

MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM
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Rationale

The purpose of this research study is to determine which factors that a school support team deems most relevant when determining their own effectiveness as a support system within a school. The purpose of the Student Support Team (SST) is to provide intervention support mainly to students, based on teacher and staff referrals. The SST's job is to consistently check-in with students and measure the effectiveness of interventions. While it is important to ensure students are meeting the goals set forth by the team for students, it is equally important that the team takes the time to measure and acknowledge their success when meeting those established factors that determine their own effectiveness. Those factors will be explored and identified in this research.

Literature Review

SSTs consist of high school staff whose primary task is to identify early on students having challenges either academically or behaviorally. This team selects the appropriate intervention to address the identified challenge. This team creates intervention plans, progress monitors students to assess the effectiveness of interventions, and increases support (tiers) as appropriate when students do not respond to intervention services. (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Policy and Program Studies Service Issue Brief: Student Support Teams, 2017).

Effective student support teams have common goals with clearly defined roles/responsibilities for each of the members. Additionally, these teams have standard operating procedures they follow and have agreed-upon metrics to measure their success. (DuFour, Guidice, Magee, Martin & Zivkovic, 2002).

Furthermore, effective teams will be collaborative and will work with all stakeholders to assess students, the school, and the SST's effectiveness. (DuFour, Guidice, Magee, Martin & Zivkovic, 2002).

Parents must be involved in the implementation and support the assigned interventions from the SST. Parents, on the other hand, must be given the tools on how to implement strategies assigned by the SST is also equally important. (Ford, 2009)

Methodology

This case study was of an urban high school. 10 participants agreed to take a 10 question Likert scale survey using Microsoft forms. Each participant, whose identity will remain anonymous, had to rank ten factors they deemed important when measuring the effectiveness as members of their school's Student Support Team. The ranking was based on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being most important and 1 being not important at all. Each factor could only receive one ranking. This team consisted of a variety of team members including coordinators, counselors, social workers, and interventionists.

Data Analysis

The ten factors participants ranked were 1) Progress monitoring occurs according to schedule 2) Team members are aware of the purpose of the meeting and their roles on the team 3) Required team members attend meetings regularly (80% of the time) 4) Established metrics

and measures of effectiveness developed by the team at the beginning of the year are met at the end of the year 5) Teachers use Tier 1 interventions before making referrals 6) Decreases in the number of student failure rates per term/grade level year to year 7) Decreases in the number of student referrals submitted by school staff 8) Parent feedback indicates improvements in student performance post-intervention services 9) Teacher feedback indicates improvements in student performance post referrals and interventions 10) School-based referral process/procedures are known and adhered to by all stakeholders (i.e., referral forms utilized, students are discussed at grade level meetings and then referred to the team).

I hypothesized that each factor would easily fall into a category between 10 (most important) and 1 (not important) and that the results would delineate important factors from non-important factors. While I was able to easily identify the top three factors, the respondents' answers varied widely with one ranking (6 – see above) being selected by six different respondents.

Ranking	Factor(s)
#1	5 – Teachers use Tier 1 interventions prior to making referrals
#2 – two factors were a tie for this rank	6 - Decreases in the number of student failure rates per term/grade level year to year 9 - Teacher feedback indicates improvements in student performance post referrals and interventions
#2	3 - Required team members attend meetings regularly (80% of the time)

Recommendations for Further Study

To better understand the factors that are most important to SST's, future studies should include a larger sample size. In addition, the participants included should be expanded to District and school leadership. Lastly, ways to improve messaging around the function, roles/responsibilities, and benefits of such teams should be further explored.

References

- DuFour, R., Guidice, A., Magee, D., Martin, P., & Zivkovic, B. (2002) *The Student Support Team*. Opinion Papers. 10, 12. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED464270.pdf>
- Ford, C. (2009) *Appraisal of Parent's Awareness of the Student Support Team's Purpose and Process and the Impact on Parent Participation and Student Achievement*. University of West Georgia. 8. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED505351.pdf>
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