Spring 2018

Factors of Academic Achievement for Middle School Students

Kelly Geary

kellyg3212@aol.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.murraystate.edu/bis437

Recommended Citation

Geary, Kelly, "Factors of Academic Achievement for Middle School Students" (2018). *Integrated Studies*. 93.
https://digitalcommons.murraystate.edu/bis437/93

Factors of Academic Achievement for Middle School Students

Kelly Geary

Murray State University

Spring 2018

ABSTRACT

Factors contributing to academic achievement in elementary, middle, and high school students; is a very important topic that has been researched for many years. There have been key points that have been identified as assisting students to reach full academic achievement. This research paper will cover various topics regarding education, beginning with; students developmental stages, theories, academic achievement, extracurricular activities, gender, educators' responsibilities, methods, strategies, and curriculum. This paper will acknowledge the importance that extracurricular activities, arts, and humanities plays on academic achievement. As well as how factors such as low socio-economic status and retention can hinder students achievement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Educational curriculum and extracurricular activities are of major importance to students and their academic success. Many studies and research have shown that extracurricular activities and school curriculum are both responsible in determining our students' academic success, throughout elementary, middle, and high school. Throughout this paper I will discuss middle schools students' developmental process, middle school curriculum and the effects that extracurricular activities have on our students, and how we should implement extracurricular activities in our students' daily lives. I will also examine some factors that may be linked to students not participating in extracurricular activities, as well as what contributes to students dropping out of school.   Middle school curriculum should reflect the physical, psychosocial, and emotional developmental needs of middle-school students. As a result, curriculum should provide studies rich in arts and humanities, and provide opportunities for choosing extracurricular activities.

Theorists and Theories

Before we begin, we will look at various thoughts and theories regarding human development. We will discuss some of them throughout this paper. The psychologists that we will focus on are Piaget whose focus was on cognitive and moral development, Vygotsky whose focus was on cognitive development, Erikson whose focus was on personal and social development, and Kohlberg whose focus was on moral development. Each of these theorists focuses on different factors of development, such as cognitive, socioemotional, personality, and moral (Slavin, 2003). However, they all have one thing in common: they believe that "distinct stages of development can be identified and described" (Slavin, p. 29).

Slavin (2003) refers to development as "how people grow, adapt, and change over time, through physical, personality, socioemotional, cognitive, and language development" (p. 28). He proceeds with how children think and see things differently than adults, and that they have and live by different moral and ethical principles. As educators and parents this supposition needs to be taken into consideration when developing rules, activities, and learning. They also need to be aware of how their students learn and make modifications and opportunities that will engage children's development. Children's behavior can be linked to "both inborn factors and social experiences" (Slavin, p. 29).

Piaget believed that children go through four developmental stages from birth to adulthood. Slavin (2003) describes these stages as follows:

- Sensorimotor – (birth – 2 years old) "formation of concept of object permanence and gradual progression from reflexive behavior to goal-directed behavior" (p. 32)

- Preoperational (2 – 7 years old) "development of the ability to use symbols to represent objects in the world. Thinking remains egocentric and centered "(p. 32).

- Concrete operational (7 – 11 years old) "Improvement in ability to think logically. New abilities include the use of operations that are reversible. Thinking is decentered and problem solving is less restricted by egocentrism. Abstract thinking is not possible" (p. 32).

- Formal operational (11 years old – adulthood) "Abstract and purely symbolic

    thinking possible. Problems can be solved through the use of systematic

    experimentation" (p. 32).

Piaget believed that every child goes through these stages, some at different rates than others,

and some can partake in two stages at a time. The basis of this paper is geared more toward

middle school students, so the focus will be more on the last stage of formal operational. Middle

school years (pre-teen and teen years) are transitioning into the last stage of development that

will be ongoing throughout the rest of their lives, according to Piaget.

During this stage people begin to think about things in a bigger way; children,

adolescents, and adults not only use past experiences and familiarity to come up with

conclusions, they begin to view situations and problems differently, logically and with more of

an open mind. Slavin (2003), states that Piaget believed "the abilities that make up formal

operational thought are thinking abstractly, testing hypotheses, and forming concepts that are

independent of physical reality; these are critical in learning higher-order skills" (p. 40). Piaget

believed that this is the base foundation of cognitive development.

Piaget's theories have played a major role in education. For example, his idea of

developmentally appropriate education, which is educating all students with environments,

curriculum, materials, and instruction that is age appropriate and fits their physical and cognitive

abilities and their social and emotional needs has played a major role in today's education system

(Slavin, 2003).   Slavin describes the Piagetian theory as follows:

- A focus on the process of children's thinking, not just its products

- Recognition of the crucial role of children's self-initiated, active involvement in learning activities

- A de-emphasis on practices aimed at making children adult-like in their thinking

- Acceptance of individual differences in developmental progress (p. 41-42)

Different in thought from Piaget, Vygotsky (Slavin, 2003) focused on two ideas: intellectual development can be understood only in terms of historical and cultural contexts children experience, and development depends on the sign systems that individuals grow up with. He described sign symbols as the "symbols that cultures create to help people think, communicate, and problem solve" (Slavin, p. 43). Slavin (2003) gives the examples of language, writing, or counting system. He believed that cognitive development was linked to the contribution of others.

Vygotsky (Slavin, 2003) believed that development occurred in the following steps: self-regulation, private speech, zone of proximal development, and scaffolding. Slavin (2003) defines these stages as follows:

- Self-regulation - the ability to think and solve problems without the help of others

- Private speech – children's self-talk, which guides their thinking and action; eventually internalized as silent inner speech

- Zone of proximal development – level of development immediately above a person's present level

- Scaffolding – support for learning and problem solving; might include clues, reminders, encouragement, breaking the problem down into steps, providing an

example, or anything else that allows the student to grow in independence as a

learner (p. 44).

Vygotsky's (Slavin, 2003) theories impact education in two important ways. The first is

desirability of setting up cooperative learning arrangements among groups of students with

differing levels of ability. Secondly, Vygotsky's approach to instruction emphasizes scaffolding;

with students taking more and more responsibility in their own learning. One common factor that

Piaget and Vygotsky shared was their thought that curriculum should be developmentally

appropriate for students.

Erikson (Slavin, 2003) who focused on personal and social development, thought as

children improve their cognitive skills, they were also developing ways of interacting with

others, and attitudes toward the world. It is crucial for educators or parents to understand both

personal and social developments. Slavin (2003) states that this understanding will help

educators and parents motivate, teach, and successfully interact with children of all ages.

