The Proposed Evaluation of the Jackson Middle School STAR Program

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Program Evaluation submitted for

C&I 676 Program Evaluation

at Marshall University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor in Education

in

Curriculum and Instruction

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Graduate School of Education and Professional Development

South Charleston, West Virginia

2013

Keywords: evaluation, revision, program effectiveness

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This proposal seeks to evaluate the Students Take Active Responsibility (STAR) program at Jackson Middle School in Vienna, West Virginia. The goals of the program include academic excellence, leadership through good citizenship, clear and ongoing communications, and preparedness for the future. The program is administered through various lessons every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday during 1st period, which is homeroom/developmental guidance for the students. The lessons consist of videos, individual, and group activities, and class discussion. Some of the topics covered consist of: no bullying, safe schools, making friends, drug and alcohol awareness, generosity, community, and diversity. The program was designed so that students would receive a truly well-rounded education from the school. Not all of the students are taught these lessons at home, so the teachers try and fill that gap so that they may create intelligent, thoughtful community members for the future.

The STAR program also encompasses teacher expectations of students through reminders and student contracts. Reminders are given to students if they do not follow class rules or do not meet certain expectations. Some of these include: being late for class, not bringing class materials, or respect for others. If a student receives three or less reminders in the nine weeks then they get a reward such as a dance or movie the last two hours of the school day. If the students get more than three reminders they must serve detention during that time. This program also has other steps such as after school detention and parent contact if the student continues to misbehave. Most teachers in the school have a homeroom class and they are responsible for checking the STAR calendar and binder for lessons and materials. Even if the teacher does not have a homeroom they still participate in the program through the reminders.

The stakeholders in this program would be the students, parents, and teachers who wish for the students to be able to grow and learn as a valuable member of the community. There are no resources available to evaluate this program, but none are needed to be able to determine any deficiencies in the program. The political environment of the evaluation would be the school, which could be somewhat problematic because some of the staff created the program, so certain steps would have to be taken to ensure no one was offended. Since the program being evaluated is in the same building with the same people that created and use it there could be some impact to the study. The evaluation would need to be sensitive to those teachers and their feelings would have to be taken into consideration.

The program needs to be evaluated due to the redundancy and outdated nature of the lessons. Most of the lessons are the same for the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade, which means the students are repeating the same lessons over and over. Some of the lessons were created in the early 1990s which the students do not take seriously. Once the students reach the 8th grade they become incredibly disinterested and complain that they have already seen the outdated videos and done the simple worksheets two times before. Some of the worksheets are not too outdated, but the videos are very old and in some cases quite silly. The students do not take the lessons very seriously, which defeats the purpose of the program.

The goal of the evaluation would be for revision of the STAR program. This program can be very beneficial, but it is also very flawed. The program would be much better for the students if it was updated and revised so that the lessons and videos are newer, and are not repeated each year. The entire program would be evaluated and hopefully the results could be used to improve the STAR program.

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| Evaluation Questions | Data to be Collected | Data Collection  Process/Strategy | Data Analysis | Utilization/  Reporting |
| 1. Need for Program   1. What are the goals of the STAR program?  2. Are the goals attainable?  3. How was the program developed?  4. Is the program beneficial to students? | A list of the program’s goals, a document of its’ development and history, a teacher survey that discusses teacher perception of program benefits | Research the goals and history of the program  Develop a survey the covers teacher perception of program benefits | Correlate research information with survey results | Report responses to specific survey questions and a summary of research results |
| 1. Program Design/Conceptualization   1. What are some of the problems with the program?  2. Are the problems subtle or obvious?  3. Are the problems fixable?  4. Could the program be completely replaced with an alternate program? | Survey and interview teachers and students about what they think the program’s problems are and conduct interviews to determine if they believe the problems are fixable or if the program should be replaced | Interview teachers and students after an initial survey is conducted | Correlate the interview responses and survey results to determine teacher and student perceptions | Report responses to specific survey and interview questions |
| 1. Program Operation/Implementation   1. How is the program implemented?  2. Is the implementation consistent in all classrooms?  3. How can consistency be maximized?  4. Would student involvement in implementation help the program? | Interview teacher’s on how they implement the program focusing on assessing consistency and determine their feelings about student involvement. | Interview teachers and research implementation policies | Compare teacher responses to program implementation guidelines | List the comparison between responses on implementation and program guidelines. |
| 1. Program Outcome/Impact   1. How has the program helped students?  2. How has the program hindered students?  3. Could student involvement in the program alter the outcome/impact?  4. What could replace the program if it was completely disregarded? | Survey and interview students on their perceptions of the program and how it has benefitted them or not and if they feel their involvement in the program would alter their previous answers. Also research possible program replacements that currently exist. | Survey and interview students about the program. Research possible replacements. | Detail student responses compared to teacher responses | List the comparison between teacher and student responses |
| 1. Program Cost/Efficiency   1. Is the program cost effective?  2. What are the costs of the program?  3. Can the costs be minimized?  4. Could the expenditures be more adequately allocated? | Research program costs and allocation of funding. Survey teacher’s about their perceptions of funding allocation. | Research program costs and survey teachers. | Detail teacher responses and financial information. | Compare the financial information of the program with previous financial information about alternate programs and correlate to teacher responses. |

**Logic Model for the STAR Program**

Interventions/

Activities

Long-Term Outcomes

Short-Term Outcomes

Resources

Enhance individual student responsibility for behavior and citizenship

Reduce negative student behavior

Increase positive student behavior

Improve school culture

Increase Parent-Teacher contact

Detention

Increase teacher expectations for student behavior

Student incentive program

In class discussion

Educational videos

Question lists

Projects

Reports

Reminders

Home calls

Parent meetings

Teacher training

Teachers

Students

Community

Program materials

The evaluation process should begin with a thorough appraisal of the program. This appraisal should encompass an explanation of the goals and logistics of the program, determine if these are attainable, and then focus on the problems associated with these aspects. It will also be important to evaluate the teachers’ roles in the program and determine their perceptions about the lessons and also ask what their desired changes would be. It will be important to include in the evaluation an assessment of the consistency of the program among the various teachers and determine if student or teacher involvement in the development of the program would be beneficial. The STAR program results also need to be assessed.

The evaluation should determine what the students are learning and if the program has benefitted them or not. The program consists of three grade levels so these results may have to be determined separately, or a comparative study of student progress may prove enlightening. The financial aspects of the program should be examined and possible alternatives considered either for program improvement or replacement.

These details in regards to the STAR program can be attained through research, teacher and student surveys and interviews, and program data analysis. The information needs to be correlated together to produce an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The ultimate goal of the program is to enhance individual student responsibility for behavior and citizenship. To determine if the program is successful in its goals a thorough evaluation must be undertaken to decide if the program is fully meeting its goal or if any revisions are needed.

If a meta-evaluation were desired it would be more accurate and beneficial if the process was undertaken by an outside source. All of the teachers work with this program on a daily basis and their closeness to this program may increase the likelihood for bias in the report. An outside source would better be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the program and could gather data and opinions from the students and faculty in regard to how they view the program. A teacher conducting this meta-evaluation may influence the results due to their own bias, or in the reaction of the other teachers toward the researcher.