

Running Head: URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

Urban Middle School Students and the Relationship of their Perception on Care on
their Intrinsic Motivation

by
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Abstract

Spanning over the course of two decades, educational leaders have invested government finances into the social-emotional needs of adolescents, validating the concern of these specific educational needs. Government programs provide student questionnaires to survey the scholastic climate from students' perception. Previous research discusses the correlation between students' perception and their success in school due to fulfillment of their transcendent needs.

This research study ventured to distinguish a possible correlation between urban middle school students' perspective of feeling “cared-for” and their intrinsic motivation. The study surveyed eleven hundred adolescents in grades six through eight from Austintown Middle School. The students completed a survey which inquired about their perceptions. The first part of the survey was acquired from the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and the second part of the survey to measure their intrinsic motivation was acquired from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). The outcomes and interventions for school districts were discussed. There was statistical significance with students feeling cared for and having a similar or higher perception of their intelligence in comparison to their peers. There was also statistical significance within a positive correlation between how students perceive their academic environment and their intrinsic motivation. There was not statistical significance between socioeconomics and intrinsic motivation; student engagement leading to intrinsic motivation was a stronger factor.

Keywords: perception, economy, care, care ethics, intrinsic motivation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Educators have an obligation to support middle school students through adolescence so students will be provided essential tools to help their mental, emotional, social, and psychological capabilities flourish (J. Williams, D., lecture at YSU, June 22, 2006). Utilizing their potential in each area enables students to succeed throughout their adult life; middle school students whose environments accommodate their needs are better prepared for the rest of adolescence and into the adult years. Adolescence incorporates the years leading up to adulthood, and during this time, students are impressionable. Adhering to the multiple needs of students will create a more effective scholastic environment through student engagement, which will increase intrinsic motivation. Creating a safe learning environment enables educators to adhere to these needs changes for each group of students. However, Bondi & Wiles (1979) explain that students' number one priority is feeling secure, so educators have to generate a safe, family environment in the classroom (p. 4).

Statement of the Problem

Educating middle school students does not come with definitive directions. All students and classes are different; all students do not derive from the same home life. These inconsistent variables create a vortex of possibilities that cause negative attitudes fueled by a lack of motivation by students towards their schooling. Learning the components that influence how students feel they are perceived in the scholastic environment enable educators to determine the essential elements that students merit. Students sprouting from diverse environments need different methods to

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adhere to their needs for engagement in order to motivate them in the classroom. Varying methods for student engagement depend on the different students; there is not a set of directions an educator can follow that holds for every student. Educators must understand the interests and values of their students in order to engage them and to create a safe, effective learning environment.

This investigation is needed to further understand the relationship(s), if there are any, between a student's motivation in the classroom, their socioeconomics, and how they perceive their educational environment. Through increased examination of these possible relationships, educators will be better equipped to provide the necessary tools for these students in the academic setting to prepare them for success. Negating this research will be a disservice to the students because administrators and educators may not know the specific needs of adolescents to enhance their intrinsic motivation. Without adhering to these diverse needs and without the proper tools, a student may shut down and not feel motivated to be successful in their academia which will impair them to be the most effective version of themselves.

Conceptual Framework

Noddings' Care Theory is the central theory for this research (1984). In 1984, Noddings' published work signifying the importance of the "one caring" and "cared-for" relationship amongst teachers and students. Noddings explains that although teachers cannot replace the care of a parent, their genuine relationship, if accepted by the student, can improve the students' success in the classroom through engagement (1984). This need for a caring relationship through mutuality correlates with

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adolescents' transient needs as explained by Scarborough (1977) almost a decade earlier. The transient demand of care in the educational environment cannot fill the void of a caring relationship at home, however, when there is mutuality at school it serves as a surrogate for students' need (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). It is a teacher's moral obligation to adhere to the caring need of their students.