Erikson believed that there were eight stages of psychosocial development that everyone

must go through. They include psychosocial crises, significant relationships, and psychosocial

emphasis. These stages are described by Slavin (2003), as follows:

- Birth – 18 months trust vs. mistrust, significant relationship is the person who is taking

  the maternal role, their emphasis is to get, give in return

- 18 months – 3 years old, autonomy vs. doubt, significant relationship is parents, emphasis

  is to hold on or let go

- 3 – 6 years old, initiative vs. guilt, significant relationship is family, emphasis is going

  after something or playing

- 6 – 12 years old industry vs. inferiority, significant relationship is neighborhood and school, emphasis making things, make things together

- 12 – 18 years old, identity vs. role confusion, significant relationships peer groups and models of leadership, emphasis on be yourself or not, share being oneself

- Young adulthood, intimacy vs. isolation, significant relationships partners in friendship, sex, competition, cooperation, emphasis is to lose and find oneself in another

- Middle adulthood, generativity vs. self-absorption, significant relationship divided labor and hared household, emphasis is to take care of

- Late adulthood, integrity vs. despair, significant relationships Mankind, my kind, emphasis to be through having been, to face not being (p. 49).

Erikson (Savin, 2003) believed that throughout these stages individuals will be faced with conflict and crisis that must be overcome to pass through to the following stages. There are many factors that can contribute to a person's outcome during a particular stage of life. One of these factors is home life, whether they were showed security, support, love, and had a safe home environment. If a child is reared in a negative atmosphere, it can have long lasting effects on them, their behavior, school completion, and success. Another factor is school life. For instance, students who have had negative school experiences may feel inferior and may have issues entering their career. However, people can overcome these complexes. Slavin, (2003) states; that people can gain trust and security in time; after they have been subjected to a more stable environment. He also states that they can change their negative school experiences when they come learn that they have valuable skills, and self-worth.

There are many theories about moral development and reasoning. Slavin (2003), noted that society could not function without rules that tell people how to communicate with one another,

how to avoid hurting people, and how to live life in general. The idea that things are either right

or wrong is paramount; there is no in-between.

Piaget (Slavin, 2003) thought is that cognitive development had to come before moral

development. He believed that "cognitive development would then determine a child's ability to

reason about social situations" (p. 53).   He described moral development within two different

stages: heteronomous morality which is younger and autonomous morality which is older.

Slavin (2003) defines these stages as:

- Heteronomous morality – Is the first stage of Piaget's theory of moral development,
  the stage when children think that rules are unchangeable and that breaking them
  results in punishment

- Autonomous morality – Is the second stage of Piaget's theory of moral development,
  is when we realize that a person makes rules and punishments are not automatic (p.
  54).

Kohlberg (Slavin, 2003) built on Piaget's theory of moral development; he believed that

there are six stages of moral development and reasoning. He grouped these six stages into the

following three groups: Preconvention, Conventional, and Post Conventional Levels. These

different groups are designed by how a child or adult identifies what they believe is correct,

acceptable moral behavior. Slavin {2003) identifies Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning as

follows:

Pre-Conventional Level – Rules are developed by others, which include Stage 1

punishment and obedience, and Stage 2 instrumental relativist orientation

Conventional Level – Individual adopts rules and will sometimes subordinate own needs to those of the group. Expectations of family, group, or nation seen as valuable in own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. This level includes Stage 3 "Good Boy – Good Girl" orientation, and Stage 4 Law and order orientation

Post-Conventional Level – People will define their own value in terms of ethical principles they have chosen to follow. Which includes the last two stages of moral reasoning; which are Stage 5 social contract orientation, and stage 6 universal ethical principle orientations (p. 55).

Teaching and implementing moral reasoning within schools has proven to be a very controversial issue. Schools have adopted different approaches in educating students in moral reasoning, from a district-wide approach to classroom instruction, and then to personal conflict management. District-wide approach is part of the whole school's curriculum, and teachers and administration try to relate it to students' home life. According to Slavin (2003), educators work on character building, acceptable behavior, and consequences. During classroom instruction, educators build on students' curiosity, and teach values and decision making through different scenarios. Individual level-conflict management is a growing need within our educational system, with all the school violence that has been occurring. This is a program where educators and administration will prepare and provide students with the tools to mediate serious conflicts without violence.

So, how do all these theories play such an important role in our educational system?

Physical Development of Middle School Students

During the middle school years, students are trying to figure out who they are, what they want, and where they fit in. Powell (2015) states that, "adolescents may be fiercely independent, yet need and seek meaningful relationships with adults. They may reveal emotional vulnerability, yet be deeply self-protective, capable of complex critical thinking, but be disorganized and excessively forgetful. They may be compassionate in their desire to make the world a better place, yet display a high level of self-centeredness and even cruelty toward a classmate." (p. 25). She describes five developmental categories that adolescents participate in. These categories are physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and character development.

Extracurricular activities can play an important role during the developmental process. During this age, students' bodies are changing, some at different rates than others because puberty has set in. This is considered to be a very awkward stage in life.   Some students look older and more developed than others. Any difference in middle school can take a toll on students' self-confidence and perspective, in both positive and negative ways. During puberty a child begins to go through stages of growth in hair under arms, face, and in private areas. They will also experience a change in the way they talk, as well as experience breakouts of acne.

Powell (2015) states that middle school students, who are experiencing puberty, are "more at risk for making poor decisions, or even acting before thinking about the consequences" (p 28).   Those thoughtless, careless actions can lead to various behavioral problems and outcomes. Educators need to remember, that although all students experience puberty, it happens at different times for everyone.

Students who utilize the opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities benefit tremendously. They learn skills in physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social skills (Metsapelto, 2010). Metsapelto (2010) also states that studies have shown that students who participate in extracurricular activities have been "linked to higher educational attainment and achievement, reduction of bad behavior and heightened psychosocial competencies" (p. 168). Participating in extracurricular activities also allows the child to learn valuable information about themselves, such as personal strength and weaknesses, values, interests, likes, and dislikes (Metsapelto, 2010). For children who are transitioning from elementary to middle to high school, it is extremely important that they participate in some form of extracurricular activities because throughout the transition years, children are more influenced by others and are more apt to engage in risky behavior.

