facilitating intrinsic motivation for appropriate behaviors in their students through a proactive approach (Glasser, 1988, 1998; Kohn, 1999, 2006).

The researcher William Glasser (1998) in his book *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom*, determined that all students from all levels are not doing their best work in school. Glasser (1998) was surprised to find that even the A students do not always put their best effort into their schoolwork. This finding validates

the need to find a student behavior modification program that can be utilized with the entire student body. Students who want to learn and students who do not want to learn are looking for something or someone who will inspire them to learn. This objective can be achieved through the application of a learning team model that engages students in the learning environment, and a proactive behavior modification program.

The teachers at the Long Middle School voiced concern about their students' inappropriate behaviors in the learning environment. The teachers defined inappropriate behaviors in semi-structured interviews (Appendix A) as disruptive, disrespectful, uncooperative, and distracting. These behaviors impede the teaching and learning environment. If changing student behaviors is vital to student success, then schools need to step back to identify proactive teaching methods that will better meet the holistic needs of their students, psychologically, emotionally, and academically.

The teachers and administrators at the Long Middle School work diligently to develop student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning. Therefore, the Long Middle School teachers would like to expand their knowledge of classroom management techniques for facilitating student intrinsic motivation along with responsibility which will affect the students' social, psychological, and academic growth. Presently, the Long Middle School utilizes a punishment and reward system to change inappropriate student behaviors. This type of system is not the best choice for building intrinsic motivation and a sense of responsibility for ones' learning.

Internal motivation fostered through a learning team model in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques may ensure that students will understand that they are learning for their own improvement and help develop student social,

psychological, as well as academic needs. A reactive classroom management model based on a punishment and reward system provides the students with a controlled learning environment, which fails to teach students how to manage their inappropriate behaviors. Jenkins (1994) states that stickers, prizes, and pieces of candy cheapen the students' accomplishments (p. 270). In addition, the work of Alfie Kohn (2006) corroborates Jenkin's statement about rewards cheapening students' accomplishments. Kohn (2006) states that, "rewards like punishments, can only manipulate someone's actions. They do nothing to help a child become a kind or caring person" (p. 34). The self management skills taught through the implementation of a learning team model and supported by proactive classroom management techniques may provide students with an opportunity to practice the skills that are needed to be intrinsically motivated and responsible learners. Teachers across the United States and at the Long Middle School want to prepare their students to be productive members of society. Therefore, teachers who want their students to be responsible learners provide learning opportunities for their students that develop engagement, good choices, and intrinsic motivation (Glasser, 1988, 1998; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Nelsen et al., 2000).

Conceptual Framework

This study's learning community concept combined with proactive classroom management is influenced by Piaget's constructivism. The constructivist theory supports the principles of the learning team model and proactive classroom management for the development of student intrinsic motivation for learning and fostering responsible learning behaviors. Kohn (2006) substantiates the constructivist connection with learning teams. Kohn states that, "Learning comes from discovering surprising things—perhaps

from grappling with a peer's different perspective—and feeling the need to reformulate one's own approach” (p. 66). The learning team model negates the teachers' familiar role of lecturing in front of the class and it encourages student autonomy in relation to their learning experiences in the classroom. The constructivist theory corroborates the proactive approach for developing student behaviors that facilitate responsible learners. There are several components of the constructivist theory that are shared with proactive classroom management. For example, the constructivist approach for learning is based on caring teacher and student relationships, which build student capacity for developing responsibility for learning through a proactive approach (Dollard & Christensen, 1996).

Another theory that supports the learning team model and proactive classroom management principles as a viable catalyst for improving the teaching and learning environment is theory X and theory Y. Theory X assumes that people need to be controlled and coerced for organizational compliance (Fullan, 2008; McGregor, 1957). Therefore, when people do not have internal motivation, they need to be directed through punitive measures. Theory X validates the reactive classroom management approach, which also follows first order thinking. However, Theory Y assumes that people want to learn how to be intrinsically motivated and develop responsible behaviors that will benefit not only themselves, but the organization as a whole (Fullan, 2008; McGregor, 1957). Theory Y is second order thinking and validates the principles of the learning team model and proactive classroom management as a sustainable classroom management technique for developing students' responsibility for their behaviors and learning process.

This study utilizes semi-structured interviews (Appendix A) with teachers. The

interviews were analyzed for codes, themes, and categories which revealed the teachers' views on influences that increase student self-motivation/responsibility in the classroom. A survey questionnaire (Appendix B) identified the Long Middle School's teachers' understanding of proactive classroom management and determined their interest for learning about the topic. In addition, the survey impacted the professional development opportunity that was offered for the teachers to learn about the learning team model in combination with proactive classroom management techniques. The teachers chose a workshop format for their professional development opportunity. The workshop disseminated information on learning team models along with proactive classroom management techniques that could be implemented together in the classroom. As a follow-up to the workshop I conducted a focus group.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop the learning community concept in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques to transform the classroom learning environment for students and teachers from a reactive approach for classroom management to a proactive approach. The integration of a learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques may foster responsible student behavior choices in the classroom through a teaching and learning paradigm shift, which would promote a proactive, holistic behavior management approach in the classroom. In this study, teachers identified appropriate student behaviors that contribute to the learning environment. Volunteer teachers participated in implementing a learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques that they learned through a workshop. The proactive classroom management techniques encompassed the needs of

the whole student to develop their intrinsic motivation to take responsibility for their learning and behavior. The teachers who adopted this approach for classroom management eliminated the reactionary punishment and reward system for impacting student behaviors, which are counter-productive to the learning environment. In Marvin Marshall's book (2007) *Discipline Without Stress, Punishments or Rewards* he states that, "giving rewards for behaving appropriately encourages dependency, a process that is diametrically opposed to raising responsibility" (p. 39). Teaching students to be responsible without utilizing a punishment and reward system will necessitate a change in how the teachers deal with inappropriate student behaviors nationwide as well as at the Long Middle School.

This study addresses the need for students to develop intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning which will affect their behaviors in the classroom while meeting the psychological, social, as well as academic needs of the Long Middle School's students. The purpose of this qualitative action research study was to facilitate the development of the learning community concept through a proactive classroom management model for the improvement of student learning behaviors. Proactive classroom management models were informed by several researchers: Glasser (1988), Kamps et al. (2008), Kohn (1999), Marshall (2007), and Mitchem, Young, West, and Benyo (2001). In addition, learning team models was based on the work of Glasser (1988) and Putnam and Burke (1998). Their work has been found to influence the development of responsible as well as intrinsically motivated learning behaviors. Each proactive classroom management technique and learning team model promotes

teaching students appropriate behaviors that will allow them to be motivated and self-reliant learners.

The principles from each model were introduced to the Long Middle School's teachers at a workshop. Volunteer teachers were recruited to implement a learning team model in conjunction with a proactive classroom management model. The volunteer teachers determined which model or models that they would implement in their classroom. There are several factors that influence the classroom management techniques teachers implement in their classroom. Researchers have found that teachers will choose a classroom management model based on their own teaching practices, morals, and ethical belief system as well as student expectations in the classroom (Richardson & Fallona, 2001; Traynor, 2003).

Applying all or some of the principals presented in the workshop would prepare teachers to teach students how to make good decisions in regard to behavior for school and life endeavors. As stated before, at the Long Middle School student behaviors are controlled through the familiar punishment and reward system. This study's objective was to shift the teachers' approach from the familiar reward and punishment system for controlling student behavior, to a self management, intrinsically motivated student behavior system. Proactive classroom management coupled with a learning team model teach students to make responsible choices in regard to their behavior and ambitions as a student in the middle school. Additionally, this study allowed teachers to apply classroom management models that were practical, could be integrated into the curriculum, and provided motivation for appropriate student behaviors.

This study seeks to change the mindset of teachers from a reactive approach to a

proactive approach when changing inappropriate student behaviors to behaviors that are intrinsically motivated for learning. A proactive approach for behavior management was adopted through the influence of a learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques that take into account the students' psychological, social, and academic needs as well as the teachers' teaching needs in the classroom. Therefore, this study contributes to teacher development of the learning community concept along with the integration of a proactive classroom management model, to transform the learning environment for teachers and students to intrinsically motivating.

Classroom management techniques that incorporate punitive and coercive reactions for managing student behavior solve behavior issues with a temporary fix. This temporary fix holds the school captive in a first order change philosophy. Proactive classroom management techniques coupled with a learning team model fosters opportunities to develop second order change, which takes into account the students' and teachers' needs in the classroom setting. The premise of proactive classroom management and the learning team concept is to teach students how to maintain behaviors that encourage social and academic growth that is sustainable. Proactive classroom management in combination with a learning team model teaches students how to apply appropriate behaviors, which will be with them today, tomorrow, and years to come. Detentions, suspensions, and expulsions are reactive approaches for dealing with inappropriate student behaviors. Proactive classroom management and learning teams are about choices, student choices, which allow them to develop their reasoning skills for applying appropriate behaviors. The implementation of proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning team model ensures that classroom teachers are able to

fulfill the school's unique student needs by developing responsible learning behaviors that are intrinsically motivating for learning in the classroom.

Research Questions

This study's research questions focus on the students' psychological, social, and academic development in relation to building student responsibility as well as intrinsic motivation for their learning through a teacher facilitated behavior modification initiative. The literature validates the need for teaching students to manage their behaviors, which ensures an optimal learning environment for all students (Darch & Kame'enui, 2004; Gable, Hester, Hester, Hendrickson, & Sze, 2005; MacKenzie, 2003; Marshall, 2007; Nelson et al., 2000; Smith & Rivera, 1995). In addition, the questions illuminate teacher development for working with disruptive students along with the improvement of student and teacher relationships in the classroom setting.

This qualitative action research study seeks to improve student behaviors in the classroom through teaching students to be intrinsically motivated as well as responsible learners while facilitating student psychological, social, and academic growth. This study seeks to answer the following questions pertaining to the Long Middle School's teachers and students ability to work together to improve teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom:

1. How will the techniques as outlined in the proactive classroom management models assist the teachers to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation in their students?
2. How did the action research intervention change the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students?

3. How did the overall climate of teacher/student relationships improve due to the intervention?
4. What leadership traits did I utilize and develop while changing the middle school's mind-set in regard to working with disruptive student behaviors?

The Long Middle School is located in a suburban community in central New Jersey, with approximately 26,000 residents. The racial makeup of the town is 97% white, 2% Hispanic, and 1% other. The majority of the community is made-up of single-family homes with an average family income of \$61,000. The Long School District has six schools: three elementary schools K-4, one elementary school for grades 5-6, one middle school for grades 7-8, and one high school. The school district serves approximately 5,000 students, which includes the middle school's 787 students.

The Long Middle School's student population consists of students in seventh and eighth grade. There are 612 students who are general education students and 175 students who are in the special education program. Failure to follow procedures is the main reason for a student to be referred to the vice principal's office. Failure to follow procedures is defined as a student not conforming to the classroom or school rules. For example, a student may not follow the rule about not chewing gum, talking back to an adult, running in the hallway, lateness to school or class, as well as unable to participate appropriately in class. The teachers who work with students who display these behaviors and refer the students to the vice principal's office, defer their ability to work with these students to the vice principal. The vice principal then assigns these students detentions, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension. A learning team model, together with proactive classroom management techniques, may allow the teachers to create a learning

environment that would alleviate the reliance on the school-wide discipline policy and punitive methods for student compliance.

Last year, the after school detention supervisors commented on the large number of students, who on a regular basis, cut office detention. Similarly, the students were not attending teacher detentions. The students' regard for rules and following directions was in a declining state. One teacher described the school as the Long Middle Zoo. It was at that time that I realized if what we were doing to correct student behavior was not working then it was time to look for another solution for the problem.

I came across School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), which is a school wide proactive approach for developing appropriate student behaviors (OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2004). This approach for working with students who display inappropriate student behaviors does not utilize detentions, suspensions, or expulsions. Appropriate student behaviors are taught and modeled by the teachers and administration. The students are taught how to make responsible choices in regard to their behavior and how it impacts their learning. The students' needs are at the root of the support program, not the teachers' needs.

I presented the SWPBS program to my principal and vice principal, who were receptive to the concepts. However, they were not ready to move away from the reactive approach for working with the student's inappropriate behaviors. The status quo and what is familiar will prevail until the principal and vice principal can be challenged to think outside of the box (Glasser, 1988). That said, the middle school teachers still struggled with how to teach their students appropriate behaviors, which would foster intrinsic motivation for learning and responsible behaviors in the classroom. The literature

validates that students who take responsibility for their learning and are motivated through proactive classroom management techniques display positive student behaviors in the classroom (Crum, 2004; Glasser, 1998; Marshall, 2007; Mitchem, 2001; Tierno, 1991). Therefore, this study will fulfill the Long Middle School's need to develop teacher capacity for implementing learning team models in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques, which will facilitate responsible student learning behaviors.

Currently, the Long Middle School utilizes a reactive approach for dealing with inappropriate student behaviors. This approach is evident in the discipline practices that are described in the school-wide discipline plan. Research finds that a punishment system that is punitive temporarily fixes inappropriate student behaviors and enforces a demeaning learning environment for the student (Glasser, 1988, 1998; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Nelson et al., 2000). A reactive approach to discipline does not provide the student with the opportunity to apply decision making skills in regard to their learning and behaviors. To this end, the teachers of the Long Middle School are in a position to change the reactive approach for dealing with inappropriate student behaviors in their classrooms. This change may eventually have an impact on implementing a proactive school-wide plan for working with disruptive students.

Through the implementation of a learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques for developing appropriate student behaviors in the classroom, the Long Middle School's teachers are in a position to impact the development of a school-wide proactive plan which will cease the use of the current reactive school-wide plan. Glasser (1988) discusses in his book, *Choice Theory In The Classroom*, that administrators are not willing to try new learning initiatives since the

status quo is safe and the overwhelming fear of the unknown can be mentally consuming. However, teachers should not be afraid to try new learning techniques in the classroom that might foster student /teacher relationships as well as improve the teaching and learning environment.

When administrators see the new change initiative in the classroom and how it encourages students to learn, the administration will be encouraged to support the new learning initiative (Glasser, 1998). Administrators need to be inspired, motivated, and assured that the new learning initiative will be beneficial for student learning and the school's overall learning environment. Therefore, the teachers of the Long Middle School who implement the learning team model combined with proactive classroom management techniques will be initiating a new model or fostering second order change for dealing with disruptive student behaviors.

Definitions of Terms

Proactive classroom management techniques are an option that can be utilized for fostering intrinsic motivation and responsible learning behaviors. The researcher Henley (2005), in the book *Classroom Management: A Proactive Approach*, defines proactive classroom management as the act and science of fostering a group of students into a cohesive group of learners. Therefore, proactive classroom management is the teacher's ability to apply teaching skills, which will promote positive student behaviors in the form of self-reliant and intrinsically motivated learning behaviors.

The **learning team concept** is best defined by Putnam and Burke (1998) in *Organizing and Managing Classroom Learning Communities*. Putnam and Burke (1998)

have found that the learning team model promotes academic, social, and personal responsibility. The learning team model is a culture that encourages a sense of community and acceptance of differences within a heterogeneous learning environment (Putnam & Burke, 1998). Student learning is centered on lessons, which develop problem solving skills, promote exploration, and build connections to prior knowledge (Putnam & Burke, 1998). Proactive classroom management and learning teams together complement student development of autonomous student learning behaviors, which develop responsible as well as intrinsic motivation for learning.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations that will impact the study's findings. The limitations provide an opportunity for me to apply my democratic, affiliative, and moral leadership styles. The leadership styles that are utilized can make all the difference in how limitations are perceived by the researcher, participants, and the readers of the study.

The first limitation has to do with assumptions. I assume that all of the middle school's teachers will be cooperative and willing to participate in my action research study. The teachers that I invite to participate in an interview may not be interested in sharing their opinions about classroom management. Additionally, the teachers may not be willing to implement new classroom management techniques since they are inundated with material to implement for the NJ ASK. Therefore, learning how to implement a new classroom management technique may not be enthusiastically received by the teaching staff.

The second limitation is the support and cooperation that I am counting on from my school district's administration. I assume that my school district's administration is

excited for my action research topic and will fully support my research endeavors. That said, the district administration might either embrace a staff member that wants to improve practice or look at the researcher as a threat to their current practices.

The third limitation involves my leadership styles and skills. I have democratic, affiliative, and moral leadership characteristics that I am depending upon for facilitating the implementation of the study's topic. As I journey down the action research path of reflection I may discover that my leadership styles are either contributive or not conducive to implementing second order change in my school. Therefore, I will keep an open mind for learning how to apply new leadership styles, which will effectively impact my action research topic.

Lastly, the fourth limitation involves the political climate within and outside the school. Recently, a new contract was ratified by both the teachers and board of education, which the veteran teachers find to be demeaning for their years of service. The contract negotiating team for the school district's union members decided to divide the money or the percentage of money unevenly among the union members. For instance, a teacher who has been with the district for 25 years is getting a 1.99% raise. However a teacher who has been with the district for 15 years is getting a 5.00% raise. As confusing as this may seem to the average logically thinking person it is a reality for the Long Township School District's union members. That said, many of the teachers in my building are refusing to donate time for anything above and beyond the average workday. I am apprehensive that this underlying feeling of bitterness will affect the selection of volunteer participants that will donate their time to my project.

My subsequent chapters develop the parameters of my research as well as

describe in more detail how my leadership facilitated the adoption of the learning team model combined with proactive classroom techniques within the Long Middle School's teaching and learning environment. Chapter 2 validates the need for my study as well as provides background information through prior research on the topic. Chapter 3 describes the setting, participants, and methods for data collection. Chapter 4 describes the study's findings and provides a detailed analysis of the data. Finally, Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the studies' results and implications for further research. In addition, in Chapter 5 I describe my leadership characteristics and how I applied them in my work setting while implementing the learning team model in combination with proactive classroom management techniques into the classroom learning environment.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Acquiring Classroom Management Skills

Beginning teachers often feel unprepared for dealing with disruptive student behaviors (Baker, 2005; Melnick & Meister, 2008; Obenchain & Taylor, 2005; Veenman, 1984). They are under the impression that their students will collectively be attentive and ready to learn (Melnick & Meister, 2008). However, reality sets in quickly and beginning teachers realize that not all students are eager and ready to learn. An international study of beginning teachers explored their first year of teaching to gain insight into their perceived teaching problems (Veenman, 1984). Teachers said classroom discipline was the most serious problem they faced (Veenman, 1984). Veenman (1984) and Richardson and Fallona (2001) have found that beginning teachers feel that their teacher preparation programs did not provide sufficient exposure to classroom management techniques. Additionally, principals report that beginning teachers are not adequately prepared with classroom management techniques for working with disruptive students (Veenman, 1984). Beginning teachers often acquire the pertinent classroom management practices through experience and professional development.

In addition, teachers have to learn how to initiate classroom management models that are able to accommodate different student needs. Each student has a unique home situation, learning ability, as well as social, psychological, and emotional needs. Today's classrooms serve students who come from diverse backgrounds (Baker, 2005). Teachers have students with different academic levels, social skills, and behavior disorders (Baker,

2005). Teachers who learn to differentiate behavior modifications and clearly state the expected behaviors have greater success in the classroom (Baker, 2005; Crum, 2004; Evertson & Weade, 1989).

However, for a beginning teacher differentiating behavior modifications coupled with the many other tasks can be overwhelming. Experience is critical for learning to deal with students who have different academic, social, and emotional needs (Melnick & Meister, 2008). Research determines that teacher preparation programs should initiate field service programs early in the pre-service teacher's college career (Melnick & Meister, 2008). Additionally, a full year of student teaching, which exposes the pre-service teacher to a multitude of teaching experiences, will help to build confidence with applying appropriate classroom management strategies (Melnick & Meister, 2008).

Despite experience, though, veteran classroom teachers sometimes also have issues with classroom management (Malmgren, Trezek, & Paul, 2005; Obenchain & Taylor, 2005; Veenman, 1984). Negative classroom management issues foster teacher burnout, which causes experienced teachers to retire early (Malmgren et al., 2005; Obenchain & Taylor, 2005). Hence, classroom management issues are the primary concern for both beginning and experienced teachers (Little & Akin-Little, 2008). Because classroom management is such a primary concern, many models have been developed to assist both beginning and experienced teachers. Additionally, teachers must decide which classroom management style would be conducive for student learning and maintaining positive student behaviors.

