

Action Research Final Session
April 25, 2007

Pee Dee Education Center 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Attending:

Melanie Solter	Marilyn Bostick
Marion Robinson	Jean Shaw
Lisa Wise	Robertha Harrison
Debra Driggers	Denise Jones
Diane Welsh	Franklyn McInnis
Frances LeGette	Dorothy Jacobs
Constance Hill	Royetta Moore
Jacqui Graham	William Thompson
Louise Goings	Erika Wiggins, student
	Bettina Thomas, student

I. Welcome & Introductions

Dr. Lorin Anderson, facilitator welcomed everyone and had each person introduce themselves with the name of their school. The purpose of the meeting today was to summarize what was learned and what teachers can do with those students that aren't our "shining stars." He related a story about a set of dice and the Polar Bear Club that demonstrated how a group of incorrigible students can work together and accomplish a common goal if they are challenged and motivated.

II. Overview & Summary Collected

Dr. Anderson distributed several handouts beginning with an overview of the Action Research Project. Of the total group of 22 Action Research teachers, 17 teachers participated in 33 student interviews this semester. Most all the teachers identified two students with one teacher interviewing 3 students. Of the sample of students observed, 20 were black males, 8 were black females, 3 were white males and 1 was a Hispanic male. Dr. Anderson discussed a handout entitled "The Haves, the Needs, and the Don't Cares" by Tim Weber, Kappa Delta Pi Record, Winter 2003. This article dealt mainly with middle school students but might be applicable to other age groups as well.

- The Haves are students who seem somewhat organized, get good grades, and are generally highly motivated in extracurricular activities. Parents play a big role in their lives by communicating with teachers reviewing homework, and supporting their students' activities.
- The Needs are students who crave attention from anybody, especially peers. They have a tendency to disrupt class, get average grades, and are sometimes discipline problems. Teachers try to encourage them to become the Have students. Most parents attempt to be involved, but generally only see the teachers at requested conferences.
- The Don't Care students give little to no effort in completing assignments and who are constantly causing disruptions that take away learning time for the rest of the students. They don't participate in class, nor in extracurricular activities. They

usually carry baggage from home. Sometimes, they have difficulty making friends or they become bullies. Like the Needs, they crave attention.

III. Categories of Difficult and Resistant Students

The observation data was categorized into five areas: 1) easily distractible, 2) constantly confused, 3) angry and aggressive, 4) attention seekers, and 5) unpredictable. He discussed quotes from student observers emphasizing the types of behavior and possible causes of the behavior.

IV. Group Discussion

After a break, the group discussed each category of difficult and resistant students and “things to do that work.” Their comments are listed below. Dr. Anderson included many of the same comments on a handout for the participants.

Easily Distractible

- Discuss background noise, move to location where traffic is less
- Instead of long activities, shorter activities work best
- Use timer to let students know there is a time limit to do some activities
- Teacher moves to vicinity (physical proximity), places hand on shoulder or walks by and taps on work to get student back on task
- Give student responsibility for something or put them in charge of something

Constantly Confused

- Use acronyms instead of long terms/words. Use songs or other types of memory aids
- Teach technology support that is available (Look at index of textbook)
- Specific strategy lessons (Here’s what I want you to do. Here are questions you should be able to answer, rather than using objectives.)
- Use examples that interest the students, us things that are relevant to them today, not 10 years ago.
- Pair students with stronger student. (peer tutoring) Start where the students are and go from there.

Angry and Aggressive

- Have a signal that students know you’re monitoring their anger (could be a verbal warning)
- Learn your students and know when you can ignore their behavior
- Remain calm when student is angry
- Offer alternative activity

Attention Seekers

- Give opportunity to share work that will give them positive attention
- Give them a chore/task in the classroom
- Give time to share
- “Burning question” box – will answer in last 5 minutes of class

Unpredictable

- Offer consistency
- Know what “triggers” unpredictable behavior and stay away from that
- Confront student before class and ask how they’re doing, if there anything bothering them
- Positive rewards for good behavior
- Write notes to parents w/positive remarks when student are deserving (smiley faces)

V. Wrap-Up

Dr. Anderson concluded with two final thoughts:

- Even when students engage in strategies that are ultimately self-defeating, their goal is actually to protect their sense of self-worth.
- Students must be helped to see the connection between effort and accomplishment.