Intellectual Development

During this time children begin to transition between thinking differently. They begin to take a more mature approach. Powell (2015) believes that the "children begin organizing information and experiences around things that they see and that are familiar to them (p.32). She states that during the transition of intellectual development "children begin to form mental connections, put things in perspective, and predict in more complex ways" (p. 32). During the intellectual development process, it is important that the curriculum has a lot of real life learning experiences. These experiences will benefit the child throughout the rest of their lives.

Researchers refer to this time as "intellectual growth spurt" because of the fluctuating scores on standardized tests (Slavin, 2003, p. 87). According, to Piaget's theory during cognitive

development; "adolescence is transitioning from the use of concrete operations to formal

operations in reasoning" (Slavin, p. 87). In the text book *Educational Psychology Theory and*

Practice, (Slavin, 2003) defines concrete operational as "a stage when children develop the

capacity for logical reasoning and understanding of conversation but can use these skills in

dealing with familiar situations" (p.36). He also defines formal operational as "a stage when

someone can deal abstractly with hypothetical situations and can reason logically" (p. 39). This

is a sign of maturity and growth. They are able to effectively look beyond what they know and

past experience to handle a difference of opinion and different way of thinking.

There are many things for teachers to consider during intellectual and cognitive

development during the adolescent years. They need to encourage and support students in

individual tasks, value the students and their opinions, and make sure that the material being

taught is challenging and developmentally appropriate for their age and ability. Slavin (2003)

gives examples of guidelines educators should follow during this stage of development. His

guidelines are as follow:

- When introducing new information, especially information including abstract concepts
  and theories, allow students ample amount of time to absorb the ideas and to use formal
  thought patters. Start with familiar examples, and encourage students to apply
  hypothetical-deductive reasoning

- Students who have yet to obtain formal operational thought may need more support for
  planning complex tasks. Pairing children who can plan with those who need support is
  one way of handling the situation

- Encourage students to state principles and ideas in their own words and to search for the
  meaning behind abstract ideas and theories

- Incorporate a variety of activities that promote the use of hypothetical deductive thinking (p. 88-89).

Hypothetical deductive thinking and reasoning is described by Slavin (2003) as the ability to form various hypotheses, logic, and reasoning to a situation or task.   The person has the ability to understand abstract meaning and principles regarding relationships and theories. They are able to debate topics and ideas, and leave personal bias out of the debate.   A student will be successful in planning and completing lengthy and complex assignments, as well as be aware and critical of their own reasoning. They will be able to reflect on a problem solving process and verify conclusions by checking sources, using other information, or seeking a solution from another perspective.   Teachers can utilize this type of thinking and reasoning by developing assignments and activities that fit these criteria. This would fall into developmentally appropriate teaching and learning techniques for middle school students.

Emotional Development

Middle school students are on an emotional roller coaster. Their hormones are running wild, they are experiencing emotions and feelings that they have never felt before. Some of these emotions include mood swings, sarcasm, anxiety, anger, embarrassment, romantic feelings, and being overly sensitive. Erikson identifies this time in an adolescent's life to be adventurous and a time of exploration, but also a time of confusion (Snowman, p.36).   According to the text *Introduction to Middle School Education* authored by Sarah Davis Powell (2015), there are five stages of emotional development. These stages include self-awareness, handling emotions, motivation, empathy, and social skills. It is of the most extreme importance that this age is

handled with care, because children's self-esteem can be at stake. This age group worries

continuously about appearance, clothing, and fitting in. Peer acceptance is of the most

importance to adolescents. As educators, we need to teach our students how to handle their

emotions by expressing them or dealing with them in a mature and productive way. Educators

need to reassure their students that they are there for them and that they care. They can do this by

providing a "safe environment" for their students, as well as support (Powell, 2015). During the

middle school / pre-teen and on to teenage years, students are exposed and introduced to various

negative behaviors and actions. Gossiping wreaks havoc on many kids, in addition to peer

pressure, drugs, alcohol, and bullying. They are faced with many obstacles during this time.

These can contribute to a child's self-esteem, confidence, and self-worth. Students need to know

and feel that adults are there for them and support them.

For students that participate in extracurricular activities, they tend to adjust to these

transition years of emotional development easier than most. They are part of a team already, and

have already started building relationships with their teammates or other club members. They

have additional support systems with coaches, teammates, or leaders of clubs, etc. They spend

the majority of their free time with the other students who participate. Being involved in

extracurricular activities will most likely have a positive effect on the students' emotional

development.

Social Development

Socialization is extremely important at this stage in life. During this time, students

become very aware about themselves, their peers, and any differences they may have, or even

enduring (Powell, 2015). During this time, not only are they still trying to figure out who they

are, but children want their freedom and independence. They usually engage in rebellious

behavior, become more self-centered, and view friends as ranking higher than family on their

priority list. They even take their friends more serious than the adults in their lives (Snowman,

2003). They believe that parents just don't understand or know anything. Peer-pressure

becomes a major issue, having both a positive and negative impact on students' behavior and

actions. Sadly, during this stage cliques are formed among their peers. The need for acceptance

and belonging is extremely important. Students become caught up and "conform to fads in

dress, speech, and conduct and they do not want to stand out by offering an opinion that they

think their peers may not share" (p. 71). Social development can be a major part of academic

success and participation in extracurricular activities can help students fit into a school culture.

Peer pressure plays a huge role in children's social and emotional developmental stages,

and it can have both a positive or negative impact. According to AACAP (2012), "it is natural

and healthy for kids to depend on others, and it begins at a very young age" (web). Children can

show support to one another and assist others in developing new skills or interests. However

they can pose as a negative enforcer, by pressuring children to do things that they normally

would not do such as skip school, cheat on homework/tests, use alcohol or drugs, and partake in

risky behavior.

Educators need to take into consideration this difficult time that their students are going

through and make modifications and show support to help them conquer their fears and

concerns. Educators need to help make this transition stage as smooth as possible. This is a very

stressful time for children because of all the changes that their body and emotions are going

through. Snowman (2003), states that middle school students need a "classroom environment

that is open, supportive, and intellectually stimulating" (p. 72). It has been said that self-efficacy influences intellectual and social behavior (Snowman, 2003). Those students, who believe in their ability to conquer a task, will do it. This, in return, builds confidence and self-worth.