Moral Education

Along with Scarborough (1977), Bondi & Wiles (1979), Holman (1979), and Cohen (1979) explored the adolescent need for care previous to Noddings book (1984). Bondi & Wiles (1979) probed the minds of adolescent students to discover the ranking of transescent needs (Scarborough, 1977). A study with students ranging in grades 5-8 lead Bondi & Wiles (1979) to the conclusion that students' most important need is to feel cared for and to be active in a scholastic setting with family cornerstones (Holman, 1979). These essential needs of students build the foundation with which they thrive for success in an academic environment. If students are lacking the fulfillment of their transescent needs at home, their scholastic achievements may waver (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). The practice of caring for others is the only way to originate one's care for "the ethical self," and obtaining mutuality will increase a student's "intrinsic motivation [which] is associated with higher achievement" (Noddings, 1984, p.14-15).

Noddings thoroughly analyzes the essence of the caring relationship in moral education. The "one caring" is solely responsible to initiate and nurture the "cared-for" in order to achieve the goal of a caring relationship with reciprocity (Noddings, 1984). Acquiring the legitimate exchange in a teacher-student relationship takes

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time, patience, and fidelity; the teacher requires themselves to not only become familiar with the generic needs of students, but they also need to "consider [their] ways of life, needs, and desires" since they will differ from student to student (p. 14; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). It is critical for the "one caring" to recognize the difference between the efficient engrossment of caring and the genuine caring for the individual student (p. 17). If a teacher only implements the caring on a superficial level, there will not be a relationship with the student increasing their motivation for achievement (p. 15).

To further elucidate her theory's importance in moral education, Noddings (1984) illuminates aesthetical caring and how an educator's ethics can be lost when caring for things trump the students (p. 22). Producing genuine care with students stimulating the process enables the educator to possess the tools that inspire the "one caring" and "cared-for" relationship flourishing through reciprocity (Noddings, 1984; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). Continuing the essential need for the "one caring" and "cared-for" in the teacher-student relationship evolves into the social-emotional learning approach.

The Social-Emotional Learning Approach

Eccles et al., 1993, Oldfather & McLaughlin (1993), and Davis (2006) explain during the transition from elementary school to middle school, grades six through eight, students exhibit a serious decline in motivation in the academic environment. This decline is a direct correlation of the crumbling relationship between the teacher and student (Eccles et al., 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Davis, 2006). Noddings (1984), Davis (2006), and Wentzel & Miele (2016) illustrate the essence of

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igniting adolescents' motivation by reinforcing the teacher-student relationship through students' interests. By propelling adolescents' motivation, their successes in the scholastic setting will increase; hence, improving their self-perception (Eccles et al., 1993).

A method of harnessing the social-emotional approach is through students' interests. Scarborough (1977) reports students, specifically middle school students, have psychological, emotional, social, and mental needs which need fulfilled to culminate the most efficient classroom environment (CASEL, 2005). Noddings (1984) supports these needs through the "one caring" and "cared-for" relationship between teacher and student. Students acknowledging the genuine attention and care from the teacher will rejuvenate motivation, and in turn, progress into a relationship based on reciprocity which will help meet their psychological, emotional, social, and mental needs (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Eccles et al, 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Davis, 2006; Wentzel & Miele, 2016).

Jones & Bouffard (2012) and Hamedani & Darling-Hammond (2015) furthered the research that social-emotional learning adheres to middle school students to specifically identify the benefits in "urban, diverse, communities" (CASEL, 2005; Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015, p.7). A framework established school districts for SEL learning is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: Framework of Social-Emotional Learning

The Office of Special Education Programs funded the School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS or PBIS) beginning in 1998 as a

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response to the overrepresented population of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students identified in special education (PBIS). In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act created a division, Response to Intervention (RTI), to meet the various needs of students prior to special education identification (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Cramer & Bennett explained this division enacted PBIS to adhere to the diverse needs of students with behavior concerns.

PBIS is a three-tiered framework developed to adhere to heterogeneous students' psychological, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual needs (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986; Davis; 2006; Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013; Wentzel & Miele, 2016; Gomez, 2017). The first tier focuses on all students (80% of adolescents will respond positively to this tier), the second tier is group intervention centralized on the data collected on those students (15% of adolescent will respond positively to this tier), and the third tier can be a more intensive on-on-one approach to help those students (1%-5% of adolescent population) (Cramer & Bennett, 2015).