Classroom Management that Fosters Academic and Social Skills

There are a multitude of classroom management models that can be applied to create an inviting and engaging learning atmosphere (Kamps et al., 2008; Marshall, 2005; Mitchem, 2001; Mitchem et al., 2001; Thornberg, 2008). A well-developed plan for classroom management maintains coherent and consistent classroom routines and student engagement. Teachers typically choose classroom management models based on their own beliefs of the pedagogical soundness of the particular model (Traynor, 2003). Furthermore, teacher expectations of student behavior dictate the implementation of a particular classroom management model.

A teacher's moral character and beliefs influence the implementation of specific classroom management strategies (Richardson & Fallona, 2001). If teachers view their roles as change agents in our society then they feel responsible to teach their students academic as well as social skills (Sanger, 2001). A teacher who believes he or she is preparing students to live in society socially, emotionally, and academically, will incorporate skills in his or her lessons to promote such preparation. Some teachers think it is their moral obligation to teach academic as well as social skills, which foster successful intellectual and emotional growth (Sanger, 2001). Schools, society, as well as people, operate in both a social and emotional state, which perpetuates the need to develop the learning needs of the whole student (Norris, 2003).

The implementation of a learning team model in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques ensures that the academic, psychological, and social skills of today's students are addressed in the classroom. Addressing the diverse needs of the student fosters their ability to be successful in their future learning endeavors.

Therefore, by combining the learning team model with proactive classroom management techniques, teachers are able to develop and maintain a learning environment that prepares students for twenty-first century learning and future employment opportunities.

Learning Community Concept

Putnam and Burke's (1998) definition of community is, "the product of how people relate to each other" (p. 40). A learning community is about forming relationships, collaborating, and sharing learning experiences. Learning communities consist of students and the teacher learning together as a team. Diversity is celebrated in learning communities, which provide students with rich learning experiences. Putnam and Burke (1998) state, "We do not learn from sameness but from the differences around us. The contrasts, differences, and even oppositions found in typical classrooms can be understood as a positive resource" (p. 40). Learning is a journey that can be enhanced by the knowledge of colleagues and peers. Each person brings his or her creativeness, prior knowledge, and expertise to the learning community classroom. Competition within a learning community classroom is non-existent. Students do not compete for the teacher's praise or a reward. Instead, in a learning community everyone is equal (Putnam & Burke, 1998). The student is able to gain a sense of satisfaction for contributing and helping to solve a problem within the learning community classroom. The teacher is an active facilitator in the classroom allowing the students to discover knowledge through their own learning experiences, instead of the traditional teaching method of the teacher lecturing in front of the classroom and imparting knowledge from the podium. Therefore, learning community teachers define themselves as instructional leaders or facilitators of

learning, in contrast to a classroom manager who maintains student behavior and holds the keys to the knowledge that the students must learn (Putnam & Burke, 1998).

The learning community classroom engages students in large and small group/team activities that allow them to take responsibility for their learning in a nonjudgmental environment. Putnam and Burke (1998) state that, “the culture of the classroom learning community is understood as one in which teacher and students can interact with safety and satisfaction” (p. 45). Heterogeneous learning community groups allow for the interaction and joining of students with cognitive abilities from all levels. The students learn to help and support each other through a problem-solving project that provides an avenue for all students to shine. The teacher maintains a learning environment that invites diversity, idea sharing, and risk taking on the part of both the students and teacher. The learning community classroom exudes the notion that, “We are in it together,” in other words, “Lets Learn Together.”

Putnam and Burke (1998) have found that the learning community classroom is based on the concepts of team building, relationship building, and engaging with students to develop a learning atmosphere of learning togetherness. Proactive classroom management models and the learning community concept complement each other for fostering student responsibility and intrinsic motivation in the classroom environment. Both concepts are based on the premise of building relationships, sharing, and creating caring learning environments for all students.

Choice Theory and the Learning-team Model

William Glasser (1988, 1998) has found that discipline programs harm school systems across America, which is similar to Alfie Kohn’s (1999, 2006) research on

classroom management programs. Glasser's (1998) research has determined that teachers who utilize punishment and a coercive system for controlling their students will hinder learning in their classrooms. Hence, assignments that provide in-depth use of knowledge and make connections to prior knowledge will engage the student in actively applying the knowledge learned in the classroom. Students who are forced to learn information for the purpose of regurgitating it on a test experience boredom and are more likely to cause disruptive behavior in the classroom. Students want learning to be fun, challenging, and, engaging (Glasser, 1988).

In Glasser's (1988) book, *Choice Theory In The Classroom*, he describes a teaching technique, which he calls the learning-team model. The learning-team model is also known as the cooperative learning model. However, Glasser's learning-team model is based on the teacher creating a long-term project that builds on student's prior knowledge to problem solve and apply their knowledge in a meaningful group project. The teacher becomes a facilitator who encourages and supports their students during the assignment. The teacher actively circulates around the room, which allows students to ask questions and the teacher can provide constructive criticism. Glasser (1988) suggests that four roles be randomly assigned within each group:

1. Encourager of participation. In a friendly way encourages all members of the group to participate in the discussion, sharing their ideas and feelings.
2. Praiser. Compliments group members who do their assigned work and contribute to the learning of the group.
3. Summarizer. Restates the ideas and feelings expressed in the discussion whenever it is appropriate.

4. Checker. Makes sure everyone is doing their assigned job and all group members understand their task for completing the assignment. (p. 110)

The four roles ensure that all members actively participate and the work is evenly divided among the group. Also, Glasser suggests that the teacher place the students in groups instead of the students choosing their groups. This allows each group to be heterogeneous and the groups work at the same pace as well as level of ability. Glasser's premise for the learning-team model is to provide students with a learning atmosphere that is caring, meaningful, and fun. Glasser (1988) states, "Keep in mind that anything you might do that would help them decide that knowledge is not only power, it is also friendship and fun, will make school a far better place for everyone" (p. 130).

Learning Teams Complement Proactive Classroom Management Techniques

The learning-team models developed by Putnam and Burke (1998) and Glasser (1988) emanate the notion of "We are a learning-team: Working, sharing, and learning together." The teacher is both a facilitator of learning in the classroom and a member of the numerous learning teams in the classroom. The teacher and students share knowledge, information, and learning as a cohesive team. Each team member is given a role to play in their learning team, which contributes to the idea that each person is important to the learning process in the classroom and allows for the students' academic, social, and psychological growth. Glasser's (1988) five basic needs, survival, belonging, power, freedom, and fun are attainable for students through a teacher planned learning team initiative that is embedded in the everyday learning environment. In addition, proactive classroom management techniques coupled with the learning-team model transcend the

learning environment for students and teachers to a higher level of learning behaviors, which encompass the student's holistic needs.

Proactive classroom management techniques partnered with the learning-team model is a powerful teaching tool when it is the basis for the inner workings of the teaching and learning environment in the classroom. Both concepts, when merged together, envelope students in an atmosphere that inspires responsible and intrinsically motivated learning behaviors. Furthermore, learning teams and proactive classroom management facilitate relationship building, team building, knowledge and information sharing, and a learning atmosphere of learning togetherness. The following is a description of the types of proactive classroom management techniques that complement the learning-team model as an integral component for ensuring an optimal teaching and learning environment for students and teachers.

Proactive Classroom Management

Middle and high school teachers find that inappropriate student social behaviors are the most disrupting classroom behaviors, which are defined as stealing, bullying, harassment, and destroying school property (Jenson, Olympia, Farley, & Clark, 2004; Johnson & Fullwood, 2006; Kokkinos, Panayiotou & Davazoglou, 2004). Today's middle and high schools need classroom management models that promote appropriate social behaviors (Conroy et al., 2008; Little & Akin-Little, 2008). Proactive classroom management instills student responsibility for learning and instructs the student on appropriate classroom behaviors.

The premise for proactive classroom management is to teach students appropriate social and academic behaviors (Conroy et al., 2008; Jenson et al., 2004; Little & Akin-

Little, 2008; Mitchem, 2001; Norris, 2003). In this model, teachers teach and model appropriate classroom behaviors instead of waiting for an inappropriate behavior and reacting. Moreover, students are regularly praised for appropriate social and academic classroom behaviors. Praising students who display positive social and academic behaviors places more emphasis on appropriate classroom behaviors rather than focusing on inappropriate ones (Jenson et al., 2004; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008; Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2000). This finding is in contrast to Kohn's (1999, 2006) finding on the affects of praise. Nonetheless, teachers who increase their rate of praise during instruction contribute to positive student behaviors in the classroom (Jenson et al., 2004; Reinke et al., 2008; Sutherland et al., 2000).

A proactive classroom management model necessitates that the teacher develops guidelines for classroom routines, layout of the room, and a plan for teaching and modeling acceptable student behaviors (Mitchem, 2005). Proactive classroom management strategies can be applied for classroom discipline prevention (Zuckerman, 2007). The proactive strategies allow the teacher to manage common discipline problems as well as manage chronically disruptive children (Jenson et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 2007). In addition, teachers can prevent inappropriate student behaviors through thorough lesson planning and teaching classroom routines, rules, and norms (Zuckerman, 2007). Moreover, research finds that teachers avoid student classroom disturbances through changing the pace of the lesson, boosting student interest, and proactively redirecting off-task behavior (Zuckerman, 2007). Additionally, it has been found that teachers who boost their students' self-esteem and build a rapport with their students have less disruptive student behaviors (Jenson et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 2007).

Hence, proactive classroom management promotes the building of teacher and student relationships (Conroy et al., 2008; Jenson et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 2007). A mutual respect is shared between the teacher and student, which minimizes disruptive student behavior. Teachers have to “walk the talk,” which means that both teachers and students have to follow the same rules. Teachers model and teach the rules that their students are to follow in the classroom. Thus, teachers who successfully model the rules gain the respect of their students and build a positive teacher and student relationship.

There are several proactive classroom management models that complement the learning-team model and facilitate student responsibility and intrinsic motivation for learning in the classroom. The following section discusses and describes several proactive classroom management techniques that are appropriate for fostering positive classroom interactions between students and teachers.

Classwide Peer-assisted Self-management Classroom Management Technique

The first proactive classroom management technique to be discussed is classwide peer-assisted self-management (CWPASM). CWPASM focuses on fostering appropriate behavior, with particular attention to on-task and social skills development (Mitchem et al., 2001). CWPASM involves student’s self-regulation of behavior by the student. There are three components for self-regulation programs, and some combination of two or more of the following components should be utilized. The first technique that promotes self-regulation is self-monitoring. Self-monitoring involves the students in self-assessment and self-recording of their classroom behavior. The second self-regulating technique is self-evaluation. This reflective component involves the students in developing behavior goals based on their past behavior. The third self-regulating technique involves positive

reinforcements. The teacher or students can administer the positive reinforcement. Together the students and teacher determine specific and appropriate reinforcements (Mitchem, 2001; Mitchem et al., 2001).

In addition, teachers who utilize the self-regulating techniques improve student on-task behavior. If CWPASM is implemented with fidelity, the technique increases positive student behavior (Mitchem et al., 2001). Thus, this proactive classroom management model allows the teacher to teach to the full class and spend less time attending to students or a student who is displaying chronic disruptive behavior. Student responsibility is increased through the ability to control one's own behavior and complete in-class tasks. Researchers have documented that students who have or do not have a disability are successfully able to learn self-management techniques (Mitchem, 2001; Mitchem et al., 2001).

Classwide Peer Tutoring Classroom Management Technique

A second proactive classroom management technique is Classwide Peer Tutoring (CWPT). Research on CWPT has focused on middle school students and their academic and behavior performance (Kamps et al., 2008). CWPT involves students teaching each other specific content and behavior skills, while the teacher facilitates the learning (Kamps et al., 2008). One student is the tutor who monitors and assesses the other student, who is the learner. The students take turns in each role. CWPT can be implemented utilizing a game format. However, this component of CWPT is not necessary for it to be a viable proactive classroom management technique for developing student intrinsic motivation and responsibility.

Pertinent to establishing a proactive classroom management model, CWPT fosters

the development of positive academic and social skills, which can be applied in special education classes as well as general education classes (Kamps et al., 2008). The CWPT technique is based on seven components:

1. Multi-modality format
2. Reciprocal and distributed practice
3. Immediate error correction and feedback
4. Game format with partner pairing and competing teams (optional)
5. Build-in reinforcement
6. High mastery level
7. Measured outcomes (Terry, 2005).

In addition, when CWPT is combined with motivational strategies, such as providing the student with choices and or teacher facilitated student reflective practice, CWPT can be an effective classroom management model, which improves the academic as well as social dispositions of middle school students (Kamps et al., 2008).

Discipline Without Stress Classroom Management Technique

The next proactive classroom management technique is Discipline without Stress. In this technique classroom management is the responsibility of the teacher and behavior management is the responsibility of the student (Marshall, 2005). Marshall (2005) identifies three practices that promote proactive classrooms:

First, teachers who are proactive, promote proactive expectations of their students. Second, teachers who allow students to have options, facilitate student ownership for their learning. Third, teachers who teach students how to reflect on their behavior will increase positive teacher/student interactions. (p. 54)

This approach is a proactive approach that teaches students acceptable social behaviors.

Marshall (2003) states that, “each time you coerce someone into doing something by

using your power of authority, you deprive that person of an opportunity to become more responsible” (Marshall, 2003, para. 6). Marshall’s (2007) proactive classroom management technique allows students to have the opportunity to learn and reflect on their behavior, which has a direct connection to reinforcing student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning.

This proactive classroom management technique is similar to the other techniques discussed in this paper. Marshall’s (2005) proactive classroom management technique fosters academic performance, raises student awareness for learning responsibility, and allows the student to make choices and reflect on their learning behavior in the classroom. Marshall (2005) states, “collaboration is more effective than domination” (p. 28). The teacher is a facilitator in the classroom promoting student learning.

Beyond Punishment and Rewards

Alfie Kohn has enlightened educators and administrators on the philosophy of moving beyond discipline and classroom management for developing students’ motivation for learning to allow students to make meaning of their learning behaviors through self-reflection (Kohn, 1999, 2006). Educators have become dependent upon praise and rewards for controlling their students’ behaviors. Moreover, educators utilize coercion and punishment to mold their students’ learning behaviors into predetermined acceptable student behaviors for the classroom. Rewards, punishments, and artificial praise are temporary fixes and teach children to comply in the classroom for the wrong reasons. When the praise or reward is not given for compliance, students may act-out, since their compliance for the classroom rules is based on the praise or reward. Students displays what they think is acceptable behavior, because they have been told how to

behave, and a reward or praise will follow the display of acceptable behavior. Therefore, students display an artificial acceptable behavior and are detached from internalizing the real motives for the behavior and how it will affect their world inside as well as outside of school. Kohn (2006) has found that students who are dependent upon praise and rewards are less caring, generous, and responsible in the classroom. Kohn's work is about empowering students to become caring, generous, and responsible learners through learning experiences that provide them with the opportunity to problem-solve their behaviors.

Rewards, praise, and punishment are all mechanisms for controlling student behavior. It is a mental mind change for educators to grasp the idea of allowing students to participate in the decision making process within the classroom instead of the teacher dictating rules and regulations. Through this process students learn how to be caring, responsible, and motivated learners in their learning community. Kohn's (1999, 2006) approach for students to learn about caring, responsible, motivating behaviors is for the teacher to become a facilitator for students, who problem-solve their behaviors which they apply in the classroom. Teachers become the guide on the side for students who are learning character development and self-behavior management. Kohn's theory (1999, 2006) for motivating students to be the best that they can be is a process through which students are active participants, rather than recipients of a technique utilized or taught by the teacher.

Character Education Compliments Proactive Classroom Management

As educators learn to juggle more requirements from the federal and state levels in regard to academic instruction, they are also learning to accommodate the needs of a

society looking to improve student moral and character development (Brimi, 2009; Elias, 2010). Elias (2010) states:

Only by developing students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills can we teach all students good study habits, effective skills for group work and positive classroom participation, emotional competence, thoughtful problem solving, and nonviolent decision making. Only by developing moral character will schools create safe learning environments, prevent peer bullying and victimization, decrease discipline problems, reduce cheating, promote ethical development, and produce public-spirited citizens. (p. 47)

Academic instruction coordinated with character education influences the development of the students' social, academic, and psychological growth in tandem. Researchers have found that character development should be implemented within the academic curriculum instead of a course or lesson taught in isolation (Brimi, 2009; Milliren & Messer, 2009; Stiff-Williams, 2010). The teacher can intertwine student character development within an academic lesson so that the student can be engaged in an authentic character and academic lesson.

Furthermore, teachers can influence the development of moral character in their students through conversations that allow the student to reflect upon their actions and behaviors. Milliren and Messer (2009) have developed the focused invitation technique as a means of influencing student reflection about their actions. Through guided teacher/student conversations, students reflect upon their action/behavior in relation to their social and psychological development and how the action/behavior affected them personally. The guided conversation provides students with the opportunity to analyze how their action/behavior positively affected themselves or other people. The character development comes from within the student, not from a teacher telling the student how to behave.

The classroom teachers, along with the parents, share the responsibility for influencing moral character development within their students and children (Brimi, 2009). Character development can be facilitated through engaging students in the process of conversations, writing, and reading literature (Brimi, 2009; Elias, 2010). Therefore, educators are a key component for enlightening students' thinking processes in regard to morals and values, and how the choices they make affect their learning process.

Students Making Meaning of School and Classroom Rules

How students perceive school and classroom rules affects their reasoning for following the rules. When students make meaning of school and classroom rules, they determine how the rules affect their lives (Thornberg, 2008). School rules can be divided into five categories: relational rules, structuring rules, protecting rules, personal rules, and etiquette rules (Thornberg, 2008). Relational rules pertain to bullying, harassment, and teasing other students. Structuring rules pertain to activity rules, such as raising your hand and no talking during deskwork. Protecting rules pertain to rules for safety or health. An example of a protecting rule is no running in the hallway. Personal rules pertain to the student's ability to reflect upon their actions. An example of a personal rule is "think before you act." Etiquette rules pertain to social norms, such as it is polite to hold the door for another person that is behind you (Thornberg, 2008).

Students regard relational rules as the most important rules to follow (Thornberg, 2008). Students realize that relational rules promote a safe school and a positive social climate (Thornberg, 2008). That said, students can make reasonable judgments concerning why a school or classroom rule exists (Thornberg, 2008).

Classroom rules should work in conjunction with academic lessons since

appropriate classroom rules provide a harmonious setting for student learning (Boostrom, 1991). Classroom rules serve two functions. First, classroom rules define the classroom's culture and second, they shape instruction and subject matter (Boostrom, 1991). Hence, classroom rules should be implemented to enhance student learning (Boostrom, 1991). For example, a classroom rule that develops individual student inquiry and student responsibility for learning is classified as a classroom rule that fosters learning (Boostrom, 1991). When teachers institute a classroom rule, it is important for the teacher to connect the rule to positive student learning outcomes (Boostrom, 1991).

Conclusion

In conclusion, proactive classroom management techniques that are haphazardly implemented send mixed signals to the students concerning the teachers' expectations for student behavior (Hardman & Smith, 1999; Mitchem, 2005). Implementing proactive classroom management techniques necessitates authentic teacher commitment. The proactive classroom management philosophy is not new. However, teachers are reluctant to implement proactive interventions in place of implementing reactive interventions as a means to manage student behavior in the classroom, since it is easier to continue practicing familiar teaching practices (Farmer et al., 2006; Hardman & Smith, 1999; Jenson et al., 2004; Kohn, 1999, 2009; Little & Akin-Little, 2008; Tierno, 1991). Proactive classroom management techniques involve consistently modeling and maintaining established rules that are attainable and address the student's holistic needs which will impact the student's intrinsic motivation for learning (Hardman & Smith, 1999; Jenson et al., 2004).