Participation in sports, clubs, or any other extracurricular activities can have a huge impact on a student's social development. When students are participating in meaningful activities or associations, then they have a feel of accomplishment, belonging, and acceptance, which builds confidence. Sometimes, students who don't participate in activities feel more inferior to those who do; social status is often linked to extracurricular participation.

Character Development

The middle school development stage is "determined by what the child does and what happens to them" (Powell, 2015, p 42). This is something that the majority of students struggle with during this age group. They do things sometimes just to fit in, test the waters, or see what they can get away with. Some typical character traits that are described by Powell (2015) are fairness; asking unanswerable questions; the need for support, but won't ask for it; and making poor decisions due to their need of acceptance (Powell, 2015). Some examples of how educators can assist in good character building techniques are as follow: teaching and expressing trust, respect for others, responsibility, fairness, caring, support, and citizenship (Powell, 2015).

During the middle school years students are impressionable. It is very important that teachers, adults, parents, and administration be good role models and set good examples. It should be the adult's number one goal not only to strive for academic success, but also to show

how to be a good person, and how to make good responsible choices and decisions. Students

need to understand that there are consequences to their actions. Good judgement and thinking

before acting are very crucial skills.

During middle school students' whole demeanor, attitude, and thought process changes.

Slavin (2003) states that they start to realize the differences between what they think and feel and

how they behave and that they begin using their developing intellectual skills to permit them to

consider other possibilities. Adolescents are more prone to be dissatisfied with themselves. They

begin to care what others think about them, which sometimes reflects both positive and negative

behavior. Slavin (2003) describes different traits and concepts that occur during this time. He

states that typical traits that occur are personal –friendly or obnoxious; emotions- depressed,

psyched; and personal beliefs- liberal, conservative. The concepts he first discussed are based on

Susan Harter's (1998) work, which are scholastic competence, job competence, athletic

competence, physical appearance, social acceptance, close friendships, romantic appeal and

conduct. The second set of concepts he identified are based on Marsh's (1993) work and they are

academic verbal, academic mathematic, parent relations, same-sex, and opposite sex. These all

can contribute to the overall success, self-worth and self-confidence of adolescents. How they

see themselves and how others see them is extremely important and influential in this stage of

life. Adults and educators should be aware during this time, and look for signs of conflict and

trouble. When issues arise, it is the adult's responsibility to make interference before conflict,

bullying, etc. occurs.

If students during this time participate in extracurricular activities, they would be surrounded by other children their age, be communicating with others, and be involved in activities resulting in less idle time. Not only that, but many children after school are unsupervised, due to parents working. Unsupervised pre-teens and teens can result in bad behavior. If students are engaged in after school activities, they would be learning and engaging in activities that would foster the following: interaction with others, following rules, routines, discipline, performance, setting of goals, monitoring goals, confronting and overcoming obstacles which are all very important in the character development process (Myung Hee Im, 2016). Teachers, coaches and other individuals will have the responsibility and opportunity to mentor, encourage, and support these students (Wilson, 2016). They will help the students feel like they belong, are accepted, and set expectations for them to achieve (Marchetti, 2016).   By mingling amongst other people, they have the opportunity to build strong friendships with people that have the same interest as they, and others that they may have never had the chance to meet. Overall participation in extracurricular activities will be a positive long lasting effect on the students that are involved.

Academic Achievement

Middle school curriculum and extracurricular activities are connected; as a result, they influence, and reflect the success of our students.   Recent studies and research show that participation in extracurricular activities enhances the student's success, performance, and behavior. Myung (2016) describes the success being "social, emotional, and academic achievement" (p.1343). Students who participate in extracurricular activities often exhibit higher

levels of self-esteem and confidence, motivation, relationships or connection with school, higher completion rate, and often times higher grades due to rule of "no pass no play" (Massoni, 2011). Massoni (2011) also states that students who participate in extracurricular activities also learn lessons in leadership, teamwork, organization, analytical thinking, problem solving, and time management, multi-tasking, discovering new interests and talents in the process. These skills can be beneficial in finding a job or choosing a career path (Massoni, 2011). These are all examples of real life lessons and admirable traits to have. They also demonstrate vital components of all stages of the human development process.

These can be linked to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which are biological and physiological, safety, love and belongings, esteem, and self-actualization.   In an article written by Saul McLeod (2017), he gives the following examples of each need.

- Physiological needs – air, food, shelter, and warmth

- Safety – protection from elements, security, order, law stability, freedom from fear

- Love and belongingness – friendship, intimacy, trust, acceptance, receive and give affection and love, affiliating and being a part of a group

- Esteem – there are two categories for esteem, which are; dignity, achievement, mastery, independence and the desire for reputation and respect from others. Maslow believed that reputation and respect from others is most important to all children and adolescents, precedes with real self-esteem or dignity

- Self- Actualization – realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth, and peak experiences. A desire to be everything you are capable of becoming

Maslow's description of hierarchy of needs goes along with all aspects of development previously discussed. It is important that all students have a good foundation in order to achieve complete academic success, as well as future success and fulfillment.

Extracurricular Activities

Participating in extracurricular activities has been proven to have a positive impact on all aspects of child development, academic success, competition, and continuing education. When people think of extracurricular activities, they typically think mostly of sports-- basketball, football, baseball, softball, golf, tennis, track, cross country, cheerleading, dance, swim team. There are many different activities students can participate in; for example, archery, fish team, bowling, various clubs, drama, art, academic teams, debates, governor scholar, journalism, news, girl scouts, boy scouts, eagle scouts, brownies, etc. There are also opportunities to volunteer within their community for students that don't want to participate in school activities. Regardless of where or what type, participation in extracurricular activities benefit students in the long run.

Volunteering in various activities or organizations has been proven to have lasting impacts on their participants. Most volunteers "report that they had a positive experience, and grew in knowledge of themselves, others, and acquired new skills" (Hamilton, 1988, p 2). Children are our future, and we need to instill values that we want to see in adults. The way we

do that is invest quality time with them, set good examples, and be a positive role model.

Communities also benefit from children volunteering and involvement by helping meet the needs

of the community and members of the community (Hamilton, 1988). Volunteering leads to

mastering developmental goals, such as forming an identity, committing to group ideas,

developing personal autonomy, and establishing more intimate relationships--- all which may

increase community service (Hamilton, 1988).