Disparate Discipline

Not adhering to the cultural needs of students is amoral for school districts, but it is also illegal. Wood (2014) explains Title IV and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibit districts from implementing harsher disciplines for specific races and from implementing a policy that “has a disparate impact on students of a particular race” (p. 402). Without proper training, educators are not equipped to adhere to the social-emotional needs of students; hence, suspending a student is not repairing the issue(s) causing the transgressions. Ironically, suspension and expulsion are shown to increase “alienation, school failure, delinquency, mental health problems, and abuse” (Sprague & Tobin 2016; Sprague & Tobin, 2017). Implementing the PBIS tiered-disciplinary framework assists in restoring the infraction. An approach within the PBIS framework is the Responsive Classroom.

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Responsive Classroom: An Approach to Social-Emotional Learning

When the Northeast Foundation for Children (NEFC) created the Responsive Classroom approach, they did not intend to directly adhere to academic standards; however, this approach does indirectly adhere to students' scholastic needs (2003). Referring to the aforementioned needs described through Scarborough's (1977) research, the Responsive Classroom approach combines adolescents' social and academic needs. Scarborough (1977) also explains the critical matter of students feeling safe through a family environment at home and in their individual scholastic setting.

Noddings (1984) explains to adhere to the transescent needs, there needs to be a "one caring" (teacher) and a "cared-for" (student) (Scarborough, 1977; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). Regardless of a student's home situation, the teacher-relationship is imperative for social-emotional development. However, no matter how strongly the relationship is reciprocated through teacher and student, the scholastic one cannot replace the home relationship, but it can continue to assist students in the advancement of their social-emotional development (Noddings, 1984). The evolution of social-emotional learning is a method of school improvement to "include the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act (HR 1875, 2013) in revisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014). The Responsive Classroom is a strategy to propel students' social-emotional learning and increase their motivation in the academic setting.

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Fidelity of Implementation

Fidelity of implementation (FOI) displays the strongest correlation between itself and the effectiveness of the Responsive Classroom approach (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014). FOI is explained as being the level interventions accomplished per intention (Greenburg et al., 2005). The most significant relationship is that of teacher and student, however, the relationships of teachers with administration, intervention coaches, and colleagues are consequential as well (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014).

In order for teachers to correctly execute the Responsive Classroom approach with fidelity, there needs to be advocacy from the top in a school environment; FOI is explicitly related to administration backing of the program (Ringwalt et al., 2003; Marshall & Caldwell, 2007). Wanless et al., 2014, explains the largest setback with FOI is deficit of support from administration in the school and district. Similar to the aforementioned teacher-student relationship, the administration-teacher relationship is based on the administrator being "one caring" and the teacher is the "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984).

When teachers' FOI was measured during implementation, there was an indirect correlation with their Social-Emotional Learning views; however, there was a positive correlation between their FOI and their engagement during professional training with their coaches (Wanless, 2012). In addition to administrator-teacher relationships, teachers thought the relationship between the academic coach and teacher was paramount during execution of the Responsive Classroom approach (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014). Channeling this relationship through mutual

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respect care enables both parties to further the effectiveness of this approach through FOI (Wanless, 2012).

Teacher-Student Relationship

According to the Northeast Foundation for Children (NEFC, 2014b,), adolescents' academic needs do not trump the relevance of how students learn along with their social-emotional needs. To gain access to the latter two constituents, teachers have to progress into a relationship based on reciprocity between themselves and the student; the teacher as the "one caring" and the student as the "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). The Responsive Classroom approach demands a genuine relationship between the teacher and student to adhere to the adolescent's transescent needs (Scarborough, 1977).

An extension to adhering to students' SEL needs, the Responsive Classroom approach enables teachers to flourish their classroom management through four principles: the groundwork invested in a classroom before the students arrive, reciprocity between teachers and students (Noddings, 1984), the scholastic atmosphere, and continuous reflection (Marzano, 2003; Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014, p. 19-20). With FOI, these core principles provide abrupt feedback to students in accordance to their behavioral expectations (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014, p. 20). FOI through professional development also calls upon the staff to grind as a united unit to reach true social-emotional learning for the students. It is critical for the staff unit to recognize the essence of social-emotional learning; it is not superior to academia, but nor is it inferior (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Horsch, Chen, & Wagner, 2002; Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Components assisting the

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imperative importance of social-emotional learning through the Responsive Classroom approach include: Morning Meetings, Rules and Logical Consequences, Guided Discovery, Classroom Organization, Academic Choice, and Assessment and Reporting to Parents (Horsch, Chen, & Wagner, 2002).