In addition, the idea of the learning team developed by Putnam and Burke (1998)

and Glasser (1988) are not new concepts in education. The learning-team model is similar to the cooperative learning model. In essence, they are based on the same concept of the teacher fostering the development of student learning through the formation of groups. However, Putnam and Burke's (1998) and Glasser's (1988) models involve an effort on the teacher's part to dedicate extra preparation time when developing learning-team projects. The idea of learning teams, coupled with proactive classroom management, is an avenue that teachers can utilize when looking for a teaching strategy to promote a twenty-first century learning environment. In Darling-Hammond's book (2010) *The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment To Equality Will Determine Our Future*, she discusses the type of learning environment that is needed to prepare today's students to be successful in the future. Darling-Hammond (2010) has found that students will need to be able to:

1. Design, evaluate, and manage one's own work so that it continually improves.
2. Frame, investigate, and solve problems using a wide range of tools and resources.
3. Collaborate strategically with others.
4. Communicate effectively in many forms.
5. Find, analyze, and use information for many purposes.
6. Develop new products and ideas. (p. 2)

Darling-Hammond's (2010) findings about the skills that students will need in the future to be successful in the twenty-first century workplace solidify the need to implement learning-team models along with proactive classroom management techniques. Together, both teaching strategies will ensure that students will gain content

knowledge as well as social and psychological skills to be able to be successful in the twenty-first century workplace. Therefore, the research verifies the need for a study that incorporates learning teams and proactive classroom management techniques for the improvement of student learning in the twenty-first century classroom.

In addition, a diverse population necessitates a need for developing student learning opportunities that involve academic as well as social experiences (Baker, 2005; Tierno, 1991). Academically and socially competent students will be able to participate positively in society (Jenson et al., 2004; Norris, 2003). Therefore, teachers who feel it is their moral obligation to teach students academic as well as social skills, will foster a society that is both intellectually and socially competent (Jenson et al., 2004; Norris, 2003; Sanger, 2001). Teachers need to reflect upon the type of role they want to play in their students' lives. Teachers have the ability to influence positive student intellectual, social, and emotional growth. Thus, teachers who are willing to implement proactive classroom management techniques along with the learning-team model develop the learning needs of the whole student (Glasser, 1988; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Norris, 2003).

The proactive classroom management techniques and learning-team models discussed in this paper will impact the development of the holistic needs of students. The classwide peer-assisted self management model, the discipline without stress model, classwide peer tutoring model, Glasser's (1988) and Putnam and Burke's (1998) learning-team model, along with Kohn's (2006) intrinsic motivation model connect students with their inner motivation for learning as the basis for behavior modification through techniques that allow students to reflect on their choices (Kamps et al., 2001; Marshall, 2005; Mitchem et al., 2001). The proactive classroom management models and

learning-team models relate to the theory Y approach for managing behaviors. Teachers who apply proactive classroom management believe that students want to learn how to be responsible/motivated learners and therefore respond in a positive manner to the models discussed in this study. Each of the proactive classroom management techniques and learning-team models discussed has elements that will facilitate a student's intrinsic motivation for learning as well as applying responsible behaviors.

Lastly, there is a need for empirical research pertaining to proactive classroom management models that are coordinated with learning-team models such as Glasser's (1988) and Putnam and Burke's (1998) learning-team models. The classwide peer tutoring and classwide peer-assisted self management techniques have empirical data to validate their utilization in the classroom (Kamps et al., 2008; Mitchem, 2001; Mitchem et al., 2001). However, the Discipline without Stress classroom management technique, while promising in theory, is lacking authentic empirical research to validate its effectiveness in the classroom (Marshall, 2005). To that end, proactive classroom management techniques and the learning-team model are not new concepts in education. However, empirical data and results, which analyze student academic as well as social success are lacking.

Future research needs to be developed to validate the soundness of proactive classroom management techniques as a method for improving and enhancing student achievement. First, researchers need to measure teacher perceptions of proactive classroom management practices and the affect on successful implementation. Second, research needs to determine the best techniques to encourage teachers to implement proactive classroom management models. Third, research needs to analyze student

reactions or opinions toward proactive classroom management techniques. Additional empirical research may validate proactive classroom management techniques as viable methods for developing positive student academic, psychological, and social skill development. Finally, research is lacking on implementing proactive classroom management along with the learning-team model as a means for developing student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning and student holistic learning needs.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Overview for Methodology

This qualitative action research study seeks to empower teachers to implement a learning-team model in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques for the purpose of teaching students to be intrinsically motivated and responsible learners. This study seeks to answer the following questions. First, how will the techniques as outlined in the proactive classroom management models assist the teachers to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation in their students? Second, how will the action research intervention change the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students? Third, will the overall climate of teacher/student relationships improve due to the intervention? This study seeks to answer the following question pertaining to my leadership while infusing proactive classroom management techniques into the teaching practices of the Lacey Township Middle School's teaching staff. What leadership traits will I utilize and develop while changing the middle school's mind-set in regard to working with disruptive student behaviors?

Research Design

I chose a qualitative action research method to answer the research questions listed above. Action research is suitable for encouraging practitioner change within an education environment. Hinchey (2008) has found that teachers practice action research more often than any other profession. Action research allows the practitioner to examine

authentic everyday practice within a specific location for the purpose of implementing a change within an organization (Ferrance, 2000; Hinchey, 2008). This study follows the action research paradigm described as participatory action research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) define participatory action research as a research project which is designed by an organization's members for the purpose of making recommendations for changing practices. I was an active participant during the research process and designed a workshop on learning-team models that work in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques to change the current reactionary teaching practices of the Long Middle School's classroom management practices to a proactive approach. In addition, the learning-team model, along with proactive classroom management techniques, was introduced to the teaching staff for the purpose of increasing student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning in the classroom environment. Furthermore, I was an active participant utilizing the learning-team model along with proactive classroom management techniques, which are outlined in this study, while teaching computer classes.

The qualitative research method allowed the Long Middle School's teachers to voice their opinions and tell their stories about classroom management techniques that facilitate intrinsically motivated as well as responsible student learning behaviors. Qualitative research allows for in-depth research into the interactions between people (Creswell, 2007). This research project involved the interaction between teachers and students and analyzed their relationship within the classroom in relation to classroom management techniques that foster intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning behaviors.

A phenomenological qualitative approach was applied to this study. Creswell (2007) defines a phenomenological study as “the means for describing the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 57). This study emphasized the implementation of learning teams in coordination with proactive classroom management techniques for the development of intrinsically motivated and responsible student learning behaviors. The phenomenological qualitative research paradigm allows for the investigation of the phenomenon and how the participants interact with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). This study looked at the Long Middle School’s teachers’ ability to implement learning teams as the fabric of the everyday classroom in coordination with proactive classroom management techniques that influence intrinsically motivating and responsible student learning behaviors. How the teachers define, view, and apply the learning team model and the proactive classroom management techniques were the phenomena studied, as well as the affects on student learning behaviors in the classroom.

As the media specialist/computer teacher at the Long Middle School I was an active participant in this study and I analyzed how I utilized the learning team model in conjunction with proactive classroom management techniques in my lessons as well as the impact it had on intrinsically motivating my students’ responsible learning behaviors. After I examined how proactive classroom management techniques were utilized within the middle school through a semi-structured interview (Appendix A) and a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), I designed a workshop for expanding proactive classroom management techniques. Then I conducted a focus group, which analyzed the impact that a proactive approach for classroom management had on the teaching and learning

atmosphere. The focus group revealed the teachers' experiences and opinions on the coordination of learning teams with proactive classroom management in regard to its affect on influencing the students to develop intrinsic motivation for learning and responsible learning behaviors in the classroom.

Action research lends itself to the qualitative research paradigm since qualitative research methods are flexible and are able to be immediately responsive to the phenomenon that is being studied (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Glesne, 2006; Hinchey, 2008). Therefore, this study used a semi-structured interview (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a focus group (Appendix C), and a personal journal (Appendix D) to gather data. The data revealed the impact that learning teams along with proactive classroom management techniques have on fostering intrinsic student learning behaviors, which also encompasses student responsibility for learning, as well as the impact on teacher professional growth in regard to developing proactive classroom management skills for the improvement of student/teacher relationships in the classroom environment.

Data Collection Strategies

This study used a semi-structured interview (Appendix A) survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a focus group (Appendix C), and a personal journal (Appendix D) for data collection instruments. The data revealed the participants' and researcher's interaction with classroom management techniques that are proactive instead of reactive for developing student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning in the classroom. In addition, the data indicated that the learning-team models along with proactive classroom management techniques, which are outlined in this study, are viable classroom

management techniques for fostering student intrinsic motivation as well as responsible student learning behaviors. The data collection methods of a semi-structured interview (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a focus group (Appendix C), and a personal journal (Appendix D) allowed for the gathering of rich data, which are triangulated to validate the studies' findings. In addition, Creswell (2007) identifies interviews and focus groups, along with personal journals, as appropriate data collection practices for a phenomenological qualitative study. The following paragraphs will discuss the rationale for the data collection methods that were utilized in this study.

The first cycle involved six teachers who participated in a semi-structured interview (Appendix A), which revealed the teachers' perceptions about proactive classroom management and its affect on the development of intrinsically motivating students in their classrooms and fostering responsible student learning behaviors. The six teachers were chosen for their ability to incorporate classroom management techniques that are proactive in nature. While doing research for another project I was able to identify these teachers as practitioners who use proactive practices instead of reactionary practices for motivating students to be responsible learners. The 10 semi-structured interview questions were reflective in nature and were developed to elicit the participants' views and opinions about working with students who could be disruptive in the classroom as well as techniques they incorporate in the classroom to motivate their students. Semi-structured interviews are found to be appropriate for disclosing beginning perspectives or to get a general understanding about a research topic (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Bogdan and Biklen (2007) state that, "the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how

subjects interpret some piece of the world” (p. 103). In this case, I began asking a question that allowed the participants to reflect on why they became a teacher and the last question asked the participants to reflect on how the middle school’s culture influences positive student behaviors.

The second cycle is centered on a survey questionnaire (Appendix B). The survey was created with an online web site called Survey Monkey. Twenty-three staff members responded to the survey, which equals a 40% respondent rate. The survey’s web site was electronically sent through e-mail to 58 middle school staff members. My intent was to gather information from the middle school’s staff to determine the staffs’ definition of proactive classroom management and the professional development experience they would like to participate in to learn more about proactive classroom management techniques. The first eight questions on the survey were yes/no questions that pertained to the participants’ current proactive practices in the classroom. The survey included 11 Likert rating type questions, which asked the participants to rate particular proactive strategies for their importance. There were two open-ended questions, which elicited the participants’ definition of proactive classroom management. The last question asked the participants to choose from and rate four different types of professional development methods to learn about proactive classroom management techniques.

Between the second and third cycle, I conducted a workshop presentation for the Long Middle School teachers. Seventeen middle school staff members participated in the workshop titled, “Proactive Classroom Management Techniques and the Learning Team Model.” The workshop began with statistics and the need for why classroom teachers need to change their teaching practices. Next, the workshop introduced two learning-team

models by Glasser (1988) and Putnam and Burke (1998). The workshop concluded with a presentation on four proactive classroom management techniques by Kohn (1999, 2006), Mitchem et al. (2001), Greenwood, Maheady, and Delquadri (2002), and Marshall (2007). During the workshop the participants were encouraged to peruse books by some of the researchers listed above.

The third cycle involved a focus group (Appendix C) with participants who attended the proactive classroom management technique workshop. The focus group interview revealed the participants' experiences with implementing a proactive approach for classroom management and its impact on developing responsible student behaviors. Glesne (2006) states, "group interviews are particularly useful in action and evaluation research where participants can express multiple perspectives on a similar experience such as the implementation of a particular policy or curriculum" (p. 102). The focus group questions were derived from the research questions for the purpose of evaluating the participants' interaction with proactive classroom management.

The fourth cycle was ongoing and encompassed a reflective personal journal (Appendix D). The journal documents my journey with the implementation of a proactive classroom management approach while teaching seventh and eighth grade computer classes. The classes are comprised of general education and special education students who have varying levels of learning abilities. In the journal I have documented my personal interaction with implementing a proactive classroom management approach within a learning team model framework. Corbin and Strauss (2008) have found that when the researcher shares common experiences with the participants it allows the researcher to corroborate the participants' experiences. Therefore, the journal was used to

triangulate the data from the interview, a survey questionnaire, and focus group. In addition, the journal documented my leadership practices throughout each cycle of the study and I practiced reflexivity and examined my biases while working with the study's participants (Glesne, 2006). The data from the personal journal were analyzed for reoccurring themes and compared to the themes found in the data from the semi-structured interviews, a survey questionnaire, and the focus group.

Participants

The teachers who participated in this study each teach different subject areas, grade levels, have varying years of teaching experience, and include regular as well as special education teachers. The participants were purposefully chosen for their involvement with the phenomenon that is being studied at the Long Middle School. Creswell (2007) states, "criterion sampling which is a form of purposeful sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon" (p. 128). In addition, all of the participants in the study have been given an informed consent form, which clearly states the recording of the interviews and focus groups.

As described in the section before, during the second cycle a survey questionnaire was developed to gain insight into current classroom management practices and the teachers' definition of proactive classroom management. In addition, the survey revealed the teachers' interest in learning about proactive classroom management techniques for the improvement of student motivation and responsibility for learning. The survey determined the actions that I utilized for introducing the Long Middle School's teachers

to classroom management techniques that are proactive and foster intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning in the classroom environment.

After the teaching staff participated in a professional development program, which disseminated information on proactive classroom management approaches in conjunction with learning teams, I asked volunteer teacher participants to participate in a focus group. The purpose of the focus group was to document the teachers' use of a proactive approach for classroom management and the impact that it has on student learning behaviors. In addition, the focus group divulged the teacher's opinions about proactive classroom management and its ability to develop intrinsically motivated student behaviors when implemented with a learning-team model.

To add credibility to the study, I was an active participant. I have a vested interest in the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques as a means of fostering intrinsic motivation in the Long Middle School's students. Therefore, my participation in the study allowed for triangulation of the data that I recorded in an ongoing personal journal.

Change Theory Implementation

Change begins with a vision, a flexible plan, and connecting with other people. In *The Six Secrets of Change*, Michael Fullan (2008) presents a change model that emulates my espoused leadership styles. My democratic, affiliative, and moral leadership styles highlight the importance of relationships, collaboration, and trustworthiness for the development of a vision (Giuliani, 2002; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Lencioni, 2002). Fullan's (2008) theory about change describes the importance of collaboration, relationship building, and trustworthiness when implementing new practices into an

organization's culture. Fullan (2008) describes a cylindrical framework that takes into account the needs of the people who are involved in the change process. Fullan realizes that sustainable change occurs when the organizational members and the leaders work together. Sustainable change comes from within the organization, not from a top down approach, which is demeaning for the organizational members. Empowerment of the organization's members is the key to successful, sustainable, and meaningful change (Fullan, 2008; Giuliani, 2002; Goleman et al., 2002). Fullan's change model facilitated the change initiative that I implemented at the Long Middle School in regard to developing teacher capacity for using learning teams along with proactive classroom management techniques within the classroom.

During the study I developed a survey questionnaire, which determined how the teachers wanted to learn about proactive classroom management techniques. The teachers responded to questions that revealed their interest in and definition of proactive classroom management as well as the type of professional development they wanted to participate in to expand their knowledge on the topic. Fullan (2008) describes the importance of connecting organizational members to the organization's vision as well as building relationships within the organization for meaningful change or sustainable change to take place (Fullan, 2001, 2007, 2008). The survey questionnaire that was sent to teachers and administrators at the Long Middle School ensured that the need for implementing the use of proactive classroom management techniques within the Long Middle School came from within the organization, and not from a hierarchal directive. This is a pivotal or vital piece of the puzzle for ensuring that this change initiative would be meaningful and sustainable in regard to changing teaching practices.

People who feel personal connections to their work are productive and optimistic members of the organization (Fullan, 2001, 2007, 2008; Goleman et al., 2002).

Additionally, the premise for Fullan's (2008) *Six Secrets of Change* is about relationship building within the organization between the members and the organization's vision. My study's research change project was dependent upon my ability to facilitate and build relationships between myself, as the researcher, and other teachers, as well as the school's administration. People and relationships is the name of the game for sustainable second order change to thrive in an organization.

Research Cycles

This study utilized the action research methods accompanied by the qualitative research method. This study seeks to address an identified issue with classroom management at the Long Middle School that will be improved through the application of an action research project. In *Action Research Essentials*, Craig (2009) states,

The critical factor in selecting action research is that the researcher is also the practitioner operating in the work-based environment in which the study will take place: a specific problem, issue, or concern has been identified: and the results from the study will improve the environment, situation or condition. (p. 21)

The outcome for this study was to improve classroom management as well as student intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning along with student/teacher relationships within the Long Middle School's classroom environment.

There were four research cycles that started during the winter of 2010 with me interviewing six teachers at the middle school. The second cycle began in the early summer with an electronic survey questionnaire. The third cycle was started during September 2010 with obtaining permission from the district's professional development committee for professional development hours for the workshop participants. The

workshop was presented in November 2010 and the focus group was conducted during December 2010. The fourth cycle is ongoing and started during the winter of 2010 and ended in December 2010. This research project was completed within a year time period. My action research plan is described in the following paragraphs.

In Cycle I through Cycle IV I followed the qualitative research paradigm within an action research framework. During Cycle I, I designed semi-structured interview (Appendix A) questions for six teachers. The semi-structured interview was developed to determine the teacher's opinions about proactive classroom management techniques and its ability to develop student intrinsic motivation as well as responsibility for learning. The interview questions posed in this study are designed to give the teacher a voice in regard to their interactions with proactive classroom management techniques and the impact that the teaching practice has on developing a proactive classroom environment. In addition, the interview questions allowed the study's participants to discuss their experiences, thoughts, and opinions in relation to classroom management techniques, particularly, proactive classroom management techniques. The data from Cycle I were coded for corresponding themes in relation to positive classroom management techniques that are in place and are currently impacting positive student behaviors within the classrooms of six teachers at the Long Middle School.

Cycle II involved a survey questionnaire (Appendix B) designed on Survey Monkey. The survey was designed to impact the development of a professional development plan that introduced and reinforced knowledge on proactive classroom management techniques. The survey was answered by 40% of the middle school's teaching staff. Also, the survey allowed the middle school teachers to share how they

currently use proactive classroom management as well as their definition for proactive teaching practices.

The professional development plan developed from the survey questionnaire data was implemented before the start of Cycle III. The data from the survey indicated that the teachers preferred to learn about proactive classroom management in a workshop format. Seventeen middle school staff members attended the workshop that I presented in November 2010. Then, I invited the same 17 teachers who attended the workshop to participate in a focus group interview (Appendix C). Cycle III involved a focus group with the middle school teachers to elicit their opinions about their experience with proactive classroom management in the classroom. The focus group questions were developed to answer this study's research questions.

Cycle IV began during the winter of 2010 and ended in December 2010. Cycle IV consisted of a personal journal (Appendix D). The journal reflects my personal thoughts about each teacher that I interviewed along with my experience with implementing proactive classroom management techniques and the learning-team model in my seventh and eighth grade computer classes. Additionally, the personal journal outlined my leadership practices that I applied during the study.

Data Analysis

This action research study applied the principles from the qualitative research method for analyzing the data. Themes, patterns, and relationships were gleaned from the semi-structured individual interviews (Appendix A), survey questionnaire (Appendix B), which preceded the workshop, and a follow-up interview focus group (Appendix C), as well as a personal journal (Appendix D). The themes, patterns, and relationships

determined from Cycle I and Cycle II influenced the action that was applied before Cycle III began. Additionally, to give the study credibility I discussed how I determined the codes, themes, and patterns found in the data following the work of Anfara, Brown, and Mangione (2002). This provides the details for the studies' rigor, which is needed to validate the studies' findings (Anfara et al., 2002).

In addition, triangulation of data from the different methods of collection provided validity to the studies' findings (Anfara et. al., 2002; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Glesne, 2006; Hinchey, 2008). The semi-structured individual interviews, an electronic survey questionnaire, a focus group, and a personal journal lend itself for the collection of data that were compared to each other for the impact that a proactive classroom environment has on student learning behaviors. Furthermore, member checking was applied as needed for the credibility of data from the interviews and focus group. Also, my personal journal provided data about my journey with implementing proactive classroom management techniques in conjunction with learning teams within my classroom as well as my leadership practices while conducting this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this qualitative action research study was to address the need for developing a proactive classroom management program, which the teachers of the Long Middle School could implement to develop student intrinsic motivation for learning as well as responsible student behaviors in the classroom. In addition, this study evaluated the impact that a proactive classroom learning environment has on the teacher/student relationship. Finally, this study allowed the researcher to analyze the leadership styles that were utilized during the study that impacted the implementation of

a proactive classroom learning environment within the Long Middle School's teaching and learning environment. The leadership styles that I applied while conducting this study were the democratic, moral, and affiliative leadership practices. These leadership styles will be discussed more in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

Findings

Context of the Study

This qualitative action research study utilized semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a focus group interview (Appendix C), and a personal journal (Appendix D) to gather data on the topic of infusing proactive classroom management techniques in combination with a learning team model for the purpose of building student intrinsic motivation as well as responsibility for learning in the classroom. The teachers of the Long Middle School were introduced to four proactive classroom management techniques and two learning-team models during a workshop in November 2010. In June of 2010 the staff participated in a survey questionnaire which was created on the website Survey Monkey and was distributed via email to the Long Middle School teachers and administration. The survey determined that the teachers were interested in learning about proactive classroom management techniques through a workshop format. The four proactive classroom management techniques that I presented to the teaching staff were: Classwide peer tutoring, classwide peer-assisted self-management, discipline without stress, and beyond discipline (Kamps et al., 2008; Kohn, 1999, 2006; Marshall, 2005; Mitchem, Young, West, & Benyo, 2001). The two learning-team models introduced to the staff at the workshop were based on the work of Glasser 1988 and Putnam and Burke 1998.