Extracurricular activities also impact educational success, too. It has been proven that

students who participate in extracurricular activities have an overall higher success and

completion rate, rather than students who do not participate in activities. Students who

participate in extracurricular activities often times find it easier to fit in with their peers.   They

appear to make better grades, create a relationship with their school, gain a sense of pride, feel

like they are accepted, and belong to something.

Wang (2012) believes that active school engagement is vital to a student's educational

success and development as a competent member of society. He also describes school

engagement as a "multidimensional construct that includes behavior, emotional, and cognitive

components" (p. 877). Below is Wang's description of the multidimensional construct of school

engagement:

- Behavior – includes positive conduct, compliance with school rules and absence of

  disruptive behaviors. Also participation in school activities

- Emotional – includes positive affective relations in the classroom such as enjoyment and

  interest. Also, personal identification and belonging

- Cognitive – includes motivation, and task valuing in school. Also self-regulated learning strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's own progress (p. 877-895)

If participation in extracurricular activities is so important to middle school student's development, why don't all students participate? Some factors could be low socioeconomic status, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, lack of parental involvement, family structure, lack of confidence / support, and students who have been held back, etc.   Often time children will not participate in extracurricular activities due to lack of financial means. Too, parents who were not involved in activities themselves are less likely to push their children to try and participate. Some have part time jobs after school, or even have to watch their brother or sister after school; some students just don't have the opportunity to participate (Marchetti, 2016). Students from low socioeconomic status are considered at high risk for not completing school, not acquiring good grades, or scoring low on standardized tests   However, some low SES that do participate in extracurricular activities, have shown to make better grades and reach benchmark on standardized tests (Marchetti, 2016).

In the article, *Academic Achievement and Extracurricular School Activities of the At-Risk High School Students,* written by Ryan Marchetti, Randal H. Wilson and Mardis Dunham (2012), the authors conducted a study that compares how employment, extracurricular participation, and family structure status of students from low socioeconomic families that achieved state approved benchmarks on ACT reading and math tests compare to those that did not achieve benchmark (2016). This article describes students who are at a higher risk of being unsuccessful in school, and are considered gap students. Marchetti (2016) defines gap students

as, "any student who is of minority race, has a disability, limited English proficiency, or qualifies

for free or reduced price meals" (p 3).

Research has showed that there is a strong connection between family income and scoring

high on standardized tests. Marchetti (2016) relates these results in connection with Maslow's

"hierarchy of needs." "Maslow's model suggests; that students with unmet basic needs will

likely place a low priority on achievement at school" (p. 5). It appears that parents are getting

blamed for students' academic failures. Marchetti (2016) suggests that parents, who are low

income, usually do not expect their children to do well academically. Parents do not push for

their children to do better than they have done; they need to set goals for their children. He

believes that parents feel uncomfortable in their ability to assist their child academically

(Marchetti, 2016). Many parents will not get out of their comfort zone, or still have an

inferiority complex from their adolescent years.

Students who work part time jobs after school sometimes fall into the risk of struggling

academically because of the lack of time they have to spend on their homework and studying.

They may endure more stress, as well as have more responsibilities than others. However,

Marchetti (2016) states that "despite their findings, it is unclear if employment influences a

student's academic success from low SES families" (p. 6).

In his article *Promoting School Success Among at Risk Youth,* Randolph (2004)

describes a study on how students' success can be determined not only by extracurricular

activities, but also whether or not they have been retained previously in school. Randolph

(2004), states that " the findings support the social development model of academic success in

which children's opportunities for pro-social involvement, social academic skills, and the rewards in their environments condition educational outcome" (p. 1). Students who have been held back previously, that do not participate in extracurricular activities are at a higher risk of dropping out of school. However those students who have been held back previously and that do participate in extracurricular activities are more apt to graduate. Randolph (2004) describes two different categories:

- Examining the differences of the impact of the timing of retention on completion of high school

- Exploring whether and how these concepts are related and moderated by extracurricular activity, involvement in high school for a group of poor youth in urban setting (p 3).

There are many reasons why a student may be retained, such as scoring low on academic tests, overall grades, maturity, and lacking the ability to conquer the next grade successfully. Research has shown that being held back in school increases the risk of dropping out later. Randolph (2004) also states that, "students who are retained are more likely to have behavior issues in class, rank lower in mental health, lack peer acceptance, and often come from families of lower SES. However students who were retained early on in the education, where at a reduced risk of not completing school"(p. 4-5). Timing is everything!

Randolph (2004) discusses how participation in extracurricular activities has counteracted the results of students who have been retained. She states that participation has a strong influence on students remaining / completing school longer. She believes that students who participate in extracurricular activities and clubs are more apt to form a bond with their

school. Too, those activities provide opportunities and skills for pro-social involvement, and

when these opportunities and skills are reinforced, students form attachments to teachers,

coaches, leaders, and other adults who provide social support. She also discusses the importance

of providing low income youth opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities and other

social involvement. Schools should not only provide, but encourage, support, and assist in low

income students participating in these activities.

Gender Roles

Gender, too, plays a role in academic achievement. Males and females share many of the

same traits, but in retrospect, they have a lot of different traits as well.   Powell (2015) states that

some of these differences are genetic, while others are the result of socialization. She identifies

some of the differences:

- Verbal/Spatial – Males have more spatial awareness and mechanical aptitude, while
  females think verbally and use more words.

- Visual System – Males rely on pictures and visual movement when writing. Females
  excel at using words to represent color and other fine sensory information.

- Frontal lobe development – Males are more impulsive; reading/writing production areas
  develop more slowly. Females are more able to sit still and read; read and write earlier
  and with more pleasure.

- Neural rest states – Males experience these states more often; drifting off task more
  frequently, and have trouble staying focused. Even if females are bored, their brain stays
  active; retains ability to read, write, and listen for longer periods of time.

- Cross talk between hemispheres – Male brains tend to compartmentalize; have a single-task focus; do better when following well-ordered steps. For females, multitasking is more natural; they pay attention to more information at a time.

- Natural aggression – Males are more naturally aggressive and competitive and more impulsive. Females are typically less competitive, more relationship oriented; more compliant with others, including teachers (p. 55).

Powell (2015) goes further to identify techniques that educators should use to meet the different learning styles for males. She describes the benefits of hands-on learning; it will get the students up and active in learning. She also proposes letting students choose topics of interest for reading and writing assignments and make learning relevant and purposeful. These are all ways to help ensure male students to complete their assignments and engage in learning. These are all positive techniques that could be used for both male and female students.