Intrinsic Motivation

Piaget's research on cognitive development aligns with latter research on engagement of adolescent motivation. Hunt (1963) explains in Stage III of Piaget's development, the smile from the child is from recognition and familiarity; this coincides with adolescent engagement in the scholastic classroom through Noddings' (1984) Care Theory. Students are cared for and diverse transcendent needs are met for individual student interests, and once these needs are met through reciprocity, students' intrinsic motivation is sparked; adolescents are motivated from engagement of their interests (Hunt, 1963; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Froiland & Worrell, 2016).

Intrinsic motivation enables adolescents to venture out and become successful in the academic setting by fueling their desire to explore novel ideas (Hunt, 1963; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Eccles et al., 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Davis, 2006). Hunt (1963) also explains the aspiration for response occurs with the motivation to conquer new work, and this parallels with the relationship between the "one caring" and "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984).

According to Vallerand et al. (1992), there are three categories for intrinsic motivation: "IM to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation" (p. 1005). In the third category, students gain intrinsic motivation through autonomy, and one way is by being given ownership of decisions in the classroom (Vallerand et al.,

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1992; Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Yeager, 2017). Another strategy to increase motivation in adolescents is completed by using their grades (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002).

Encouraging students to alter their mindset on grades will provide opportunities of endless intellectual growth and motivation (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Yeager, 2017). When students acknowledge grades are not a final stop at failure, they will be more inclined to recognize their own improvements which will engage and motivate them to succeed (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Yeager, 2017).

90/90/90 Research: High Achievement in Low Socioeconomic Schools

Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century, scholastic educators associate individuals from low socioeconomic homes with students grappling with high achievement in schools (Murray & Herrnstein, 1994; Haycock, 1998; Carter, 1999; Haycock, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2007). However, the aforementioned norm was thrown a curve ball in the middle of the nineties with a school district in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

According to Reeves (2003), this school district had a demographic that included at least a 90% enrollment who qualified for free and reduced lunches, at least 90% of students were a minority, and at least 90% of students were complacent with the state or district specifications for high standards in an area of math, reading, and/or writing. Through student motivation from engagement in effective instruction and efficacious school leadership, students do not have to be content with only a predetermined conditioned of economics to predict their academic success

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(Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Carter, 1999; Noddings, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003; NEFC, 2007; Wanless, 2012).

Studies on 90/90/90 schools found similar components in the school districts correlating with high achievement: a spotlight on scholastic success, explicit educational curriculum, consistent progress monitoring with various feedback for improvement, priority on "written responses in performance assessments," and a continuous, collective effort on grading assessments (Reeves, 2003). These components directly impact mathematics, reading and writing, however, along with these components there was significant curriculum achievement in social studies and science scores.

The spotlight on student success provides various possibilities to display student success (Reeves, 2003; Skibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). Reeves (2003) explains these opportunities continuously remind students the significant respect the school has for their student achievement; it also enables student to gain ownership of their learning.

Having unambiguous curriculum provided necessary constituents for teachers without limiting their educational creativity (Reeves, 2003). Specifics were to spend more time on "the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics and less time on other subjects" (Reeves, 2003, p. 4). When teachers implemented this curriculum, science and social studies test scores substantially grew (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006).

Executing immediate feedback for students displaces the irrelevant information teachers gain from students' abilities from the previous year's

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standardized tests (Reeves, 2003). Besides rating a school, these tests do not provide the timely tools to enrich students' achievement with feedback and enable them to improve in their near future. Allocating constructive feedback from progress monitoring allows students chances to improve their achievement which will, in turn, increase their intrinsic motivation.

Placing strong emphasis on "written responses in performance assessments" signified a strong correlation in the academic improvement of 90/90/90 Schools (Reeves, 2003). Reeves further explains the essence of how teachers can evaluate students' needs from writing their responses; this method allows educators to trace students' thoughts and differentiate their interventions per the need of each student (Marzano, 2006; Skibbe, Decker, & Kaufman, 2006).