Following the November workshop two teachers who participated in the

workshop were interviewed in a focus group format. These teachers answered four reflective questions in a 30-minute time period. The questions elicited the teachers' perceptions about the techniques that were introduced at the workshop and the impact that the techniques have had on their teaching practices. The data from the semi-structured interviews, which was conducted during the winter of 2010, the survey questionnaire data from June 2010, the data from a personal ongoing journal, and a focus group interview were all analyzed for the purpose of answering the following questions:

1. How will the techniques as outlined in the proactive classroom management models assist the teachers to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation in their students?
2. How will the action research intervention change the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students?
3. Will the overall climate of teacher/student relationships improve due to the intervention?
4. What leadership traits will I utilize and develop while changing the middle school's mind-set in regard to working with disruptive student behaviors?

This chapter first discusses what I learned from the collected and analyzed data. Then I compare the data to the literature, which was discussed in Chapter 2 as well as how the methodology shaped this study's findings. Also, I discuss my biases, the study's limitations and assumptions, and insights. Lastly, I discuss how my theoretical framework impacted this study's findings.

Data Sources

The data for this study were qualitative in nature. When developing the themes, categories, and codes from the semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), focus group (Appendix C), and a personal journal (Appendix D), I looked for similarities among the data that related to my research questions and the overarching theme for the study, which is proactive classroom management and its affect on developing teacher/student relationships along with student self motivation for learning. Additionally, I referred back to the information in my literature review on proactive classroom management techniques along with other components that impact a teacher's decision to implement a proactive approach for working with their students. I looked for themes that related to the topic as well as the research questions. My data analysis began with the overarching theme of proactive classroom management. Next, I developed codes from frequently used words which relate to proactive classroom management as well as insights drawn from the semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), the focus group (Appendix C), my personal journal (Appendix D), the survey questionnaire (Appendix B), and my literature review. The codes reflect the teachers' and students' behaviors that are found in proactive learning environments. The categories and sub-themes reflect coordinating actions within the data that support the teachers' and the students' actions that are found in a proactive classroom. Analysis of the data was impacted by my personal perspectives about proactive classroom management, the research questions for my study, as well as the literature on the topic. The themes, categories, and codes relate to each other and the overarching theme of the study as well as highlight the benefits for student learning when

proactive classroom management techniques are implemented in the classroom. The study's data are linked between the reoccurring concepts, descriptions, ideas, and meanings found within the data from all methods of data collection.

The data revealed three distinct sub-themes and categories along with multiple corresponding codes. The data revealed the sub-theme of "students and teachers share a mutual respect." The corresponding category is "teacher has positive response to negative behavior." The relating codes are student choices, responsibility, and self-motivation. The next sub-theme is "the teacher builds a relationship with the students and the corresponding category is teacher/student interactions." The relating codes are good rapport, caring, communication, and sharing. The last sub-theme is "teachers' model, clearly define, and consistently apply classroom rules as well as procedures." The corresponding category is "students follow rules and classroom procedures." The relating codes are teacher expectations, fairness, and prevention.

The study's participants were a purposeful typical case selection. The six teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews practice proactive classroom management within their classrooms. Their interviews gave a baseline definition of proactive classroom management for the Long Middle School as well as proactive practices that were already being implemented at the school. In addition, the semi-structured interviews determined the Long Middle School's definition of appropriate and inappropriate student behaviors in the classroom environment.

In order to corroborate the semi-structured interview data and to gain insight from a larger group of teachers about their proactive classroom management techniques a survey questionnaire was electronically sent to 58 teachers and administrators. The 23

anonymous participants who responded to the survey revealed that they had a basic understanding of proactive classroom management techniques and were in fact practicing basic proactive techniques within their classroom. However, the teachers determined that they wanted to learn more about the topic and they overwhelmingly selected a workshop as the professional development format for learning about proactive teaching techniques. Finally, my personal journal, which documented my application of proactive classroom management techniques within my seventh and eighth grade computer classes revealed coordinating themes with the semi-structured interviews as well as the focus group data. The triangulation matrix for all data sets is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Triangulation Mix

Research Questions	Data Source 1	Data Source 2	Data Source 3	Data Source 4
How did the techniques as outlined in the proactive classroom management models assist the teachers to develop the characteristics of intrinsic motivation in their students?	Focus Group	Personal Journal	Semi-Structured Interviews	
How did the action research intervention change the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students?	Focus Group	Personal Journal	Survey Questionnaire	Semi-Structured Interviews
How did the overall climate of student/teacher relationships improve due to the intervention?	Focus Group	Personal Journal	Survey Questionnaire	Semi-Structured Interviews
What leadership traits did I utilize and develop while changing the middle school's mind-set in regard to working with disruptive students?	Personal Journal	Focus Group		

Analysis of the Data

The data from the semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), my personal journal (Appendix D), and the survey questionnaire (Appendix B) have determined that teachers who present their classroom rules as classroom procedures that are regularly practiced and consistently applied provide students with a learning environment where they know what behaviors are expected of them as well as the corresponding behaviors of their teachers. Consistently applied classroom procedures allow students to make choices about their behaviors in the classroom, which then places the responsibility for the student's behavior in the student's hands. Therefore, in analyzing the data it became apparent that students are capable of making good choices in regard to their behavior through the teacher providing basic expectations for the student's behavior in the classroom and developing a rapport with their students.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In the spring of 2010 I conducted six semi-structured interviews with six teachers at the Long Middle School. Four of the teacher participants were special education teachers. One participant was a science teacher and one participant taught both language arts as well as special education students. I chose these teachers for the knowledge that they possess on proactive classroom management practices. I observed five of these teachers in the classroom during the fall of 2009 while doing course work for Rowan University's educational leadership doctoral program. One of the participants was recommended to me by my principal, who had observed the participant using proactive classroom management techniques. The semi-structured interviews were conducted to provide a baseline account of the proactive practices that were in-use at the Long Middle

School. In addition, the semi-structured interviews provided information about the participants' personal lives. The semi-structured interview questions are as follows:

1. What life events led you to become a teacher?
2. Describe yourself as a student in middle school or high school?
3. How do you establish a relationship with your students?
4. How do you make decisions about the classroom management techniques that you use in the classroom?
5. Can you tell me about a recent experience with a student who displayed a negative behavior in the classroom and how you addressed the situation?
6. How can you influence positive behaviors in your students?
7. What would be the characteristics of the perfect student?
8. Do you think that today's students are self-motivated and responsible learners?
9. How can we as educators influence students to be self-motivated and responsible learners?
10. Do you think the Long Middle School's culture promotes positive student behaviors? If yes or no, please explain your answer.

The first semi-structured question was designed to help the participants to relax and allow them to reflect on the life experiences that impacted their decision to become a teacher. Three of the participants were impacted by childhood experiences that made it clear to them that they wanted to become a teacher as an adult. Two of the participants decided to become a teacher through experiences that they had in college, and one participant was influenced by a life experience with her own child. It could be determined

from the data that the majority of the participants knew from their childhood that they would become a teacher as an adult (see Table 2).

Table 2

Experiences That Impacted the Participants to Become a Teacher

	Childhood Experiences	College Experiences	Other
Number of participants	3	2	1
Response percentage	50%	33%	17%

Note: Six participants answered this question.

The second semi-structured interview question again was designed to relax the teacher participants and it allowed them to reflect on their experience as a student in middle or high school. Data analysis of this question revealed that three of the participants had a negative experience during their middle school years. A participant stated that, “I swore to my parents that if high school was like middle school I was going to drop out.” In contrast, three of the participants had a positive experience during their middle school years. In addition, it was noted that the participants that had a positive experience in middle school were involved in clubs and activities (see Table 3).

Table 3

Experience in Middle School

	Negative Experience	Positive Experience
Number of participants	3	3
Response percentage	50%	50%

Note: Six participants answered this question.

The third semi-structured interview question is where I began to investigate how these participants build a relationship with their students. Literature about proactive classroom management suggests that the development of teacher/student relationships minimizes disruptive student behaviors (Conroy et al., 2008; Jenson et al., 2004; Zuckerman, 2007). Fifty percent of the participants stated that teachers who facilitate positive communication practices, clearly define student expectations in the classroom, and are available for student needs during, as well as after class, develop a rapport with their students. Sixty-seven percent of the participants revealed that their caring attitude and treating students with respect maintained and developed student relationships. Behavior modeling, which the literature designates as a major component for developing a proactive classroom, is a practice that 33% percent of the participants revealed as a component that they use to develop teacher/student relationships in the classroom (see Table 4).

Table 4

Teacher Practices for Developing a Relationship with Students

	Positive communication	Clear expectations for student behaviors	Available for student needs	Treat students with respect	Show caring attitude	Model behavior for students
Number of participants	3	3	3	4	4	2
Response percentage	50%	50%	50%	67%	67%	33%

Note: Six participants answered this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

Three of the participants answered the question about influences for their decision to incorporate a particular classroom management practice. One participant stated that professional literature was a factor for their decision about implementing a particular classroom management practice. All of the participants revealed that on-the-job or trial and error experiences influenced their classroom management practices. Additionally, one participant considered their students' developmental stage when incorporating a classroom management practice (see Table 5). The data support the literature that classroom management practices are not influenced by teaching preparatory programs and is more often impacted by trial and error experiences conducted on the job (Richardson & Fallona, 2001; Veenman, 1984).

Table 5

Factors That Influence a Teacher's Classroom Management Practice

	Professional literature	On-the-job experience	Student developmental stage
Number of participants	1	3	1
Response percentage	33%	100%	33%

Note: Three participants answered this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

In order to gain insight into the participants' practices when working with a disruptive student, I asked the participants about a recent experience with a student in their classroom who displayed a negative behavior and how the participant addressed the situation (see Table 6). The data affirmed Glasser's (1988, 1998) choice theory concept in regard to student behavior. Five participants use disruptive experiences in the classroom to teach students about choosing behaviors that are conducive for the classroom. The participants give the disruptive students the opportunity to make a choice about their behavior. The student is then made aware that the consequences for their choices are in their own hands. In addition, five of the participants avoid embarrassing the disruptive student and the student is taken to the side or removed from the classroom to discuss their behavior in a non-confrontational manner. This avoids the power struggle, which Glasser (1998) refers to in his work about choice theory.

Table 6

Techniques for Addressing Disruptive Student Behaviors in the Classroom

	Avoid embarrassing student	Turn situation into learning opportunity	Provide student with opportunity to make choices	Ignore behavior	Proximity to student
Number of participants	5	2	5	2	2
Response percentage	83%	33%	83%	33%	33%

Note: Six participants answered this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

The next question focused on the participants' techniques for influencing positive student behaviors in their students (see Table 7). Five of the participants use verbal praise and tangible rewards as their method for reinforcing positive student behaviors in the classroom. The researcher Kohn (1999, 2006) has determined that a tangible reward cheapens the learning experience and students become dependent on the rewards in order for them to have positive behaviors in the classroom. Therefore, the positive behaviors are triggered by the reward, not by the student's own need to do well in school. Two of the participants use modeling behaviors as a practice for encouraging positive student behaviors in the classroom.

Table 7

Influences for Positive Student Behaviors in the Classroom

	Modeling behaviors for students	Praise and rewards	Provide students with choices	Parent involvement
Number of participants	2	5	1	1
Response percentage	33%	83%	17%	17%

Note: Six participants answered this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

The intention for the next question was for the participants to define behaviors that they find to be appropriate student behaviors (see Table 8). Four of the participants believe that respect is a notable characteristic for a student to possess and it is an appropriate student behavior. Additionally, four participants stated that their students do not have to be an A student. However, the participants look for their student to make an effort to learn and effectively participate in the classroom.

Table 8

Characteristics of the Perfect Student

	Willingness to learn new things	Respectful	Hardworking	Make an effort to learn
Number of participants	2	4	2	4
Response percentage	33%	67%	33%	67%

Note: Six participants answered this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

All five participants who responded to the question about today’s students and their ability to be self-motivated and responsible learners believe that their students do not exhibit self-motivated and responsible learning behaviors. The participants state that the American society’s need for material things has impeded student ability to develop an inner drive for learning and active participation in their learning process.

Five participants responded to the next question about how an educator can impact the development of intrinsic motivation and responsible learning behaviors in their students (see Table 9). The participants divulged that being a role model for lifelong learning is a component for influencing their students to be self-reliant learners. In addition, the participants believe that the inclusion of parents in the students’ progress in school is an overlooked component for increasing student motivation for learning. The last factor for increasing student motivation and responsibility for learning, which was revealed from the semi-structured interviews, is the ability of the teacher to not overwhelm the student.

Table 9

Factors for Increasing Student Intrinsic Motivation for Learning and Responsible Learning Behaviors

	Teacher as role model	Parent involvement	Avoid overwhelming student
Number of participants	2	2	2
Response percentage	40%	40%	40%

Note: Five participants responded to this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

The six participants were split on the question regarding whether the middle school’s culture promotes positive student behaviors (see Table 10). Three of the participants believe that the middle school’s administration and teachers were welcoming and facilitated positive student behaviors through caring and a willingness to work with the students. Three of the participants felt that the teachers fostered positive student behaviors and the administration hindered promoting positive student behaviors. These participants believe that the administration does not follow through with applying appropriate consequences for disruptive behaviors. In addition, there is a disconnect between the parents and administration when working with a disruptive student.

Table 10

Does the Middle School’s Culture Promote Positive Student Behaviors?

	Yes	No	Yes and No
Number of participants	3	0	3
Response percentage	50%	0%	50%

Note: Six participants responded to this question.

Survey Questionnaire

A survey questionnaire (Appendix B) was electronically sent to 58 certified staff at the Long Middle School in June 2010. Twenty-three staff members responded to the survey. Sections one through three were designed to gain a broader view of the current proactive classroom management practices in the middle school as well as the staff’s definition of proactive classroom management. The answers in section three of the survey allowed me to solidify my belief that the staff wanted to learn more about proactive

classroom management techniques. In addition, the fourth section of the survey allowed the staff to choose the professional development method for learning about the topic.

Section 1 of the survey was designed to elicit the participants' current classroom management practices (see Table 11). I purposely asked questions that pertained to proactive classroom management techniques. Therefore, I was able to develop a sense of the proactive classroom management practices that were currently used at the middle school. Four questions received a 100% response rate:

1. Classroom rules and expectations are continuously taught and practiced.
2. I acknowledge and praise good student behaviors on a regular basis.
3. I establish classroom routines at the beginning of the school year and continually reinforce them throughout the year.
4. Minor problem behaviors are managed in a consistent manner.

This affirms the themes that were found in the semi-structured interview responses with participants who were identified as applying proactive classroom management techniques in their classrooms. Currently, the Long Middle School's proactive classroom management practices involve consistency, praise, as well as teacher expectations are taught, modeled, and continually reinforced.

Table 11

Section 1 Participants' Responses

1) Students are provided with activities to engage in if they complete work before other students in the class.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	20	2	1
Response Percentage	90.9%	9.1%	
2) Chronic problem behaviors are anticipated and pre-corrected.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	21	2	0
Response Percentage	91.3%	8.7%	
3) Minor problem behaviors are managed in a consistent manner.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	23	0	0
Response Percentage	100%	0.0%	
4) Desks/room is arranged so that all students are easily accessible by the teacher.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	21	2	0
Response Percentage	91.3%	8.7%	
5) I consistently move throughout the classroom during the lesson.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	17	6	0
Response Percentage	73.9%	26.1%	

Table 11 (Continued)

6) Classroom rules and expectations are continuously taught and practiced throughout the year.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	23	0	0
Response Percentage	100%	0.0%	
7) I acknowledge and praise good student behaviors on a regular basis.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	23	0	0
Response Percentage	100%	0.0%	
8) I establish classroom routines at the beginning of the school year and continually reinforce them throughout the year.			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	23	0	0
Response Percentage	100%	0.0%	

Section 2 reinforces the data revealed in Section 1 about current proactive classroom management techniques that are practiced at the middle school. The 23 participants rated establishing classroom rules, along with procedures and routines, as the most important classroom management practice. The participants rated two choices as most important for classroom management. The first is managing student behavior and discipline. The second is setting clear goals and expectations for students. This finding is consistent with the semi-structured interview participants and their classroom management practices (see Table 12).

Table 12

Section 2 Importance of Each Choice in the Classroom

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	N/A	Number of Participants
Arranging the classroom setting	69.6% (16)	26.1% (6)	4.3% (1)	0.0%	23
Establishing classroom rules, procedures and routines	100.0% (23)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Establishing teacher-student relationships	82.6% (19)	17.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Maintaining students' attention and focus	91.3% (21)	8.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Managing student behavior/discipline	95.7% (22)	4.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Managing time	78.3% (18)	21.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Motivating students to learn	87.0% (20)	13.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Organizing teacher materials and supplies	65.2% (15)	34.8% (8)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Planning and preparation of lessons	78.3% (18)	21.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Recognizing individual students' needs	78.3% (18)	21.7% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23
Setting clear goals and expectations for students	95.7% (22)	4.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0%	23

Note: Numbers in parentheses are the number of respondents.

Section 3 involved the 23 participants defining proactive classroom management and their interest about learning more on the topic. Fifteen participants answered the write-in question on the survey. Eight of the 15 participants defined proactive management as providing consistent and clear expectations for their students. As can be seen in Table 13, the participants had varying definitions for proactive classroom

management. One participant defined proactive classroom management as, “do it to them before they do it to you. Keep them busy or they will keep you busy. Time tested words to live by.” This is a humorous statement; however, it reveals that the participants struggled with articulating a definition for proactive classroom management.

Table 13

Section 3 Participants’ Definition for Proactive Classroom Management

	Consistency/Clear expectations defined for students	Praising students	Knowing students holistic needs	Teacher modeling appropriate behaviors	Creating engaging lessons
Number of participants	8	3	3	1	1
Response Percentage	53%	20%	20%	7%	7%

Note: 15 participants responded to this question. Percentages do not sum to 100%.

The following two part question allowed the 23 participants to reveal their interest in learning about proactive classroom management techniques and the district’s inability to be able to provide workshops on new classroom management techniques. The first question asked the 23 participants about the Long School District’s ability to provide classroom management training, which highlights new classroom management techniques. Seventy-eight percent of the 23 participants answered “no.” The second question revealed that 69.9% of the 23 participants were interested in learning about proactive classroom management techniques. Therefore, the participants divulged their desire to learn about new classroom management techniques which the school district did

not take into account when developing professional development workshops for the district's teachers.

Table 14

Participants' Perceptions Regarding Professional Development and Classroom Management

Does the school district provide in-service training on new classroom management techniques?			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	5	18	0
Response Percentage	21.7%	78.3%	0
Would you like to know more about proactive classroom management techniques?			
	Yes	No	Skipped Question
Number of participants	16	7	0
Response Percentage	69.6%	30.4%	0

The fourth section on the survey involved the 23 participants rating professional development methods for learning about proactive classroom management techniques (see Table 15). This section was designed with the influence of my democratic and affiliative leadership styles. I wanted to provide the participants with the option for choosing their preferred professional development experience, which would facilitate their learning about proactive classroom management techniques. The participants chose a workshop as the first choice for a professional development learning experience. Teacher study group followed as the second and third choice. The fourth choice was a professional book club. This survey influenced the development of the workshop, which I presented to the Long Middle School staff on November 17, 2010.