Powell (2015) further breaks down students' learning styles into "learning modalities." She refers to students' learning modalities as "how they use their senses in the learning process" (p. 62). She breaks the learning modalities down into the following four categories:

- Auditory Learners – is when a student enjoys reading or being read to, the ability to verbally explain concepts and scenarios, like music and hum to themselves, and enjoy both talking and listening

- Visual Learners – students have good spelling, note-taking, and organizational skills, notice details and prefers neatness, learn more when illustrations and charts accompany reading, and prefers quiet, serene surroundings

- Kinesthetic Learners – when a student is demonstrative, animated, and outgoing, they enjoy physical movement, and manipulatives, are willing to try new things, and be messy in habits and surroundings

- Tactile Learners – prefer manipulatives when being introduced to a topic, literally translate events and phenomena, tolerate clutter, and are artistic in nature (p. 62).

Powell (2015) proceeds with the how important it is for teachers to be aware of their own learning styles and modalities, and be careful not to just implement their own styles when teaching their students. The bottom line is that it is important that a teacher becomes familiar with their students' learning styles and work hard to accommodate them.   By doing so, teachers will help students become aware of their own learning styles and modalities.

Snowman (2003) describes various learning styles that students can have; they are as follow:

- Impulsive – which is when the student prefers quick action; reflective students prefer to collect and analyze information before acting.

- Field-independent - these students prefer their own structure; they prefer to work within existing structure.

- Legislative – students prefers to create and plan; executive style prefers to follow explicit rules; judicial style prefers to evaluate and judge (p. 299).

It is extremely important for educators to "use various instructional methods to engage all styles of learning, as well as accurately measure what students have learned (Snowman, p. 299).

An article published by Gender Spectrum addresses the issues of gender diversity within education. This article acknowledges the importance of an inclusive school environment regardless of student' differences. "Gender impacts students' experiences both positive and negative no matter what the student's age is" (www.genderspectrum.org)

The article discusses how all students have the right to attend school in a safe and supportive environment regardless of gender and that school has the opportunity and responsibility to impact the views of students regarding gender differences. Teachers need to be supportive of differences; students should not be restrained from their interests, talents, or intellectual endeavors because of their differences (www.genderspectrum.org). During students' educational journey, "time for discovering new skills and exploring ideas" is paramount www.genderspectrum.com).

If we discriminate against students because of their differences, it will have a negative impact on the student and their success. Instead of building students up, we would be tearing them down by depleting their self-confidence, self-worth, and self-respect. This, in turn, would contribute to a negative school environment and experience. It could potentially affect the student's level of achievement and rate of completion. Various types of teaching methods can ameliorate a negative school experience.

Educators Responsibilities, Teaching Methods, and Strategies

Teachers' teaching methods have a tremendous effect on middle school students. Educators are more than just teachers; this is not just a job to them; it is more of a calling.

Working with children, adolescents, and teenagers can and most of the time is extremely

stressful and challenging. Children, adolescents, and teenagers have many different stages of life

they go through, and teachers get to witness and participate in all these stages. Many times

educators are portrayed and seen as the enemy or bad guy, but they really aren't. So in order to

be a good and successful educator, teachers must truly love working with children. They must

have a desire to make a difference, be able to believe in students unconditionally, and motivate

and encourage all students. They must look past the exterior and dig in to the interior and get to

know each student and how they operate best. A teacher must possess certain special

characteristics; such as, kindness, compassion, respect, and trust, but they must also be stern and

not be a push over either. They must be well balanced in order to be successful for themselves

and their students.

Kentucky has established teaching standards for all teachers. They are listed below:

1. Standard 1. Learning development. The teacher shall understand how students grow and

   develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within

   and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and shall design

   and shall implement developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

2. Standard 2. Learning differences. The teacher shall use the understanding of individual

   differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning

   environments that enable each student to meet high standards.

3. Standard 3. Learning environments. The teacher shall work with others to create

   environments that:

   a. Support individual and collaborative learning; and

b. Encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-
motivation.

4. Standard 4. Content knowledge. The teacher shall:

a. Understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline
he or she teaches; and

b. Create learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible
and meaningful for students to assure mastery of the content.

5. Standard 5. Application of content. The teacher shall understand how to connect concepts
and use differing perspectives to engage students in critical thinking, creativity, and
collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

6. Standard 6. Assessment. The teacher shall understand and use multiple methods of
assessment to engage students in their own growth, to monitor learning progress, and to
guide the educator's and student's decision making.

7. Standard 7. Planning for instruction. The teacher shall plan instruction that supports every
student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas,
curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of students and
the community context.

8. Standard 8. Instructional strategies. The teacher shall understand and use a variety of
instructional strategies to encourage students to develop deep understanding of content
areas and their connections and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

9. Standard 9. Professional learning and ethical practice. The teacher shall engage in
ongoing professional learning, shall use evidence to continually evaluate his or her
practice, particularly the effects of his or her choices and actions on others, such as

students, families, other professionals, and the community, and shall adapt practice to

meet the needs of each student.

10. Standard 10. Leadership and collaboration. The teacher shall seek appropriate leadership

roles and opportunities to:

a. Take responsibility for student learning;

b. Collaborate with students, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and

community members to ensure students growth; and

c. Advance the profession (www.espb.ky.gov/mod/book/view.php?id+133)

After all these standards are met during the course of school day, the school day is not over when

the bell rings. In fact, second shift has just begun. Teachers spend a majority of their free time

preparing lessons, researching, grading papers, and making modifications to meet the needs of

their students. A teacher's job should not be taken lightly; they are framing students' minds.

They are preparing the future leaders of our nation, educating students not only academically, but

also on how to be good responsible citizens.

A major part of successful teaching is classroom management, effective teaching

strategies and a curriculum that is age appropriate yet challenging for all students. It does not

matter how well the educator knows her content area if he/she does not present information in

ways students can understand it or engage students in learning and participating and be able to

maintain productive classroom management. In order for teachers to be successful, they must set

classroom goals, rules, and expectations for their students. Teachers must be able to modify

lessons to meet the needs of all their students, yet challenge them. Everyone learns differently;

what works for one, will most likely not work for another student.