Table 15

Section 4 Teachers' Preference for Professional Development

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Number of participants
Professional book club	4.50%	0.00%	18.20%	77.30%	22
Workshop	78.30%	8.70%	4.30%	8.70%	23
Peer observation	22.70%	40.90%	22.70%	13.60%	22
Teacher study group	0.00%	45.50%	50.00%	4.50%	22

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100%.

Focus Group

The focus group (Appendix C) was conducted on December 20, 2010 with two participants. Both of the participants attended my workshop presentation about proactive classroom management practices in conjunction with learning teams on November 17, 2010. The focus group questions were designed to provide data that would corroborate the findings from the other methods for data collection as well as divulge data for the study's ability to attain the goals outlined in the study's research questions. The following list contains the focus group questions:

1. How will the techniques as outlined in the workshop assist you to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning in your students?
2. Have the proactive classroom management techniques as outlined in the workshop helped you to change your behavior or attitude when working with disruptive students?
3. Do you feel that the learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques will improve student/teacher relationships?

4. Do you feel there are any school-wide benefits for implementing in the classroom the learning team model and proactive classroom management techniques?

The first question revealed that both participants began using more group activities after attending the workshop. Also, the participants now group students by learning ability so that all groups are evenly dispersed with learning ability. They both believe that the students take more responsibility for learning when they are in learning groups and the students actively participate when given roles to play in the group.

The second focus group question disclosed that both participants believe that their attitudes have changed when working with disruptive students. One participant revealed that, "I try to avoid a power struggle when dealing with disruptive students. I approach them differently than I use to and I try to have them take responsibility for their own actions." The other participant said, "I try not to call kids out and embarrass them when they are being disruptive. I now take students to the side and talk to them and they can't show off to the rest of the class." Both statements support my study's research question about changing the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students.

The third question allowed the participants to reflect on the techniques that were presented at the workshop and the techniques' influence on fostering student/teacher relationships. One participant felt that the techniques both helped and hindered a teacher's ability to build a relationship with their students. The participant believes that, "some kids like to work alone and may not like a teacher's choice to have students work in groups. In this instance, it can diminish rapport with students and those hard to reach

kids.” However, the other participant believes that her relationship with her students has been strengthened by the group work.

The last focus group question asked the participants to reveal their opinion about school-wide benefits for the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques along with the learning team model in the classroom learning environment. Both participants stated that proactive classroom management techniques coupled with a learning team model has definite school-wide benefits. A participant stated that, “it would improve teacher/student relationships. Teaching and discipline should be separate and this needs to be changed in our building.” The other participant stated that, “It helps to teach social skills, the students have to focus more on their own behavior. It is our responsibility to teach social skills as well as academics.” Both participants have determined that the techniques presented at the November workshop have school-wide benefits for both teachers and students.

Personal Journal

My personal journal spans the time period of February 2010 to December 2010. The journal begins with documentation of my leadership and interaction with the Long Middle School’s administration. My interaction with my administration during my study was always amicable, but their support for the study was superficial. At times I was frustrated with the lack of timeliness for processing paperwork, which slowed down the process of the study. My journal documents my frustration with the 2-month wait to get my Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved by the school district, as well as the month and half wait for my workshop’s approval from district administration. My persistence, communication skills, and listening skills were put to the test during my

study when working with the Long Middle School’s administration and district administration. The journal is a testament to the “can do” attitude that I possess. My life motto is, “all good things come to those who wait.” I do not give up easily and my personal journal provides the proof (see Figure 1).

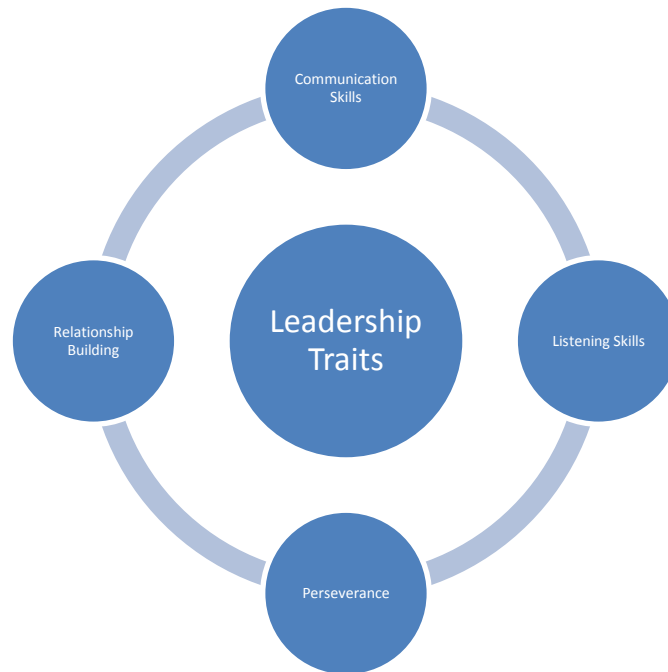


Figure 1. Leadership Traits Documented in the Personal Journal

The leadership traits documented in the journal depicts my interactions with administration along with teachers and students. The strongest traits relate to the democratic and affiliative leadership styles. These styles, as defined by Goleman (1998, 2000), are the leadership styles that foster relationship building, open communication, and listening skills. Perseverance is another leadership style that is recorded in the journal. The perseverance trait relates to the moral leadership that I espouse to possess. I

believe and have proven in this study that teachers who teach academics along with social skills develop self-reliant as well as responsible learners. A focus group participant stated, “It is a teacher’s responsibility to teach academics along with social skills.” In essence, the participant believes that it is the teacher’s responsibility to prepare students for lifelong learning and lifelong endeavors. The process of implementing a new teaching approach can take time to implement. However, my belief was supported by the data from this study that proactive classroom management, coupled with a learning-team model, were worth the time and my perseverance in pursuing the new initiative at the Long Middle School.

In addition, I used the journal to bracket my biases about the semi-structured interview participants. I work closely with each of the interview participants. I was concerned with my ability to be objective with analyzing the participants’ responses. The researchers Bogdan and Biklen (2007) have found that bracketing biases through the use of a journal allows the researcher to practice reflection and increase objectivity during the data collection and analyses components for a study.

Lastly, the personal journal documented my experience with implementing proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model in my classroom. I teach seventh and eighth computer classes at the Long Middle School. I analyzed the journal for the overall themes that supported my process with the integration of proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model in my classroom. Table 16 lists the themes that emerged from the data recorded in the personal journal.

Table 16

Characteristics of Proactive Classroom Management Techniques

Proactive Classroom Management and the Learning Team Model Characteristics		
Relationship building	Consistent	Student input recognized
Praise	Respect for students	Involvement of parents
Teacher expectations	Provide choices	Student reflection

The characteristics listed above impacted the development of intrinsically motivated and responsible learners in my classroom and is documented in my personal journal. I worked with my students to develop reflection skills through the process of providing them with choices. I did not make decisions for them about their work or behavior. I presented to them options, which they had to reason through about their class work and behavior. Sometimes, I would involve a student’s parents who worked with me as a team to facilitate the student’s intrinsic motivation for learning. Also, I used praise as a means for student reflection. Instead of saying, “Good Job,” I would tell the students that they should be proud of themselves, or asked how they felt about the good work or choice. In addition, I built a relationship with my students by getting to know about their personal lives and academic as well as social needs. The class meeting was another technique that I implemented to build a rapport with my students and to let them know that I valued and respected their opinion about issues that impacted the class. The most

important factor for developing intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning was my ability to convey my expectations for their learning and behavior in the classroom.

Discussion

This study has found that teachers acquire classroom management skills through trial and error practices, knowledge sharing between colleagues, and on the job experience. The semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), the survey questionnaire (Appendix B), my personal journal (Appendix D), and the focus group (Appendix C) data collaborate Veenman's (1984) and Richardson and Fallona's (2001) findings that teacher preparation programs are not the catalyst for fostering teacher classroom management techniques. Hence, the teacher participants in this study found that they developed their current classroom management practices through on the job practice. The teachers at the Long Middle School validate the studies by Veenman (1984) and Richardson and Fallona (2001) in regard to how teachers acquire classroom management techniques that are conducive to working with disruptive student behaviors. In addition, this study corroborates Sanger's (2001) and Norris' (2003) findings that teachers who believe that they are preparing students to be productive members of the American society will incorporate social skills along with academic skills in their teaching practices. The semi-structured interviews, my personal journal, and the focus group data determined that the teachers at the Long Middle School feel that it is their responsibility to teach both academic and social skills within their lessons. The participants in this study are committed to empowering their students to be self-motivated learners who are productive and contributing members in the classroom, which subsequently provides a learning atmosphere where all students are able to learn in a disruption free classroom.

Furthermore, the data from this study's focus group, along with my personal journal, outlined the benefits of coordinating proactive classroom management with a learning-team model as a means for improving student behavior in the classroom. Techniques from the Glasser (1988) and the Putnam and Burke (1998) models both contributed to the development of student responsibility for learning, as well as improved the classroom climate for motivating students to be committed members of a learning community. The techniques that were most helpful for creating the learning community within the classroom at the Long Middle School was Glasser's (1988) learning team model, and his finding that the learning team needs to be developed by the teacher and be comprised of students who have varying learning abilities. In addition, Putnam and Burke's (1998) and Glasser's learning-team models involve providing each member of the learning team with a role to play within the team. The roles ensure that all students are active and contributing members within their learning community or team, as well as in the overall classroom. These concepts for developing learning teams within the classroom were successfully implemented by the two teachers who participated in the focus group.

Although seven of the teachers who participated in the November workshop informally stated that they did not have enough time to implement all of the proactive techniques that were presented in the workshop during a 1-month time period, they were interested in incorporating some of the techniques after the Christmas break. However, three of the teachers who participated in the workshop shared with me in an informal conversation, which I documented in my personal journal, that the classroom meeting concept as described by Kohn (2006) was a successful proactive technique that they

began to implement with their class to open up lines of communication and develop a relationship with their students. I corroborated their findings in my personal journal while I described my successful experience with the classroom meeting and its impact upon building teacher/student relationships as well as empowering students to take responsibility for their learning experiences. This study has found that the classroom meeting is a powerful tool for opening lines of communication, building trust, and student intrinsic motivation for learning. The students were intrigued by the fact that their input was valued and seriously considered for making classroom decisions about their learning experience. Therefore, this study has determined and solidified Kohn's (2006) reasoning for incorporating classroom meetings into teaching practices. Hence, the classroom meeting creates a learning team atmosphere, which allows the students to feel a sense of ownership and commitment for their learning experiences.

Additionally, the study by Milliren and Messer (2009) found that student self-reflection about their actions and choices increased the student's ability to develop character traits that are conducive for the classroom environment. My personal journal, the semi-structured interviews, and the focus group data validate Milliren and Messer's (2009) findings about the positive outcomes for students who are disruptive to the learning environment to learn the skills of self-reflection to change their behaviors. The data corroborate the notion that self-reflection builds intrinsic motivation and student responsibility for their learning, actions, and behaviors in the classroom.

Impact of Findings

This study was a qualitative action research study. As stated in Chapter 3, Hinchey (2008) has found that the action research method for collecting data is a viable

research paradigm for educators who are committed to improving practice. Action research provides a road map for the practitioner who is conducting research in the education field. The action research method allows the practitioner to plan, act, and reflect on an issue or topic that is of importance to an organization. The topic determined to be of importance to the Long Middle School's teaching staff was their students' lack of engagement in their learning experience: particularly, the students' lack of responsibility for their learning as well as student disruptive behaviors, which were compromising the learning environment in the classroom. Once this need was determined through informal conversations, semi-structured interviews, and a survey questionnaire, a workshop was developed on proactive classroom management techniques along with the learning-team model. I researched the validity of the coordination of the two techniques and found them to be concepts worthwhile for accomplishing the determined need at the Long Middle School. A month after the workshop, I conducted a focus group with two teachers who participated in the workshop to determine if proactive classroom management coordinated with a learning model was in fact a practical solution for developing student intrinsic motivation along with responsibility for learning and to improve student/teacher relationships. The study has determined that proactive classroom management techniques are complemented by the learning-team model as viable classroom management approaches for influencing appropriate student learning behaviors.

Additionally, this study followed the participatory action research paradigm (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I was an active participant in this study. My views, opinions, and experiences with proactive classroom management were documented in a personal journal, which spanned over a 10-month time period from February 2010 to December

2010. As an active participant in the study I was able to confirm my colleagues' positive experiences with proactive classroom management as well as their positive encounter with learning teams within the classroom. In addition, I was able to attest to the benefits that proactive classroom management combined with learning teams had on developing student motivation and responsibility for learning in my classroom. Also, I witnessed the benefits that both techniques had on increasing teacher and student relationships.

Finally, a phenomenological qualitative approach was applied while I studied the Long Middle School's experience with proactive classroom management and learning teams. Qualitative research involves discovering feelings, thoughts, and actions through interviews, observations, and other means of data collection that view phenomena in the natural setting. Also, qualitative research involves making connections with the data to people's perceptions of the phenomena being studied. Therefore, qualitative research provides the parameters which illuminate the associations between the phenomena and the people who are experiencing the phenomena. In this instance, the qualitative research paradigm brings to life the connections between teachers and students when they interact with proactive classroom management techniques along with the learning-team model.

How the teachers and students interact with proactive classroom management along with learning teams is the phenomenon that was qualitatively studied through semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a personal journal (Appendix D), and a focus group (Appendix C). The teachers who participated in the study provided rich, detailed, and vibrant data, which revealed their positive experiences with proactive classroom management techniques in conjunction with the learning team concept. The teachers' opinions, views, and experiences with proactive

classroom management were analyzed for themes, which suggested that proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model are a practical means for improving student motivation and responsibility for learning as well as increasing teacher/student relationships.

The Study's Limitations, Biases, Assumptions, and Insights

Limitations

I am the media specialist and computer teacher at the Long Middle School. I am not in an administrative position, which would have given me the ability to have started my action piece of this study before November 2010. My workshop took a month and a half to be approved by the school district's professional development committee. Therefore, the teachers who attended my workshop were not given sufficient time to implement the proactive classroom management techniques that were presented to them before I had to begin the fourth cycle for this study. This limitation impacted the teachers who were willing to participate in the fourth cycle's focus group.

Another limitation for this study was the nervousness of the semi-structured interview teacher participants. After each interview the participant stated that, "I was nervous about being recorded" and "are my answers O.K.?" I explained to each participant that there was no right or wrong answer to each of the questions and their responses would help me to complete my study. Interview questions 1 and 2 were designed to help the participants to relax through the opportunity to talk about themselves and their personal endeavors as a student. One participant said that she enjoyed thinking about the answers to the beginning questions and it allowed her to reflect upon their teaching approaches when working with disruptive students in the classroom.

The last limitation involves the negative political climate within the school which is due to an unpopular teacher contract settlement. In addition, the Long School District is one of the few districts in New Jersey to freeze their 2010/2011 school year salaries. This limitation impacted the focus group participant sample size. Out of the seventeen teachers who were asked to participate in the focus group, two teachers volunteered their time after school to answer the focus group questions.

Biases

To contain my biases about the teachers that participated in the semi-structured interviews, I discussed what I already knew about each teacher's professional and private lives in my personal journal. My personal journal allowed me to reflect on my biases and helped me to enter each interview with an open-mind. This was an important component of the research process, since I work closely with each teacher in the building. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) have found that qualitative researchers are aware that their biases can shape or hinder a study. Although a qualitative researcher cannot completely eliminate biases, a good qualitative researcher is able to identify biases and work to limit their impact on the study's data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). My personal journal served the purpose of providing me with an avenue to write reflective field notes through which I was able to be objective about my semi-structured interview participants.

Assumptions and Insights

This study determined that the special education department understands and practices proactive classroom management techniques for managing student behaviors. In contrast, the general education classroom teachers who I interviewed and apply proactive classroom management techniques, were not aware that their classroom

management techniques were proactive. Therefore, it can be assumed that there is a disconnect between the special education and general education teachers in regard to knowledge and training about proactive classroom management techniques. This phenomenon was discovered during the semi-structured interview cycle of the study. Also, it can be assumed that the special education teachers are an essential component for school wide implementation of proactive classroom management techniques at the Long Middle School. A participant from the special education department suggested the development of a peer-observation program for the sharing of knowledge and practices pertaining to a school wide professional development program, which would foster the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques throughout the school.

The participants who were identified as already practicing proactive classroom management techniques revealed interesting data in regard to personal traits. These teachers did not set out to become teachers. As one participant said, she felt it was God's will that she was a teacher. Additionally, these teachers were not model students in middle school or high school. A participant admitted that she hated middle school and told her parents if high school was like middle school, she swore she would quit. Further research is needed to determine if these personal traits have impacted the participants' decisions in regard to applying proactive classroom management techniques within their classroom.

Implications for the Study's Theoretical Framework

The theory X and theory Y concept is the main theoretical building block for this study. This study's premise is that students do not need to be coerced or controlled in order for them to be active participants in their learning process. This study dispels the

theory X concept for motivating students to be self-reliant and motivated learners. It has been determined through the semi-structured interviews (Appendix A), my personal journal (Appendix D), and a focus group (Appendix C), that students inherently want to do well in school, and through their teacher's ability to engage them in empowering teaching practices students, can be intrinsically motivated to be responsible learners who are able to demonstrate appropriate learning behaviors in the classroom. In this study the empowering teaching practices included implementing proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model. In addition, this study has found that the relationship developed between the teacher and student is the major component for the teachers to be able to inspire their students to be active participants in their learning endeavors. Therefore, this study validates the theory Y concept that students want to be responsible for their learning needs. Additionally, students want to apply appropriate behaviors in the classroom that will benefit themselves and their classmates.

Conclusion

This study has found that the teachers who practice proactive classroom management techniques have a good rapport with their students and have few inappropriate student behaviors. These teachers are caring, share a mutual respect with the students, and have high expectations in regard to student behaviors. Moreover, these teachers think that learning should be fun and interactive. Proactive teachers model appropriate student behaviors and foster the development of appropriate student choices. In addition, the teachers of the Long Middle School have identified their definition of appropriate student behaviors and inappropriate student behaviors through the semi-structured interview cycle of the study. The teachers believe that model students are

respectful to classmates as well as teachers, participate in school activities, try to do their best in regard to following rules, and they are role models for other students. The teachers identified the characteristic of disrespect for classmates as well as teachers as an inappropriate behavior along with not following school-wide and classroom expectations.

Lastly, this study will set the ground work for further research on proactive classroom management at the Long Middle School. Future research should involve the implementation of a school wide professional development plan to facilitate student intrinsic motivation for learning as well as applying appropriate behavior with the help of the classroom teacher. The teachers who adopt proactive classroom management techniques would facilitate the elimination of the familiar punitive system for coercing appropriate student behavior.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Implications

The Research

The purpose of this study was to implement proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model for the transformation of the classroom learning environment from a reactive to a proactive approach for managing student behavior. This study, which used semi-structured interview (Appendix A), a survey questionnaire (Appendix B), a personal journal (Appendix D), and a focus group (Appendix C) for data collection methods, has revealed that a proactive approach for student behavior management that is coordinated with a learning-team model is a viable method for developing self-motivated students who portray responsible learning behaviors. In addition, the study has found that proactive classroom management techniques build positive teacher/student relationships within the classroom.

Additionally, this study achieved its research goals and answered the following questions:

1. How did the techniques as outlined in the proactive classroom management models assist the teachers to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation in their students?
2. How did the action research intervention change the teachers' attitudes when working with disruptive students?

3. How did the overall climate of teacher/student relationships improve due to the intervention?
4. What leadership traits did I utilize and develop while changing the middle school's mind-set in regard to working with disruptive student behaviors?

Questions one, two, and three were the basis for the focus group questions which allowed me to bring the study full circle with the teacher participants being able to directly answer the study's main research questions. In this chapter, I discuss the answers to the study's research questions, implications for future research, and my leadership traits that I used to implement this study's change initiative.

Proactive Classroom Management

Four proactive classroom management techniques were presented to my colleagues in a workshop on November 17, 2010 along with two learning-team models. The four techniques were classwide peer tutoring, classwide peer-assisted self management, discipline without stress, and beyond discipline (Kamps et al., 2008; Kohn 1999, 2006; Marshall, 2007; Mitchem et al., 2001). The two learning team models were based on the work of Glasser (1988) and Putnam and Burke (1998). The techniques presented in the workshop facilitate relationship building, team building, knowledge and information sharing, and builds student responsible learning behaviors as well as intrinsic motivation for learning in the classroom.