Powell (2015) states that "a developmentally responsive middle level school will embrace a curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory, finely tuned to the characteristics and needs of young adolescents" (p. 145). That curriculum should encourage students to seek "higher levels of learning" (Powell, p. 145). How can educators be sure to implement these categories into classroom instruction? According to Charlotte Danielson (2009) who is one of the authors of the book titled *Implementing the Framework for Teaching in Enhancing Professional Practice,* teachers need to do a self-assessment regarding planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities.

Danielson (2009) identifies the following categories of each domain:

- Planning and Preparation - Demonstrating knowledge of content, pedagogy, and of students. Setting instructional outcomes, demonstrating knowledge of resources, designing coherent instruction, and designing student assessments (p. 8-11).

- The Classroom Environment – Creating an environment of respect and rapport, establishing a culture for learning, managing classroom procedure and student behavior, organizing physical space (p. 11-13)

- Instruction – Communicating with students, using questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, using assessment in instruction, and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness (p. 14-16).

- Professional Responsibilities - Reflecting on teaching, maintaining accurate records, communicating with families, participating in a professional community, growing and developing professionally, and showing professionalism (p. 16-18).

These domains are very important part of being both a successful teacher and student. They also go along with the various developmental stages of children and adolescents, as well as the standards that teachers are required to follow.

It is so important for teachers to get to know their students, not just academically but personally; each student has a life outside of school. They have hobbies and interests such as sports, music, and clubs. They participate in other activities that may not be connected with school, such as family and cultural traditions, and activities in their community. Danielson (2009) states that research has shown," students' learn in their own individual ways and may have gaps or misconceptions that teachers need to uncover to plan appropriate learning activities" (p. 41). As a result, when planning lessons, teachers need to include and identify resources that will ensure students' understanding.   They can do this by getting to know their students and what works best for them.

Getting to know their students, their interests, and how they learn will not only benefit the student and teacher academically. It will help build positive relationships among the teachers, students, peers, and the entire school. Students will feel like they are valued individually, because someone took the time and interest in them. This, in return, will help students achieve academic success, self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth. This will contribute to student involvement and engagement throughout their educational journey.

CURRICULUM

Developing curriculum is a very important topic, which has been a major issue for a very long time. Ingman (2017) states, " it is critical to be mindful of students and the community throughout the development of curriculum and best to engage local perspectives in the

development and evaluation of curriculum" (p. 10).   Ingman (2017) goes on to say that

curriculum has become more standardized, and geared more toward national audiences without

recognition of the unique contexts of students and teachers. He describes this approach on

curriculum to be based mostly on the perspective of subject-matter content which often alienates

students.

Powell (2015) states, that "curriculum embraces every planned aspect of a school's

educational program" (p. 145). She proceeds with stating that curriculum is made up of certain

classes, core and elective, etc, guidance, advisory, various activities, and provided services (p.

145). Powell (2015) believes that a developmentally responsive middle level school will

embrace a curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory. The following

are the descriptions of these categories given by Powell.

- Curriculum is relevant when it allows students to pursue answers to questions
  they have about themselves, content, and the world. Relevant curriculum is rich
  in all personal meaning, creates new interests, and promotes higher learning

- A challenging curriculum addresses three different issues. The first issue being;
  substantive issues and skills. Which are issues that are important to both adults
  and students? This curriculum identifies both why and how something happened.
  Secondly, curriculum based on diversity, and finding ways to meet our students
  where they are, build on prior knowledge and experiences, and continue to
  challenge them should become our daily ritual requiring various levels of
  curriculum. Lastly, the curriculum should enable students to take responsibility
  for their learning, and exercising decision making

- Powell describes integrative curriculum, as when "students are able to make sense of their lives and the world around them

- Exploratory is as an attitude or approach, discovery and choice. She states that exploratory curriculum can capture student's interests and making learning fun (pp. 145-146).

When educators and administrators are developing and constructing curriculum, it is very important that they keep these categories in mind. Educators need to push students beyond their comfort zone to help them achieve higher order learning and for them to be able to think about things more critically and creatively. Teachers need to incorporate real life lessons and relate past and present knowledge.

Educators, administrators, and staff need to offer opportunities in learning, curriculum, and extracurricular activities that engage and interest the variety of students that attend their school. This entails not only including core subject areas, sports, and clubs, but also offering curriculum that is rich in arts and humanities.

According to an article titled "Visual and Performing Arts" (2018), on the ky.gov website; "schools are urged to provide their students with rigorous art programs that emphasize the four artistic processes of creating: performing, presenting, producing, responding and connecting." The National Core Arts Standards define these four artistic processes as follow:

- Creating
  - generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
  - organize and develop artistic ideas and work
  - refine and complete artistic work"

- Performing, Presenting, and Producing

  - select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation

  - develop and refine artistic techniques for work and presentation

  - convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work"

- Responding

  - perceive and analyze artistic work

  - interpret intent and meaning of artistic work

  - apply criteria to evaluate artistic work"

- Connecting

  - synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art

  - relate artistic ideas and works with societal culture and historical context to

    deepen understanding (www.nationalcoreartsstandards)

Educators need to place an emphasis on "exposing students to a variety of arts through active experience at all age levels; through art literacy, art discipline, critique of the arts, and active sharing of their own art and personal experience" (Visual and Performing Arts, 2018). The article also states that by allowing students the opportunity to create and perform, they will learn that the arts are basic to human communication and that art can be used to communicate specific meaning through their choices in the use of various art styles. Doing so will help students develop a deeper understanding, meaning, and appreciation to art (Visual and Performing Arts, 2018).

The majority of students, educators, administrators, and staff can agree on their like/love for music, no matter what the style is. So why aren't more opportunities available for students to participate in musical curriculum or activities? Music can take

the form of band, chorus/choir, history, pop culture, etc. and even include dance (which is a performing arts). We need to reach the variety of students and their interests and give them the opportunity to take electives in various areas of interests.

In the article "Restructuring Music's Role in the Middle School Curriculum" written by Eady and Wilson (2007), the author states that music is known as the universal language of the world. The authors state that "curriculum is more than just a syllabus, required reading list, schedule of tests, papers and homework assignments. Curriculum is actually an instance where the world enters the school. Curriculum encodes the social relevance of power and the relationships with respect to people and knowledge" (Eady and Wilson, 2007). Teachers should base their teaching on their students' abilities with connection to society's values and expectations. Eady and Wilson (2007) believe that society values and expects music. Integrating music into core areas can have a positive impact in middle school education. It will allow students the opportunity to use visual and auditory media, in addition to the written word, to express ideas and concerns (Eady and Wilson, 2007).