A focus group was conducted on December 20, 2010, which provided insight about the impact that proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning team model had on fostering intrinsic motivation within the students of the Long Middle School. The two teachers who participated in the focus group were participants in the

November workshop. This study has determined that proactive classroom management techniques infused with a learning-team model provided the teachers with an approach for developing self-reliant learners. The focus group participants revealed that the learning-team models, along with the classroom meeting technique, were the most beneficial for facilitating intrinsic motivation within their students. In addition, the participants stated that these techniques allowed the students to have ownership of their learning and the classroom environment.

Teachers' Attitudes

The action research process is a cyclical process that involves the following steps: planning, acting, analyzing, and reflecting (Hinchey, 2008). This study's action portion for the action research process was the workshop that I conducted in November of 2010. At the workshop, the participants were introduced to proactive classroom management techniques along with learning-team models, the purpose of which was to increase responsible student behaviors in the classroom. Additionally, the action research intervention allowed the teachers, who participated in my workshop, to reassess their current practices for working with disruptive students and begin to develop new techniques for redirecting disruptive student behaviors in the classroom.

The workshop participants who took part in the focus group admitted that the workshop exposed them to techniques that allowed them to change their approach for working with students who were disruptive in the classroom. Both of the focus group participants shared that the workshop introduced them to new teaching practices that highlight productive student behaviors in the classroom, and do not allow disruptive student behaviors to overwhelm the classroom learning environment. In addition, the

workshop provided the focus group participants with the opportunity to reflect upon their own actions when managing students who engage in behavior that is not beneficial for the teaching and learning environment.

Climate of Teacher/Student Relationships

The action research intervention shows promise for improving the overall climate of teacher/student relationships at the Long Middle School. The learning-team models that were presented at the workshop were identified as motivating factors for fostering teacher/student relationships. My personal journal affirms that the class meeting technique, as well as teaching students to reflect about their behaviors, improves student/teacher relationships. I have found that students, who learn how to access their own behavior, view the teacher as a facilitator for learning in the classroom. Therefore, teachers and students avoid the power struggle that can perpetuate disruptive student behaviors and deter the development of teacher/student relationships (Glasser, 1988, 1998).

Leadership Traits

This study allowed me to pique my colleagues' interest to reflect about their current approaches for managing disruptive student behaviors and incorporate proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model, instead of resorting to punitive punishments. While conducting this study I utilized the following leadership traits: democratic, affiliative, and moral. In addition, I developed my communication skills as well as listening skills while implementing the study's goal for changing the mindset of Long Middle School's teachers about working with disruptive students in the classroom. I documented the leadership traits that I utilized in this study in a personal

journal. The personal journal divulged that I primarily relied on my democratic and affiliative leadership traits.

Implications for Proactive Classroom Management Practice

This study's research reveals that proactive classroom management, coordinated with the learning-team models of Glasser (1988) and Putnam and Burke (1998), is a viable concept for facilitating student intrinsic motivation for learning as well as developing responsible student learning behaviors, which fosters teacher and student relationships in the classroom environment. To this end, further research needs to be conducted which will glean the best techniques for developing student motivation and appropriate behaviors for learning, while nurturing teacher and student relationships.

The proactive classroom management techniques described in this study cultivate student accountability for their learning behaviors, which allow the teacher to be a facilitator in the students' learning process. These techniques also provide an opportunity for relationship building, instead of creating a power struggle in the classroom. However, this study was not able to determine which technique is preferable for attaining positive student learning behaviors. Therefore, further research is needed to bring to light the best techniques for promoting student growth in the area of responsibility and self-motivation for their learning process.

An analysis of classroom climate focusing on the students' reactions to interacting with proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model needs to be conducted in future research endeavors. A measurement of classroom climate might illuminate student opinions about their interaction with proactive classroom management techniques that are coordinated with a learning-team model. This study

focused on the teachers' voice while they implemented proactive classroom management techniques combined with a learning-team model. In addition, teacher insight and their interpretation about the impact of proactive classroom management coordinated with a learning-team model was the main focus for data collection methods used in this study. Including the students' voice in further research would be able to strengthen or contradict this study's findings.

Additionally, further research needs to be conducted over a longer time period to provide the participants with an opportunity to implement, observe, and reflect on the process for incorporating proactive classroom management techniques in their teaching practices. A longer time period for research will determine the sustainability for the new teaching practices as well as the long term impact on the students' learning behaviors. People and organizations are complex entities for which a leader needs to take into account when implementing a new concept (Fullan, 2008). People need time to assimilate new information or knowledge in order to be able to adequately incorporate a new initiative into their daily practices. Hence, change is a process, and an integral part of the process is the time factor. Therefore, sustainable change does not occur instantaneously and there may be a few roadblocks. Fullan (2001) states: "Leaders who understand the implementation dip know that people are experiencing two kinds of problems when they are in the dip--the social-psychological fear of change, and the lack of technical know-how or skills to make the change work" (p. 41).

The roadblocks should be looked at as a learning process. In this case, the learning process necessitates time as a main factor for implementing a new teaching practice into the classroom learning environment. Teachers need time, to psychologically

adapt and acquire the knowledge and skills that allow an individual to feel comfortable when implementing a new initiative.

Lastly, this study did not investigate teachers who are reluctant to implement proactive classroom management within their classrooms. Previous studies have found that teachers are reluctant to implement proactive practices instead of using reactive practices for student behavior management, since it is easier to maintain dated practices (Farmer et al., 2006; Hardman & Smith, 1999; Jenson et al., 2004; Kohn, 1999, 2009; Little & Akin-Little, 2008; Tierno, 1991). Further research may reveal why teachers are reluctant to implement proactive practices and motivational techniques for managing student behaviors in the classroom. Furthermore, additional research needs to examine interventions that might be used to inspire these teachers to change their teaching practices.

The Change Process

Fullan's (2001, 2008) change model was implemented in this change initiative at the Long Township Middle School in regard to a proactive classroom management model. A collaboratively designed professional development plan was implemented to increase the teachers' knowledge about proactive classroom management techniques coordinated with a learning-team model approach for managing student behaviors. This process was facilitated through my democratic, affiliative, and moral leadership styles as well as influenced by Fullan's (2001, 2008) change model.

In Fullan's (2008) book, *The Six Secrets of Change*, he describes a change principle called "love your employees," which pertains to the leader equally loving the employees and customers. In a school system, the employees are the teachers and the

customers are the students. Both share equal importance when a leader is considering change in the organization. My study takes into account the affect that proactive classroom management along with a learning-team model has on the teaching and learning environment for both teachers as well as students. The teachers' voice about the impact of proactive classroom management and learning teams on the students' learning experience is a factor that determined this study's success within the classroom learning environment.

Fullan (2001, 2008) has developed a theory concerning the significance of capacity building for organizational members who develop knowledge and skills to foster organizational innovation and growth. Fullan (2001) states the following on knowledge sharing and capacity building within an organization:

That, first, people will not voluntarily share knowledge unless they feel some moral commitment to do so; second, people will not share unless the dynamics of change favor exchange; and, third, that data without relationships merely cause more information glut. (p. 6)

Collaborative learning among the faculty facilitated this study's organizational change. During this study I initiated the sharing of knowledge for the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model, which facilitated the development of a proactive approach for working with students in the classroom. Fullan (2008) has found that cultivating the organization's talent brings prosperity and employee motivation.

This study has attempted to facilitate teacher motivation to improve classroom practices to foster an optimal teaching and learning environment within the classroom. My moral leadership belief was an inspirational factor for undertaking this study. My effort to implement this study's topic was grounded in the fact that the teachers wanted to

learn about proactive classroom management, as well as my vision for the improvement of teacher/student relationships to change the teaching and learning environment from reactive to proactive when managing student behaviors in the classroom.

Fullan (2001, 2008) describes the importance of connecting organizational members to the organization's vision and building relationships within the organization for meaningful change or sustainable change to take place (Fullan, 2001, 2007, 2008). This notion is a pivotal or vital piece of the puzzle for ensuring that change initiatives are engaging and maintainable in regard to changing teaching practices. Fullan (2001) states, "If you ask someone in a successful enterprise what caused the success; the answer was 'it's the people.' But that's partially true: it is actually the relationships that make the difference" (p. 51). As I have stated before, this study was dependent upon my ability to build a rapport with the teachers at the Long Middle School, which allowed me to persuade them to implement a new teaching practice within their classroom. The teachers who attended my workshop about proactive classroom management techniques coordinated with a learning-team model were open to the workshop's ideas, however, they felt that they were confined by a time factor and needed more time to implement the techniques.

Leadership

I identify with three leadership styles: democratic, affiliative, and moral. I see my leadership as transformational. In the book *Transforming Leadership* by James MacGregor Burns (2003), he defines a transformational leader as a person who can bring about change that is lasting and is maintained after the leader leaves the organization. This is the type of leader that I espouse to have been within my school community during

the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model within the Long Middle School's classrooms. Overall, my objective for this study was to increase teacher knowledge of proactive classroom management techniques coordinated with a learning-team model to increase student motivation for learning along with responsible learning behaviors and develop teacher/student relationships. I used my espoused leadership styles to attain my study's objective, which was dependent upon my democratic and affiliative leadership style throughout the study's process.

This study both strengthened and challenged my espoused leadership beliefs. My study was dependent upon my ability to build a rapport with my colleagues as well as administration for the purpose of piquing their interest to want to support the implementation of proactive classroom management techniques supported by learning teams. As documented in my personal journal, my administration did not take an active role in supporting my study. My building principal did not hinder my study; however, my principal did not promote or discuss my study with the Long Middle School staff. Therefore, the study was dependent upon my democratic and affiliative leadership skills. I incorporated my democratic leadership skills through the dissemination of a survey questionnaire to the Long Middle School staff for the purpose of eliciting their interest in my study's topic and their preference for a professional development experience for learning about my study's topic. In addition, this study challenged my democratic and affiliative leadership skills in regard to communication and listening skills for staff involvement in the study, and my ability to sell my vision about the benefits of proactive

classroom management techniques along with the learning-team model as a viable teaching practice for the improvement of student learning behaviors in the classroom.

Additionally, while writing my literature review on proactive classroom management techniques, which are found to promote socially acceptable student behaviors, I realized the importance for educational leaders and classroom teachers to teach their students both content knowledge as well as socially acceptable behaviors. I believe in the notion that, “children are the candles that light our future.” Students who are exposed to morals and ethics will go out into the world knowing how to appropriately participate in society. Educators prepare their students for their future life endeavors as well as prepare students to effectively participate in a democratic society. Prince (1995) states, “A powerful way of learning moral behavior is through the process of observing others” (p. 489). Moral leaders feel a need to inspire ethical behaviors and beliefs in their followers. I aspire to instill and expose my students to acceptable behaviors that will allow them to be productive members of a democratic society and fulfill their lives’ dreams. Furthermore, as a leader in education, I strive to keep my colleagues abreast of teaching and learning practices that promote student academic and social growth.

In *Primal Leadership: Learning To Lead With Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman et al. (2002) state, “Intellect alone will not make a leader” (p. 27). Besides knowledge, successful leaders know how to communicate, listen, inspire, and motivate the organization. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines leadership as, “the capacity to lead” (Leadership, 2008). My definition of leadership is, a person who is trustworthy and has the ability to incorporate democratic leadership skills, which encourage, inspire, as well as motivate organizational members to achieve the organization’s goals. Moreover,

the ability to successfully lead a school involves the ideals of open communication, participative collaboration, and the ability to apply human resource principals.

Educational leaders who build a trusting and positive rapport with their staff, nurture and inspire them to be contributing members of the learning community. This in turn, builds a productive learning and teaching environment, which values the contributions of all members of the learning community.

Finally, a colleague at the Long Middle School added this comment to a survey that I conducted during my course work while I was enrolled in Rowan University's Educational Leadership doctoral program:

I think that a great leader leads by example and demonstrates the attributes and outcomes he/she expects of others. In my experience, those leaders that I have respected also express appreciation, loyalty, and an individualized approach to those whom they lead.

As I become a leader who promotes a positive and productive work environment, I will continue to assess and reflect upon my leadership ability. Goleman (2002) states, "Successful leaders are able to master at least four different leadership styles and they are able to apply the appropriate style for each situation" (p. 31). I realize that I gravitate toward the democratic and affiliative leadership style. I feel comfortable with both leadership styles, since I like to make sure that everyone is able to contribute to the organization and that everyone is happy. I do not like to let people walk away feeling unhappy or dissatisfied. I continue to communicate with a colleague until a happy medium can be established. However, sometimes I spend too much time working on mediating a compromise.

Therefore, I realize that I need to develop an authoritative leadership style that I feel comfortable with and that will maintain a positive working environment. In the

article, *Leadership that Gets Results*, Goleman (2002) explains that leaders can learn how to incorporate other leadership styles that they are lacking. Goleman (2002) states, “Leaders must first understand which emotional intelligence competencies underlie the leadership styles they are lacking. They can then work assiduously to increase their quotient of them” (p. 90). Exposure to situations that allow me to apply authoritative characteristics will give me the opportunity to master the authoritative leadership style as a productive means for achieving the learning community’s goals and objectives.

Future Research Studies

Deal and Peterson (1999), in the book *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership* state:

To re-embrace the mythology that launched the public school system in this country; school should be a place to create a sense of community; each student should be able to realize his or her potential; each student has promise; each student can become a greater American. (p. 30)

This study embraces the meaning behind this quotation. The American public school system prepares students to be productive citizens in a democratic society who can realize their maximum potential in life through their experiences in school. Furthermore, this study allows students to participate in a learning team, which promotes sharing knowledge, learning community building skills, and developing relationships within the classroom.

In order to continue and follow-up with the study, I am conducting another workshop during the spring of 2011, which will give other teachers at the Long Middle School who were not able to attend the workshop in November the opportunity to be exposed to the study’s proactive teaching techniques coordinated with a learning-team model. The second workshop will allow more teachers to be exposed to the new teaching

practices, which will further my vision for transforming the Long Middle School's teachers' mind-set of using reactive approaches for changing student behaviors to a proactive approach.

In addition, I will continue to infuse the proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning-team model in my classroom while teaching computers to seventh and eighth grade students. I will continue to promote the concept within my classroom that, "we are a learning team: Sharing, working, and learning together." Finally, I will continue to model my belief in the merits of proactive classroom management and the learning-team model as a viable teaching approach for instilling intrinsic motivation and responsible learning behaviors in the Long Middle School's students. This study has determined that students who are exposed to proactive teaching practices, coupled with a small learning community approach, can transform the classroom to an engaging and productive learning environment.

References

- Anfara, V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher*, 31(2), 28-38.
- Baker, P. H. (2005). Managing student behavior: How ready are teachers to meet the challenge? *American Secondary Education*, 33(3), 51-64.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education an introduction to theories and methods*. New York, NY: Pearson Education.
- Boostrom, R. (1991). The nature and functions of classroom rules. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 21(2), 193-216.
- Brimi, H. (2009). Academic instructors or moral guides? Moral education in America and the teacher's dilemma. *Clearing House*, 82(3), 125-130.
- Burns, J. M. (2003). *Transforming leadership*. New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Conroy, M. A., Sutherland, K. S., Snyder, A. L., & Marsh, S. (2008). Classwide interventions effective instruction makes a difference. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 40(6), 24-30.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Craig, D. V. (2009). *Action research essentials*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Crum, C. F. (2004). Using a cognitive-behavioral modification strategy to increase on-task behavior of a student with a behavior disorder. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 39(5), 305-309.
- Darch, C. B., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2004). *Instructional classroom management: A proactive approach to behavior management*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equality will determine our future*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Deal, T. E., & Peterson, K. D. (1999). *Shaping school culture: The heart of leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Dollard, N., & Christensen, L. (1996). Constructive classroom management. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 29(2), 1-12.

- Elias, M. (2010). Character education: Better students, better people. *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review*, 75(7), 47-49.
- Evertson, C. M., & Weade, R. (1989). Classroom management and teaching style: Instructional stability and variability in two junior high English classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal*, 89(3), 379-393.
- Farmer, T. W., Goforth, J. B., Hives, J., Aaron, A., Jackson, F., & Sgammato A. (2006). Competence enhancement behavior management. *Preventing School Failure*, 50(3), 39-44.
- Ferrance, E. (2000). *Action research*. Retrieved from Brown University, Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University website: http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/themes_ed/act_research.pdf
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (2008). *The six secrets of change: What the best leaders do to help their organizations survive and thrive*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gable, R. A., Hester, P. P., Hester, L. R., Hendrickson, J. M., & Sze, S. (2005). Cognitive, affective, and relational dimensions of middle school students: Implications for improving discipline and instruction. *The Clearing House*, 79(1), 40-44.
- Glasser, W. (1988). *Choice theory in the classroom*. New York, NY: Harper.
- Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Glesne, C. (2006). *Becoming qualitative researchers an introduction*. New York, NY: Pearson Education.
- Giuliani, R. W. (2002). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Hyperion.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(2), 78-90.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership: Learning to lead with emotional intelligence*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

- Greenwood, C. R., Maheady, L., & Delquadri, J. C. (2002). Class-wide peer tutoring. In G. Stoner, M. R. Shinn, & H. Walker (Eds.), *Interventions for achievement and behavior problems* (2nd ed.) (pp. 611-649). Washington, DC: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Hardman, E., & Smith, S. W. (1999). Promoting positive interactions in the classroom. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 34*(3), 178-180.
- Havill, L. (2004). Levels of involvement: The power of choice in middle school level system. *The Journal of Strength-based Interventions, 13*(3), 155-161.
- Henley, M. R. (2005). *Classroom management: A proactive approach*. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Hinchey, P. H. (2008). *Action research primer*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Jenkins, D. (1994). An eight-step plan for teaching responsibility. *The Clearing House, 67*(5), 269-270.
- Jenson, W. R., Olympia, D., Farley, M., & Clark, E. (2004). Positive psychology and externalizing students in a sea of negativity. *Psychology in the Schools, 41*(1), 67-79.
- Johnson, H., & Fullwood, H. (2006). Disturbing behaviors in the secondary classroom: How do general educators perceive problem behaviors? *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 33*(1), 20-39.
- Kamps, D. M., Greenwood, C., Arreaga-Mayer, C., Veerkamp, M. B., Utley, C., Tapia, Y., ...Bannister, H. (2008). The efficacy of classwide peer tutoring in middle school. *Education and Treatment of Children, 31*(2), 119-152.
- Kohn, A. (1999). *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Kohn, A. (2006). *Beyond discipline: From compliance to community*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Kokkinos, C. M., Panayiotou, G., & Davazoglou, A. M. (2004). Perceived seriousness of pupils' undesirable behaviors: The student teachers' perspective. *Educational Psychology, 24*(1), 109-120.
- Leadership. (2008). In Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/leadership>.
- Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Little, S. G., & Akin-Little, A. (2008). Psychology's contributions to classroom management. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(3), 227-234.
- MacKenzie, R. J. (2003). *Setting limits in the classroom*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
- Malmgren, K. W., Trezek, B. J., & Paul, P. V. (2005). Models of classroom management as applied to the secondary classroom. *The Clearing House, 79*(1), 36-39.
- Marshall, M. (2003). *Promoting responsibility newsletter, 3*(1). Retrieved from <http://www.disciplinearchives.com/newsletter/2003/january.htm>
- Marshall, M. (2005). Discipline without stress, punishments, or rewards. *The Clearing House, 79*(1), 51-54.
- Marshall, M. (2007). *Discipline without stress punishments or rewards*. Los Alamitos, CA: Piper Press.
- McGregor, D. M. (1957). The human side of enterprise. In J. M. Shafritz, J. S. Ott, & Y. S. Jang (Eds.), *Classics of organization theory* (pp. 179-184). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Melnick S. A., & Meister, D. G. (2008). A comparison of beginning and experienced teachers' concerns. *Educational Research Quarterly, 31*(3), 39-56.
- Milliren, A., & Messer, M. (2009). "Invitations" to character. *Journal of Invitational Theory & Practice, 15*, 19-31.
- Mitchem, K. (2001). Adapting self-management programs for classwide use. *Remedial & Special Education, 22*(2), 75-88.
- Mitchem, K. J. (2005). Be proactive: Including students with challenging behavior in your classroom. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 40*(3), 188-191.
- Mitchem, K., Young, K., West R., & Benyo, J. (2001). CWPASM: A classwide peer-assisted self-management program for general education classrooms. *Education & Treatment of Children, 24*(2), 111-140.
- Nelsen, J., Lott, L., & Glenn, H. S. (2000). *Positive discipline: In the classroom*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
- Norris, J. A. (2003). Looking at classroom management through a social and emotional learning lens. *Theory into Practice, 42*(4), 313-318.
- Obenchain, K., & Taylor, S. (2005). Behavior management. *Clearing House, 79*(1), 7-11.

- OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. (2004). *School-wide positive behavioral support implementers' blueprint and self-assessment*. University of Oregon. Retrieved from <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/pdf/SchoolwideBehaviorSupport.pdf>
- Prince, H. T., II (1995). Moral development in individuals. In J. T. Wren (Ed.), *The leader's companion: Insights on leadership through the ages* (pp. 484-491). New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Putnam, J., & Burke, J.B. (1998). *Organizing and managing classroom learning communities*. New York, NY: The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Reinke, W., Lewis-Palmer, T., & Merrell, K. (2008). The classroom check-up: A classwide teacher consultation model for increasing praise and decreasing disruptive behavior. *School Psychology Review, 37*(3), 315-332.
- Richardson, V., & Fallona, C. (2001). Classroom management as method and manner. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 33*(6), 705-728.
- Sanger, M. G. (2001). Talking to teachers and looking at practice in understanding the moral dimensions of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 33*(6), 683-704.
- Smith, D., & Rivera, D. (1995). Discipline in special education and general education settings. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 27*(5), 1-14.
- Stiff-Williams, H. (2010). Widening the lens to teach character education alongside standards curriculum. *Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas, 83*(4), 115-120.
- Sutherland, K., Wehby, J., & Copeland, S. (2000). Effect of varying rates of behavior-specific praise on the on-task behavior of students with EBD. *Journal of Emotional & Behavioral Disorders, 8*(1), 2-8.
- Terry, B. (2005). *An introduction to classwide peer tutoring*. <http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/specconn/main.php?cat=instruction§ion=cwpt/main>
- Thornberg, R. (2008). School children's reasoning about school rules. *Research Papers in Education, 23*(1), 37-52.
- Tierno, M. (1991). Responding to the socially motivated behaviors of early adolescents: Recommendations for classroom management. *Adolescence, 26*(103), 569-577.
- Traynor, P. (2003). Factors contributing to teacher choice of classroom order strategies. *Education, 123*(3), 586-599.

Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54(2), 143-178.

Zuckerman, J. T. (2007). Classroom management in secondary schools: A study of student teachers' successful strategies. *American Secondary Education*, 35(2), 4-16.

Appendix A

Teacher Semi-structured Interview Protocol

What life events led you to become a teacher?

1. Describe yourself as a student in middle school or high school?
2. How do you establish a relationship with your students?
3. How do you make decisions about the classroom management techniques that you use in the classroom?
4. Can you tell me about a recent experience with a student who displayed a negative behavior in the classroom and how you addressed the situation?
5. How can you influence positive behaviors in your students?
6. What would be the characteristics of the perfect student?
7. Do you think that today's students are self-motivated and responsible learners?
8. How can we as educators influence students to be self-motivated and responsible learners?
9. Do you think the Lacey Township Middle School's culture promotes positive student behaviors? If yes or no, please explain your answer.

Appendix B

Survey Questionnaire

1. Classroom Management Self-Assessment

Research has found that classroom management is challenging for all educators. In addition, disruptive student behaviors in the classroom are cited as the most common reason for teachers leaving the profession. The following is a self-assessment of classroom management techniques which are utilized to improve student behavior. The purpose of this survey is to target areas for improvement in relation to classroom management. The data will be utilized to design professional development for the staff. This survey does not collect any personal information and all of your answers will remain anonymous. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in completing the survey.

1. Students are provided with activities to engage in if they complete work before other students in the class.

Yes

No

2. Chronic problem behaviors are anticipated and pre-corrected.

Yes

No

3. Minor problem behaviors are managed in a consistent manner.

Yes

No

4. Desks/room is arranged so that all students are easily accessible by the teacher.

Yes

No

5. I consistently move throughout the classroom during the lesson.

Yes

No

6. Classroom rules and expectations are continuously taught and practiced throughout the year.

Yes

No

7. I acknowledge and praise good student behaviors on a regular basis.

Yes

No

8. I establish classroom routines at the beginning of the school year and continually reinforce them throughout the year.

- Yes
 No

9. Please rate the importance of each choice.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	N/A
Arranging the classroom setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing classroom rules, procedures and routines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishing teacher-student relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining students' attention and focus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing student behavior/discipline	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivating students to learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organizing teacher materials and supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Planning and preparation of lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recognizing individual students' needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting clear goals and expectations for students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. What is your understanding of proactive classroom management? Please respond below.

11. Does the school district provide in-service training on new classroom management techniques?

- Yes
 No

12. Would you like to know more about proactive classroom management techniques?

- Yes
 No

13. What type of professional development would you find most beneficial for learning about proactive classroom management techniques? Please rate in order of preference.

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Professional Book Club	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer Observation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher Study Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This survey was created on Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com)

Appendix C

Teacher Focus Group Questions

Positive Classroom Management Techniques Evaluation

Good afternoon, my name is Ann Toth and I am an Ed.D candidate from Rowan University's Educational Leadership Doctoral Program. I am currently doing research for a dissertation pertaining to the development of a learning community concept through the implementation of a proactive classroom management model which will transform the classroom learning environment for students and teachers to one that is proactive as well as intrinsically motivating for students. I would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in a discussion which will allow you to discuss your experience with the techniques which were discussed during the workshop on November 17, 2010. As we go through our discussion I will serve as the moderator and will document your comments on a tape recording. I invite you to speak openly and freely. Your comments will remain confidential.

The purpose of this focus group is to get honest feedback that will be used to evaluate and improve the adaption of a proactive classroom learning environment at the Lacey Township Middle School. To ensure everyone's comments are accurately recorded, it would be helpful if you talk one at a time after I pose a question. Before we begin, are there any questions. OK, let's begin:

1. How will the techniques as outlined in the workshop assist you to develop characteristics of intrinsic motivation and responsibility for learning in your students?
2. Have the proactive classroom management techniques as outlined in the workshop helped you to change your behavior or attitude when working with disruptive students.
3. Do you feel that the learning team model along with proactive classroom management techniques will improve student/teacher relationships?
4. Do you feel there are any school-wide benefits for implementing in the classroom the learning team model and proactive classroom management techniques?

I would like to thank you for your participation in the
Proactive Classroom Management Techniques Focus Group.

Appendix D

Personal Journal

Journal For Dissertation

Rowan University

Ann Toth

February 2010 - December 2010

Introduction

This journal fulfilled the need for me to reflect upon my participants and the inside knowledge that I have on their professional and personal lives. Both aspects of a teacher's life affect how they interact with the students. Since I work so closely with each teacher it was important for me to keep this journal as away to curb my biases. For the purpose of confidentiality I have removed personal details about the teacher participants in this published version of the journal. This journal allowed me to document my leadership and how I handled obstacles when doing research, particularly how I handled data collection after Governor Christie's state aid reduction announcement. Furthermore, I have included conversations with my principal and supervisor which document their leadership and how I have handled certain situations differently. Lastly, I have documented my personal implementation of proactive classroom management techniques along with a learning team model in my seventh and eighth grade computer classes.

February 1, 2010

I will start my journal here. I have not received IRB approval yet and reflecting upon my leadership for my project is hard to do when I am not able to work on it. I have been working on getting my school district to approve my IRB since November 2009. I hope to be approved at the February board of education meeting. So, I will discuss my concerns about the political climate in my school district and my fears about the effect it will have on my project. In January our new contract was ratified between the union and the board of education. This contract is not a normal contract. The steps were compressed and many of the older teachers where to put it bluntly screwed. This has caused a real moral problem in the district and in my building. My principal is concerned about the teacher's moral and he has tried to be compassionate to the pain that the new contract has caused for the staff. The contract has caused a divide between staff members who feel that the negotiation team lined their pockets. I am worried that the don't do anything extra feeling that is spreading through the staff will affect my project. My leadership skills will be put to the test and I am not sure how I will feel if I am faced with rejection from my colleagues to work with me on my project. I have never been rejected by my colleagues when I have asked for their input and I am hoping that the good rapport that I have with them will facilitate their willingness to be a member of my project.

February 8, 2010

I was talking to Ms. A today about my dissertation project. She was surprised that my doctorate degree was in Educational Leadership. She assumed that I was working on a doctorate in the library field. She was even more surprised with my dissertation topic of proactive classroom management. At first I was insulted with her comments. Then, I realized many people don't realize that when I teach classes in the library that I am applying classroom management techniques, however it is in the atmosphere of the library. I consider the library as my classroom. It may not be the convention classroom with desks in a row, but nonetheless it is my classroom. I hope Ms. A reaction will be an oddity and my colleagues will take me seriously about my vision for improving student motivation for learning in the middle school.

February 17, 2010

Today I sat down with my principal and discussed with him my dissertation project in detail. I talked with him for an hour and I was quite surprised with how helpful he was. I want to include him in the project as much as possible, since he is the building principal and if I want this project to be successful and lasting, I need to have his input as well as support. Relationships, Relationships, Relationships. I asked him for input on the teachers that I had selected for my study. He was very open and even said to me, "I don't know if I should be sharing so much information with you." I told him this information will only stay with me and I know he will be listening to see if I stick to my word. We also, discussed ideas on how to share proactive classroom management techniques within our building. I suggest peer-observations and he was receptive to this idea. However, I don't think he was into giving teachers release time to observe. He felt that a teacher could use their prep time for peer-observations. That said, the meeting had good outcomes and I hope to keep the lines of communication open.

March 4, 2010

Today, I decided that I should write a formal letter to each teacher that I want to interview. I am happy that I did. After putting out the letters, within one hour I had three of the eight teachers who I asked to participate in the interviews, had replied. Three of the teachers that I asked were out for the day. I think I will develop a thank you letter for the teachers as well. I appreciate their time and I want them to know how much I do appreciate their time as well as participation in a study the will help to make our school a better place for learning.

March 10, 2010

I have received confirmation from all eight teachers who I have asked to be participants in my study. They are all willing to be participants which is great, but I am having a little problem with connecting mutual time for the interviews. Majority of the teachers in my building teacher six periods which leaves them with a 25 min. period for lunch and a 40 min. prep period. I on the other hand, I cannot leave the library, so the teachers have to come to me for the interviews. I would do the interviews after school,

but I run an after school program 3 days a week and leave early for school another day. That leaves me with Friday and the teachers leave immediately after school. So that said, my research interviews are slow going. I hope to have all interviews done by the end of next week.

March 12, 2010

Today, I interviewed Mrs. B. Mrs. B has been using positive behavior reinforcements for years. She is known among the staff as a person who can change a negative into a positive. She spends a lot of time helping students that she thinks will fall between the cracks without her help. Her students are special ed. Self contained and she usually teaches in-class support classes. She is in tune to her students' academic, social and psychological needs. She is in constant contact with her student's parents. She makes all of her phone calls from my desk phone; this allows me to have access to how she handles parent's negative or positive remarks. Mrs. B. told me that the recorder made her nervous. After I stopped taping she shared with me that her proactive classroom management style is eclectic. She has attended many workshops over the course of her 25 years of teaching. She has taken a little bit of something from each workshop and made it her own. I asked her why the special education department had a good handle on how to incorporate proactive classroom management techniques into to their teaching practices and she said, that special ed. teachers are trained in behavior modification techniques that say an English teach may have only received an abbreviated version in college. I asked her if anyone has ever approached her about sharing her classroom management techniques with other teachers in the building and she said NO. She is a former teacher of the year.

March 15, 2010

Today, I interviewed Mrs. D. She lives in town and she is involved with local town functions. All of her children attended the Lacey Township School District. Mrs. D. stayed home with her children when they were little. She went to college when all of her children were in school fulltime and she did her student teaching during my fifth year of teaching. She is a former teacher of the year.

March 18, 2010

Today I interviewed Mrs. F. Mrs. F is a lifelong resident of Lacey Township. She has shared with me that she has always loved to learn new things and her daughter shares the same passion for learning.

March 22, 2010

Today, I interviewed Mrs. G. Mrs.G. has been teaching for over 25 years. She has been nominated as teacher of the year many times and she is called the Susan Lucci of the middle school.

March 23, 2010

I think my interviewing for this class is over. Today, I asked the last three teachers who volunteered to help me with my project to interview for me by the end of the week. They were not real receptive. Unfortunately, the tension of layoffs, pay cuts, and pay freezes has overcome their sense of why they are teachers. This reminds me of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. When your survival needs are not taken care of how can you get beyond that to progress toward self actualization. The teachers in my building feel like they are in survival mode and they can't get beyond that mode. One of the teachers that I want to interview is in jeopardy of losing her job. My principal is trying his best to keep the teachers' moral up beat. However, survival mode brings out unusual behaviors in people and for now I feel that my research will be stunted by the recent political issues. This does not mean that I have given-up. What it means is that my research will continue at a later date, possibly after this class is done and I will add to the chapter five later in the spring.

March 30, 2010

Today I began analyzing my interview data. I am still interviewing however. I find it interesting that the teachers who I decided to interview are willing to divulge freely their thoughts and ideas even when the question relates to the administration. I have found that majority of my participants feel overwhelmed with the multi-dimensions that are required of their job. They are not complaining however they wish they were

given more time to interact with the students and prepare lesson, especially teachers who have in class support teachers. My colleagues are interested in learning more about their profession however the top administration does not nurture this teacher need. Despite the in-fighting and political problems that persist to dominate the middle school's everyday life, some of the teachers have not let these issues dominate their professional life. Some teachers have sub-come to the persisting issues and their students will suffer for the unprofessional behavior. It is times like this when the teachers who are in education to make a difference in someone's life will shine through the whirlwind of pessimism.

April 6, 2010

A colleague asked me why I am continuing my pursuit for a doctorate degree in educational leadership when I won't be able to use the degree. This teacher assumed that I was pursuing a doctorate degree in order to climb the administrative ladder. I was quite surprised that this teacher felt that pursuing education was a waste of time. How ironic, a teacher who thinks that education is a waste of time. It is a scary thought that a person who is supposed to influence lifelong learning in the students was asking me why I was wasting my time. I told him I did not feel like I was wasting my time. Working toward a doctorate degree does not box me into administrative aspirations. I explained that I could teach on the college level which would allow me to inspire future leaders to go out into the field and transform the educational system to go back to the roots of educating the students for their future endeavors, instead of pushing teachers to teach to a test which eventually the test scores will be put in the newspaper for society to make judgments. Everyone has their personal reasons as to why they became a teacher. This teacher has commented that he became a teacher to have the summers off. So, the question is first: How does a leader motivate a teacher who is not in education to improve students' lives to become an advocate of lifelong learning? Second, how does a leader turn this teacher's view on lifelong learning from a waste of time to an enhancement of both the personal and professional growth of a teacher?

April 9, 2010

My data collection is coming along slowly. The middle school has a unique

scheduling routine in that majority of the teachers teach six periods. I never leave the library since there is no duty teacher and my secretary technically is not allowed to stay with students alone. Therefore, both situations have slowed down my interview process. I would conduct the interviews after school; however, I run an after school program three days a week, which requires my full attention at all, times and one day I have to be to Rowan by 4:45 pm for a class. That leaves me with Friday as my only day that I could possibly stay after for an interview and unfortunately my interview participants would rather not stay after school on a Friday. I am persistent and I will gather my interviews, but it may take me several months to complete. I am fearful that I will not have the data collection process completed for the end of LAFS. So, I will continue working on my first cycle after the course has ended as well as code the data. This may put off my benchmark II, but as I said I am persistent and my interview participants are willing to work with me so that I can get their input. So, I remain optimistic.

April 12, 2010

My principal told me, today, that my after school library program is cancelled for next year. I am quite upset about losing the program that allowed students who do not have access to computers at home another avenue for completing class assignments. Also, I am quite upset that my principal told the entire faculty about this budget cut for next year before he told me the news. My principal held his monthly faculty meeting, today and decided to include the cutting of the after school library program on a power point presentation. Luckily, I was not able to attend the meeting since I was at after school library hour. I would have been mortified to find out about this news in front of the entire staff. As my principal was returning the AV-ATor to the library he said, "Oh by the way did you hear that this program is cut for next year." I thought this statement was odd since I was wondering who would have told me besides him. Shortly afterward another teacher said, to me, "Ann I am so sorry." I said to her, "why are you sorry," the teacher then said, "well about losing your after school program." I asked her how she knew this information and she said, "Mr. A. told us at the faculty meeting." At this time I realized how important it is to deliver either bad or good news to a staff member in private before sharing the information with the rest of the staff. Leadership is about

relationships, trust, and respect. I think Mr. A. forgot about the relationship part of leadership when he forgot to tell me about the budget cut.

April, 15, 2010

I interviewed Miss J. today. She is a young teacher who like me is always in school. She recently completed a master's degree in educational administration. I included her in my interview participants since My principal brought to my attention her proactive classroom management skills. He told me that she has an excellent rapport with her students and seldom writes students up.

April 19, 2010

I spoke to my principal today about the students that I chose for my study. They are students that I know and have worked with in the library as well as recommended by the vice principal's secretary. The vice principal handles all discipline for the middle school, so the vice principal's secretary works with all discipline students. My principal suggested that I contact each parent by phone and tell them that a consent form is coming home about my study which will improve teaching and learning in the classroom. I thought that was a good suggestion and I was happy that he was willing to provide suggestion which will help my study.

April 20, 2010

I had my observation yesterday and today I did my consultation with my supervisor. In conversation he asked me how my doctorate program was going. I told him about my study and the professional development component. He said something that I did not think of, he said, our budget cuts have eliminated professional development workshops and we will be looking for in-house presenters as well as ideas for professional development hours. This follows the notion that, "every cloud has a silver lining." As frustrated as I am over the budget cuts, it may help my study. This probably sounds selfish, but the budget cuts may benefit my study.

April 21, 2010

Today, I handed out student consent forms to the students who I want to participate in my study. In addition, I called their parents to introduce myself and to let them know that I was sending home a letter which pertained to my project. I let the parent know that a goal of the study was to improve teacher/student relationships in the classroom. I asked four students which I identified through my own experience with the students, the principal's recommendations, and input from the vice principal's secretary. I looked up the student's discipline reports and found that one student does not have as many discipline reports this year compared to last year. I will be interested in interviewing this student to find out why she has improved her behavior in school. The NJ ASK test is next week so I am not optimistic about conducting interview next week. Although it would be an opportune time since the teachers show fun movies after the test until dismissal.

May 5, 2010

Today, my district voted to freeze our salaries for the 2010/2011 school year. This topic has caused havoc and bad feelings among the staff in the district and in the middle school. I have watched people who have been friends for 25 years refuse to talk to each other. To make matters worse the contract that we signed in December 2009 caused dissent and bad feelings throughout the district and now the salary freeze issue has caused more bad feelings. I have seen teachers yelling at each other and carrying on in front of students. My building principal has chosen to ignore the situation. I think he thinks the situation will go away eventually and everything will go back to normal. I DON'T THINK SO. Ignoring the situation is making the issue fester under the surface. The bad feelings between staff members is the HUGE white elephant in the room. I know the uncivil situation will impact my ability to get teachers and staff to work together as a learning community to develop a professional development plan for implementing proactive classroom management techniques within the school. I will have to think of another way of getting staff input.

May 13, 2010

I received an E-mail today from Mrs. K. which contained her answers for my interview questions. I have been unable to leave the media center to interview her. Her prep-time is the same time as my secretary's lunch. My principal who says that he supports my research endeavors really gives lip service to that statement. As long as my project does not interfere with his life he is all for it. So, asking him for help to get coverage so that I can leave the media center to interview Mrs. K is out of the question. So, technology has saved the day. Mrs.K. is a very caring teacher who is a special education teacher. We have about 150 special education students in the building and she works with the 7th grade self-contained students.

May 21, 2010

I think I will ask Dr. E. if I can do a survey to gather information about my teachers' interest on learning about proactive classroom management techniques and their thoughts on what proactive classroom management is. I am concerned since I did not include a sample survey in my IRB. The survey will allow the whole staff to take part in deciding how they will learn about proactive classroom management instead of just a few select people on a committee. I like the idea of opening up the decision to the whole staff which allows me to highlight my democratic leadership skill ability.