Eady and Wilson (2007) state that the general role in middle grade education is to guide students in learning about life, and share collaborated curriculum decision making in order to shape the world. Since music is such a big part of life, it should be a big part of school (2007). Music has been used as a motivation technique in many core subject areas, such as Math, Social Studies, Language Arts, Science, and History (Eady and Wilson, 2007). So why not promote music in all subject areas to promote and provide learning appeal? After all, the goal of educators is to improve the success of all students

in a variety of curriculum, and raise students' self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence.

By implementing curriculum rich in arts and humanities, teachers will be engaging and promoting students' creativity. Students will master various types of skills in communication and design. They will be able to relate art and music to their daily lives. If students choose to follow a career path within art or music, they will have a base foundation, experience, and appreciation of art to help them pursue their dreams.

In conclusion, extracurricular activities have proven to be very important and a major contributor to students' success. As educators, we need to allow opportunities to meet the many interests of our student body and engage all students in some type of extracurricular activity. There are endless opportunities. We have learned that students who participate in extracurricular activities not only have a higher completion rate, but they have higher self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth, a connection to the school and student body, as well as positive role models.

Students need to be engaged, motivated, and challenged continuously by parents, peers, educators, coaches, and staff. Curriculum should be developmentally appropriate, and educators should try their best to meet the needs of all their students. Teachers have the opportunity to shape young minds and future leaders of the world. They should take it seriously and tread lightly. Educators can influence whether a student has a positive or negative school experience. They can also contribute to students' academic and future success.

Incorporating arts and humanities into school curriculum will be extremely beneficial. This will allow students to become aware of their artistic side and ability. I believe that the majority of educators recognize the importance that art and humanities play on our daily lives. Implementing more courses in this area will allow more opportunities for creative students to find interest within their educational environment.

Hopefully, implementing arts and humanities into curriculum will create more opportunities for all students to participate in various extracurricular activities, in relation to their interests.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is very important for educators to fully understand the developmental stages of our youth, get to know their students and their learning styles make modifications to meet their needs, and be a good role model. It is important that opportunities for extracurricular activities to be available to all students in various different forms, whether it is in the variety of sports, clubs, art, music, and journalism, etc. We should encourage all students to get involved, set and accomplish goals, succeed, and teach them how to be a good and responsible child, adolescent, teenager, and adult.

WORK CITED

Aacap. (2012, June). Peer Pressure. Retrieved January 18, 2018, from
https://www.aacap.org/aacap/families_and_youth/facts_for_families/FFF-Guide/Peer-Pressure-104.aspx

Creating. (n.d.). Retrieved March 08, 2018, from http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/

Danielson, C., & Axtell, D. (2009). *Implementing the framework for teaching in enhancing professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Eady, I. L., & Wilson, J. D. (2007). Restructuring music's role in the middle school curriculum. *College Student Journal*, *41*(1), 239-241.

Eder, D. 1., & Parker, S. (1987). The cultural production and reproduction of gender: the effect of extracurricular activities on peer-group culture. *Sociology Of Education*, *60*200-213. doi:10.2307/2112276

Education. (n.d.). Retrieved March 10, 2018, from https://www.genderspectrum.org/explore-topics/education/

Hamilton, S. F., & Fenzel, L. M. (1988). The impact of volunteer experience on adolescent social development: evidence of program effects. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 3*(1), 65-80. doi:10.1177/074355488831006

https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/kyacadstand/Documents/Kentucky%20Academic
    %20Standards_Final-9%2011%2015.pdf

Im, Myung Hee1, Jan N. Hughes, Qian Cao, and Oi-man2 Kwok. 2016. "Effects of
    extracurricular participation during middle school on academic motivation and achievement
    grade 9." *American Educational Research Journal* 53, no. 5: 1343-1375. *Education Source*,
    EBSCO*host* (accessed January 30, 2018).

Ingman, B. C., Lohmiller, K., Cutforth, N., Borley, L., & Belansky, E. S. (2017). Community-
    Engaged Curriculum Development Working With Middle School Students, Teachers,
    Principals, and Stakeholders for Healthier Schools. *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue,
    19*(1 & 2), 9-34.

Kentucky Teachers Standards. (n.d.). Retrieved February 27, 2018, from
    www.epsb.ky.gov/mod/book/view.php?id 133

Kostelnik, M. J., Gregory, K. M., Soderman, A. K., & Whiren, A. P. (2012). *Guiding Children's
    Social Development and Learning* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning Wadsworth.

Mahoney, J. L., & Cairns, R. 1. (1997). Do extracurricular activities protect against early school
    dropout?. *Developmental Psychology*, *33*241-253. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.33.2.241

Marchetti, Ryan1, Randal H .2 Wilson, and Mardis2 Dunham. 2016. "Academic achievement
        and extracurricular school activities of at-risk high school students." *Educational*

Research Quarterly 39, no. 4: 3-20. *Education Source*, EBSCO*host* (accessed January 30, 2018).

Massoni, E. (2011). *Positive Effects of Extracurricular Activities on Students* [Scholarly project].
        In *Http://dc.cod.edu/essai/vol9/iss1/27*. Retrieved January 0, 2018, from
        http://dc.cod.edu/essai/vol9/iss1/27

Mcleod, S. (2017). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Retrieved February 03, 2018, from
        https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html

Metsäpelto, R., & Pulkkinen, L. (2012). Socioemotional behavior and school achievement in
        relation to extracurricular activity participation in middle childhood. *Scandinavian Journal
        Of Educational Research*, *56*(2), 167-182. doi:10.1080/00313831.2011.581681

Powell, S. D. (2015). *Introduction To Middle Level Education* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson

Randolph, K. m., Rose, R. A., Fraser, M. W., & Orthner, D. K. (2004). Promoting school success
        among at risk youth. *Journal Of Poverty*, *8*(1), 1-22. doi:10.1300/J134v08no1_01

Slavin, R. E. (2018). *Educational Psychology: theory and practice*. NY, NY: Pearson.

Sprick, R. S., & Baldwin, K. (2009). *CHAMPs: a proactive & positive approach to classroom
        management*. Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

Wang, M., & Eccles, J. S. (2012). Social Support Matters: Longitudinal Effects of Social Support on Three Dimensions of School Engagement From Middle to High School. *Child Development*, *83*(3), 877-895. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01745.x