June 16, 2010

I put out my survey today on Survey Monkey to the teachers and administrators in the middle school. I am hoping for at least a 40% response rate. I made the survey short and sweet so that it did not take up too much time. I am optimistic that majority of the teachers will want to help me with my research endeavors and I hope they realize that my research will help them to improve their teaching and their students' learning environment.

June 22, 2010

I have received 40% of the teachers and administrators to respond to my survey. I am quite pleased that they overwhelmingly want to learn more about proactive classroom

management. They have voiced their preference of a workshop to learn about the topic and majority of them have a basic idea of what proactive classroom management is.

June 25, 2010

The last day of school!!! I am happy school is over, but I have to reflect on a situation that I encountered in the hallway today with a student and a first year teacher. Charles an 8th grader who has ADHD (he does not take medication, instead he goes to the nurses' office several times a day to drink coffee) was wandering in the hallway about 15 min. before the end of the day bell. Before I could engage him in a conversation about what he was doing wandering in the hallway, Mr. E. a first year teacher, stopped Charles and asked him where he belonged. Charles responded with a snotty answer of Mr. N.'s room but I am not going back there and there is nothing that you can do. Mr. E. told Charles that he was to go directly back to Mr. N.'s room or he could go to the office. At this time, I intervened to deflate the heated situation and I asked Charles why he didn't want to go back to class. He responded with, "I don't have to and there is nothing that anyone can do about it." "I am already suspended for the first two days of school for next year and I am not allowed to be in the graduation, so what else are they going to do to me." In other words, Charles was like a caged animal trying to figure out how to get away from captures. Despite Charles' story Mr. E. continued to repeat himself telling Charles that he had to go back to class. Mrs. J. one of Charles' special education teachers heard the commotion in the hallway and stuck her head out her door. She could see that Mr. E. was not going to give up on his repeated speech nor was he hearing anything that I was saying or Chris. So, Mrs. J. asked Charles to come into her classroom so that she could speak with him and he did so. This situation solidified my belief that not all teachers automatically know how to work with a student who does not respond to the typical teacher requests to follow directions. I think the middle school needs to change its' mindset for working with disruptive students or situations like Charles' will continue to be the norm.

September 7, 2010

Today, is the first day of school for students and staff. I taught my first class outside of the media center in 17 years. I did my student teaching in 1993 and that was

the last class that I actually had to keep a lesson plan book and a grade book. I went over the course syllabus and class rules as well as my expectations with the students. They are seventh graders and they looked like deer in headlights. I went over classroom procedures with the students and allowed them time to ask me questions. I told them about my background and then I asked them to tell me their name so that I could start to remember their name and one thing that they wanted to learn about in their computer class. I was surprised that they took the question seriously and they gave me good answers. I told them to remember their answers and we will revisit this question at the end of the semester. Last, I told them that I have 3 other rules that are not on the handout that I gave them 1) Be the best that you can be. 2) Do the best that they can do. 3) We are a learning team, we share, work, and learn together. I told them that I am a member of the learning team we are all learning together. My principal keeps thanking me for teaching the computer classes. I guess he is sincere; I am not sure since I found out that Mr. M. did not take the art classes on his free will. My principal made me think that he did. That to me is deceptive.

September 8, 2010

I wrote on the board today "Goals for the Day". I listed three goals and told the students that our goals for the day will always be on the blackboard. I taught Microsoft Word terms today and I really tried to take my time to keep the students interactive in the lesson by asking the answers to my questions, telling them to use prior knowledge to answer the questions. I decided to create learning teams today for my 3rd period class since I have 7 IEP students who are self-contained special ed. These students could use the social interaction with other students in their grade as well as a mentor to help them accomplish the goals for the day. I originally told them that they could sit where they wanted, but to keep in mind that they need to choose wisely who they sit next too. I told them that if the person they sit next to is not appropriate for them we will have a discussion together about the situation and come up with a plan that may be better for them and their learning. I got some strange looks. I don't think they want to have a conversation with me about their sitting arrangement. That said, today, I decided that this would be a recipe for disaster. So I have created learning teams for the class and I will sit them in their seats tomorrow. I am trying to remember to say hello at the beginning of the class and ask them how they are before I start the lesson. My vice principal and principal both thanked me today about taking the classes. I am starting to worry they are being too nice to me and I think they are hiding something from me. This could just be my paranoia.

September 9, 2010

I put my period 3 class into learning teams. It looks like it will be fine. The students were receptive to the idea of learning teams and today, the students had to work

without computers since the system went down. 22 students 7 of which are special ed. and they handled the situation quite well. At the end of class I thanked them for working with the situation. I had them write out their essay on paper and told them tomorrow you will type what you have written today. I announce at the beginning of the class our goal for the day and the students so far are receptive to this concept. It keeps them on track and gives them a sense of we are working together to meet the goal. I have one student however who does not have his computer folder together and I told him it has to be together by the end of the week. In addition, I have one student who comes to class late each day. Today, I told him after the class gets started on the goal for the day we were going to have a conversation about why he could not get to class on time. He looked a little surprised that I was going to have a conversation with him. I began the conversation asking him where was he coming from. He told me gym. I found that interesting since he came to class today from the opposite direction of this class. In addition, he did not have his computer folder. I asked him where his locker was. He said, a number for a locker that was next to the classroom door. That said, he admitted that he took the long way to class. So I told him how to leave the gym and to go up the stairwell in B hall which will put him right in front of his locker where he can pick-up his computer folder. He smiled and told me he would try that tomorrow. We will see.

September 10, 2010

I gave my workshop proposal to my professional development coordinator for my building. I have to go through the coordinator in order to schedule a workshop. He told me he would do his best to accomplish the task. However, he submitted a workshop proposal in the beginning of August and he found out yesterday that the proposal is lost, so now they have to do the process all over again. He told me the story because he knows this workshop is a part of my dissertation research and he did not want me to be mad at him if the same thing happens to mine. The joke in the district is that the Board Office which is where the proposal is going is a black hole that gobbles up everything. I have intimate knowledge of this situation since they held me up for two months before I could submit my IRB proposal. That said, I am following the chain of command and hoping that everything works out. My late student made it on time to class today with his backpack and folder. However, he did not use the stairwell that I suggested and he realized that I knew this. In addition, he lost his paper he wrote yesterday. I quickly told him well you don't have time to fool around and dwell on the situation, get typing and I know it will be as good as yesterday paper. He typed the whole time. My other student who did not have his folder organized is still looking for his computer class rules. That said, I told him if he did not have it on Monday he will get half credit. I let him know that he was the only student in the class who lost the rules. I told him he could hand copy a friends and I would accept that.

September 17, 2010

This week I realized that two students in my class need to be moved since they are friends with students who sit around them. I have spoke with each student and told them that we may need to find another seat for you. If you would like to sit where you are currently sitting realize that other people need to get their work done and so do you. Both students continued to talk to people around them. So, I made an announcement today, that on Monday I will be changing some seats. The students are not malicious bad, they are chatty bad. The learning team concept does work for the IEP students. I have found though that some of the regular ed. Students need more help than the IEP students. I have not heard back about my October workshop nor has Mr. Z. who tells me that I have to wait to hear from him about it being approved. So, I am patiently waiting following the chain of command.

September 20, 2010

Today, I changed Tommy's and Richard's seat. They didn't give me any problems about the change and the students they sat next to thanked me. One student by Ryan said he is friends with Richard and Richard kept talking to him which was putting him behind in the class work. I noticed that the staff is not as outgoing as we use to be. Many people seem to be miserable and it shows on their face. I hope this new feeling of I am here and that is it, will not affect how my workshop is received. I am sure many people will come just to get their hours for professional development.

September 21, 2010

The seat changes are working nicely. Tommy however is the kind of kid that will talk no matter where he sits. But, the girl who sits next to him ignores him so he is typing faster and getting the work done. The same for Richard however he doesn't have any friends sitting around him that he knows. I will be out tomorrow so I explained to the class that the substitute is a guest in our classroom and we are treat the sub like a guest that we would have in our own home. I also, told them that the sub is to leave the names of anyone who is late, uncooperative or disruptive and they will stay with me on Monday after school to discuss with me how they will not behave the same way again when there is a substitute in our classroom.

September 24, 2010

I am having an issue with a student who is coming late to class. The class is aware that they each have three times for being late to class. On the third time I have told them that they will stay after with me to develop a plan for not being late to class and they will write the plan and sign it. The idea that they have to write a plan and sign it is a

scary thought for most of them. However, this one student has been late to class two times. Today, I asked her to come over to my desk and we had a conversation about why she comes late to class. She told me she has Mrs. O. period 1 who is across the hall and she goes to her locker on the other side of the building to get her computer folder. I explained to her that Monday she will get her computer folder before homeroom and bring it with her to period 1. All she will have to do is walk across the hallway and she won't be late for class. So, we will see how she does on Monday. Also, I happen to be talking to another teacher who says that this same student comes late to her class each day. So, I will have to share with her my experience if this works for this student. The new seating arrangement is working, so far. The students all seem to get along with each other and they work nicely together.

September 30, 2010

I realized this week that the students in my period 3 class that have a problem with staying on task and handing in work on time are not my special ed. Students, it is my regular ed. Students. An email was put out this week concerning one of my students who has a 504 plan. He comes from Lakewood which is a predominately Hispanic and African American community. He is African American and is one of five African American students in the school. Other teachers have complained about his behavior in class. However, I don't have anything out of the ordinary with his behavior in my class. He likes to joke around and I need to let him know that it is ok to joke around, however, he must get his work done and so far this has worked. Mr. Z. has assured me that my workshop paper work is not lost and it is waiting on the assistant superintendent's approval. I asked if it would help if I called over to the board office and he told me NO they will just send me back to my building rep. which is him.

October 1, 2010

Today, I announced that it was the last day for typing out the autobiography and we were on a mission to get all typing done today. I told them as they typed I was going to scan in their pictures so that they had them for Monday when we would begin their cover page. I made it seem like we were on a mission together to get the work done and it worked. Period 3 work the hardest that I have ever seen. I also, had two students come up to me and complain today about a student in their learning team. They asked if they could have their seats moved. I thought about it and then realized that the one student who was bothering everyone needed to be the one who learned to control their talking. So, I made a general announcement that we were going to have a class meeting since I received several complaints about people talking to other people in the learning groups and it was causing the other members to not be able to get their work done. So, therefore, if they are having a problem with talking and annoying their learning team members they will have

to come and talk with me about moving their seat to a place where they will not feel the urge to bother other people. No one wanted to talk with me so that stopped the situation.

October 5, 2010

Yesterday, I had a little time with the student that is African American in my period three class. I had to tell him several times to stop talking so that he could get his work done. I finally told him that it was rude to speak when other people are speaking and he apologized and I didn't have to say another word.

October 6, 2010

Today, I asked my professional development rep. for my building if he heard back from the district professional development committee about my workshop approval. I ask him about it a couple times a week. He said, he heard nothing and he would send over a reminder today after school. In addition, I have noticed in my third period class that the special ed. students are working very hard to complete their project. I am happy with their dedication. However, I have one student who I have to constantly say to him, "Where are you at on your project". He sees that everyone is working on the project and he seems to drift into space. Once he gets working he can finish quickly.

October 12, 2010

I decided to ask my building's professional development rep. if I can call over to the board office myself to locate my workshop paper work. He said he did not mind. I called the board office and was told they knew nothing about my workshop and the secretary would have to ask the assistant superintendent about it. I am starting a project today in my class that involves power point. I have asked each learning team to help each other. For instance, if one person is proficient at adding slide transition and clip-art please help other members of your team. The students are all working hard and for some it has given them a sense of leadership while they show their team mates how to do something on their power point.

October 13, 2010

Today, I decided to call the board office back about my workshop. I was told that Vanessa sent the paper work back to Jim to sign. This is unheard of since building principals don't sign off on professional development workshops. The assistant superintendent does. I talked to my building professional development representative and he was quite confused as to why my principal had to sign the paper work. So, I asked my principal's secretary about the paper work and his secretary told me she has not seen the paper work and she would ask my principal about it. The learning teams are working out

great. It seems that the special ed. students are more knowledgeable about power point than the general ed.

October 14, 2010

My principal has not seen anything about my workshop and he was confused as to why he needed to sign anything. I gave him a copy of what Mr. Z. had originally sent over to the board office and he told me he would read it and give it back to me signed.

October 15, 2010

My principal signed my paper work and I picked November 17, 2010 as the new workshop date. I handed the paper work back to Mr. Z. who again will send it back to the assistant superintendent for her signature. I definitely need her approval to conduct the workshop. So, Mr. Z. is allowing me to follow up on this new paper work. He definitely had a face that said I don't want to get any more involved than I need to.

October 20, 2010

I called over to the board office today to follow up on my workshop paperwork. I was told that they needed to look for the paperwork it was somewhere on the assistant superintendent's desk. Today, I started to work on Study Island with my computer class. It did not go well. It was like pulling teeth trying to get the students to stay on task. I finally decided to ask the students about their thoughts about Study Island. To my surprise they hate Study Island. So that said the next few days is going to be torture for me and them. On another note, I had a student ask me today what I was going to do to boost her grade. I looked at her and said well Beth let's turn that question around. What are you going to do to boost your grade? I don't give grades, you earn them. She looked at me with her mouth open and said, WELL.

October 25, 2007

I received confirmation today that my workshop is approved for November 17. I will put out an email inviting the staff to the workshop and announce it at my department meeting on Wednesday. I started a new project with my class today. Several students wanted to know how it would affect their grade if they bombed out on this project and I told them this project could make or break them it was their choice not mine. With that I began introducing the project and those students are deciding how important they think this project is to their grade.

October 26, 2010

Today, my period 3 class was out of control talking. Before I know it I had resorted to a reactive approach to their behavior. I told them that their behavior was out

of control and if it continued I would begin to give out detentions. I grabbed a piece of paper and walked around with it for the rest of the class as a deterrent so that they would think I was going to write their names on it for detention. As soon as I said detention I knew I was resorting to my old ways of controlling the class. So at the end of the period I called a class meeting to go over with them the type of behavior I expected from them tomorrow and I told them that their grade on the project would reflect the work that they put into it. I ended the class with that statement.

October 27, 2010

I decided to create a project participation grade to stop the student's constant calling out, getting out of their seats and not staying on task. I started the class with a class discussion or a class meeting as I called it to the class. I explained how the participation grade worked and they all looked at me with their mouths open. Well, they all stayed in their seats, raised their hands to ask questions and stayed on task. However, several students had to test me and they had points deducted from their participation grade. I also, hung up a poster that says, "Discipline Yourself So Others Won't Have To." Several of the special ed. students had quite a time with self control and monitoring their own behavior. Also, I noticed that I spelled something wrong that I sent over to my assistant superintendent. I will have to pay more attention to my spelling. I also, hung up posters for my workshop in the library and announced it at my department meeting. Someone told me if I had food they would come. Of course I always serve food, Big Shop-Rite bakery cookies. They always draw a crowd.

October 29, 2010

I hung up more posters for my workshop in both faculty bathrooms. I have approximately 10 participants and I hope to get at least five more by November 17th. I have been trying to create a sense of enthusiasm for the workshop by explaining the topic in a "it will be fun to learn about something new attitude". I hope the enthusiasm is contagious.

November 1, 2010

Since yesterday was Halloween more than half of my computer class is out today. That said, the students worked so hard today. It was so quiet. I praised the students at the end of the class about their work and I asked them how they felt about their progress on their projects. I wanted them to reflect upon their hard work as well and to feel good about themselves. The students looked at me funny. I don't think they are asked about how they feel about their hard work and allowed to express their feelings. I have found this to be a continuing theme. The students are not asked for their opinions or input on their learning, so they really don't know how to respond. I will be staying after school on November 3rd to provide the students with extra time to work on their projects. Several

students need the time to work so as I identified them I would ask them if they thought they should stay after school. If they weren't sure I contacted their parents to discuss it with them. Some of the students volunteered themselves to stay after saying, "I can really use the extra time." However, some of them needed to be persuaded.

November 10, 2010

Today, I asked my period three students focus group questions for my diversity project. I was quite surprised with how the focus group went and how mature the students were with their responses. The students have been on a quest to finish their last project for me and they have been working really hard and I am pleased with their self motivation to get the project done. I am going to leave the last day of the first marking period as a celebration day to celebrate all of their hard work. I will let them go onto Study Island to play the games or go onto National Geographic kids. I am really happy with the response to my workshop. I now have 15 people signed up for the workshop. I asked my principal today for help with trying to access U-Tube within the school so that I can show a U-Tube video which demonstrates why we as teachers need to change our teaching strategies to collaborative and proactive. My principal was less than helpful and I now know that my dissertation project is not something that he feels is important. So that said, I will figure out myself how to get the movie to play.

November 17, 2010

I did my workshop today and I received different reactions to its content. Some of the workshop participants thought that the statistical information that I used to backup why we need to change our teaching practices, was skewed and was uncomplimentary to public education. Some of the participants thought the workshop was great and eye opening as well as full of information to use in the classroom. So, I hope one of those people would let me observe their classroom while they implement some of the techniques I talked about in the workshop. My principal wished me luck today and he was happy that someone in his building had volunteered to help the professional development committee for our building to put on a workshop. I quickly realized that my workshop filled a void in his building since I and one other teacher have volunteered to do a workshop for the professional development committee. As a side note, I gave my workshop participants gourmet cookies from Shop-Rite, little bottles of water, candy bars, and their workshop hand-outs were coordinated in a blue folder with a pencil as well as paper for notes. They all liked the food and the folders.

November 22, 2010

Mrs. L. stopped me this morning to tell me that she tried a group activity on Friday with all of her classes. She said, that she has never done this before and she has been teaching for about twenty years. She used this activity as a treat for her class. She said, she was surprised at how well it worked out and that she liked the idea of grouping the students together to work together on math problems. Mrs. L. is known for having classroom management problems. So, I was really surprised that she tried something new and totally outside of the box for her personality.

November 23, 2010

Mrs. S. shared with me today that she used a class meeting today to discuss a class issue. She said that the students were quite surprised that she wanted their input on solving a classroom issue. At first they were apprehensive to participate but as she put them at ease they began to open-up and the meeting was really productive. She said, she will definitely use this technique more often. She said, that she would like to implement more of the ideas that I presented at the workshop. However, right now is a bad time since the holidays are in sight and after the holidays she is going to try more of the techniques that I presented at the workshop.

November 24, 2010

Mr. D. shared with me today that he is doing a group project and assigned each person in each group a role to play in the group. He said, he is looking forward to seeing the final product for each group and so far the techniques is working to help keep each person in the group productive members and on track with the project. He also, said that he tried the class meeting and he really liked the feedback that he received from his class.

December 10, 2010

I asked my principal today to help me to secure permission from the assistant superintendent to give my focus group participants professional development time. However, my request was met with a look and “I would really like to help, but I really can’t do anything to help you.” He more or less wished me luck with my quest which was not helpful. Needless to say, I was disappointed, but it was an expected answer. So, I sent the following memo to my assistant superintendent.

December 10, 2010

TO: Assistant Superintendent
FROM: Ann Toth, Media Specialist/Computer Teacher
RE: Follow-up to the Proactive Classroom Management Techniques and Learning Team Model Workshop
DATE: December 10, 2010

.....

As a follow-up to the “Proactive Classroom Management Techniques and Learning Team Model Workshop”, I will be conducting a focus group with the workshop participants. I would like to be able to offer professional development time to the focus group participants. The focus group participants will answer three to five reflective questions and it will take approximately thirty minutes to complete. The questions will elicit the teachers’ perceptions about the techniques that were introduced at the workshop and the impact that the techniques have on their teaching practices. I would like to conduct the focus group on Monday, December 20, 2010 at the middle school in the media center at 2:15 pm. Therefore, I am asking for your approval to offer thirty minutes of professional development time to the teachers who participate in the focus group. If there are any questions, I can be contacted by e-mail (atoth@longschools.org) or phone (ex. 2113).

Thank you for your consideration.

Ann Toth

LMS

December 20, 2010

Today will be my last entry for my journal for this study. I will be collection data for my last cycle, today. I will conduct a focus group with three teachers who will answer four questions pertaining to the workshop they attended in November. I did not receive permission from my assistant superintendent to grant the focus group participants professional development time. I am not surprised. I did drive over to her office and delivered it to her secretary. Despite my persistence on trying to work with my assistant superintendent it seems that the professionalism on her part is lacking. I disagree with people I work with all the time, however, I maintain a working relationship with those individuals and I hope that I maintain this type of professionalism in an administrative position, someday.