Reeves (2003) and Marzano (2006) describe the significance of utilizing a team collaborative effort when grading common assessments. Employing this strategy assists in limiting inconsistencies when grading by eliminating personal feelings towards a student and ambivalent stipulations on a rubric (Reeves, 2003, p. 6).

Testing the Research

Simpson (2003) explained the significance of this research is yet to be determined; the methods need tried in a completely separate urban school district from Milwaukee. Simpson (2003) continued the research on 90/90/90 Schools in Norfolk, Virginia, however, the demographics in the Norfolk School District were not the exact same as Milwaukee: 67% African American, 28% white, and at least 65% of students "qualif[ied] for free and reduced...lunches" (Reeves, 2003; Simpson,

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2003). Although the demographics were not exactly the same, not many schools are the same, the structure of 90/90/90 Schools enabled this district to obtain similar academic improvements without solely relying on the components of demographics and parental involvement.

Harnessing the following components yielded significant improvements for the Norfolk District:

- 100 percent...met the state benchmarks in writing
- 100 percent of...high schools met the state benchmarks in chemistry
- 100 percent of...middle schools are fully accredited in earth science
- 100 percent of...middle and high schools showed positive trends in reading, literature and research (Simpson, 2003, p. 43-44).

Specifically, the district attributes the upswing of their students' achievement to collaboration, feedback, time, action research, "teacher preparation and alignments," data analysis, common assessments, the family unit of the district including every adult, and cross-curriculum (Scarborough, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978; Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Greenberg et al., 2005; Skibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006; Marzano, 2006).

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to study how and why middle school students feel they are perceived a certain way in their classroom environments and how this correlates to their intrinsic motivation. Researching middle school students' diverse personal components and their scholastic perceptions will identify which elements of a middle school student's life they value; these components can be harnessed to ignite intrinsic motivation in students in the academic setting. This research will identify

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the varying aspects of a middle school students' life academically, economically, and personally.

Research Questions

1. How do students perceive their intelligence in relation to feeling cared for in the classroom?
2. How do students perceive their scholastic environment in relation to their intrinsic motivation?
3. Is students reported level of feeling cared for or intrinsic motivation moderated by their economic status?

Definition of Terms

Transescents -- the prefix "trans" meaning "to go across" and the suffix "escent" meaning "to become something" -- are young people in transition from childhood to adolescence.

Perception – what a person identifies of how he/she is appreciated by others in interpersonal relationships (Noddings, 1984)

Economy – efficient use of money, resources, etc. (Merriam- Webster)

Care- “maintaining the world of, meeting the needs of, ourselves and others” (Noddings, 1984)

Care Ethics- “in a caring relationship there is the ‘one-caring’ and the ‘cared for’; for there to be a genuine relationship when the ‘one-caring’ is employing the needs and/or wants of the ‘cared for,’ to strive for mutuality which will fully never occur” (Noddings,1984).

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Intrinsic Motivation- exerts effort to learn from it; there is no benefit besides achievement of goals (Piaget, 1936 as stated in Hunt, 1963).

Urban School District: Category 7- “High Student Poverty & Average Student Population” (Typology of Ohio School Districts)

Methodology

This quantitative study explored students' perceptions in their academic setting in relation to their scholastic intrinsic motivation. Following permission from the Superintendent from an urban district, Austintown Local Schools, located in Austintown, Ohio, and the IRB (Institutional Review Board), research already collected by the middle school administration was analyzed for possible relationship correlations involving student perception of care, socioeconomics, and their intrinsic motivation. The research of student was collected, anonymously, via Survey Monkey.

Significance of the Study

Results of this study are highly beneficial to administrators in the school district due to the heavy influence social-emotional learning has on the academic achievement of students. Hopefully, the goal of the district is not solely state test scores but rather to improve students' scholastic performance. Employing the results of this research will enable districts to adhere to the needs of middle school students that are currently not being fulfilled to provide a holistic education that will empower them their studies through the foundation of powerful social-emotional learning. In turn, by placing students first, the school will experience an improvement in their academic performance which will increase test scores. Just as the administration and teachers are expected to place the students as the central focus to adhere to their

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needs, administration needs to adhere to the teachers' needs to be successful in this endeavor. For efficacy, social-emotional learning must be completed with fidelity, and this fidelity appears as a top-down approach in school districts.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study include human interaction in the study. If there are administrators and/or students not willing to participate in the survey, the results will be affected. Adolescents not honoring the research and completing the survey in a lackluster and dishonest manner will negatively impact the validity of this research.

Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations of the study include the number of participants. My results will reflect middle school adolescents attending Austintown School District in northeast Ohio; therefore, the state nor the nation will be accurately represented in my research. Another delimitation is if the participating district incorporates social-emotional learning to adhere to the transient needs of their students more or less than other districts.

Summary

This research will examine the climate influences on students' academic motivation, and how these components impact their achievement in class. Identifying the social-emotional needs of students that are not being met will assist the district in providing the teachers with the tools to adhere to these needs. Acknowledging the diverse and specific needs of adolescents will assist the school in engaging middle school students in the scholastic environment which will, in turn, fuel the students'

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intrinsic motivation. Once students are intrinsically motivated, their academic achievement will increase.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research from sixty years to present day examine adolescents' needs to feel care from school and home that positively correlates with their intrinsic motivation in the scholastic setting.

Hunt (1963) explains research completed by Piaget with developmental stages. Specifically, Piaget examines the powerful connection between children becoming motivated to further their abilities through familiarity and feeling care (Hunt, 1963). In the following decade, Scarborough (1977), Bondi & Wiles (1979), and Holman (1979) continue to explore the social-emotional needs of adolescents in middle school. These researchers examine how essential it is for middle school students to feel care and support in school and from home in order for them to engage in the academic environment. Noddings (1984) built upon these explanations to delve into more specifics of how educators can help adhere to the adolescents' diverse needs. This research was continued with Froiland & Worrell in 2016 further solidifying the positive correlation between motivation and success in the classroom.

Noddings (1984) explains the significance of the teacher- student relationship with the "one caring" (teacher) and "cared-for" (student) roles. Genuine relationships between teacher and student reach a level of mutuality between the two parties (Wentzel & Miele, 2016). Noddings (1984) explains although this relationship cannot replace a negligence of care from an adolescent's home, it is still essential for student's intrinsic motivation in school. Intrinsic motivation has a positive correlation relationship with higher achievement in schools; therefore, adolescents having a

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genuinely caring relationship with educators contribute to their intrinsic motivation that yields more academic achievement (Noddings, 1984). Similar to Noddings (1984) research, Eccles et al (1993), Oldfather & McLaughlin (1993), and Davis (2006) concluded from their work the positive correlation between the diminishing teacher-student relationships and decreased intrinsic motivation. The initial downfall of these relationships in middle school leads to the decrease of intrinsic motivation in middle school. Into the twentieth century, researchers continued to explore the significance of adolescent needs.

Reeves (2003) explains a concept called 90/90/90 Schools where the schools focus on the diverse needs of the students and not their state testing. Once the schools realign the importance on student success by meeting the diverse needs of students, the students performed better in school (Reeves, 2003; Shibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). 90/90/90 schools are schools with at least 90% minority, 90% free and reduced lunch, and 90% proficiency in a tested area (Reeves, 2003).

The Northeast Foundation for Children (2003) developed an approach called the Responsive Classroom to incorporate social-emotional learning into daily education because a student who did not have these social-emotional needs fulfilled would not succeed as well academically. Curley, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abey (2013), Rimm-Kaufman et al (2014), and Wanless et al (2014) describe how the Responsive Classroom model meets the social-emotional needs of adolescents through Morning Meetings, Academic Choice, and Rule Creation.

Shortly after this development, in 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act created a sector called Response to Intervention (RTI)

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which then created a branch for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to adhere to adolescents' social-emotional needs (Davis, 2006; Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013; Cramer & Bennett, 2015; Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015; Gomez, 2017). Cramer & Bennett (2015) explains the PBIS framework was designed to meet the cultural needs of students apparent with data collected in special education forums. The intent of this framework was to strengthen the relationship of teacher-student as "one caring" and "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984; Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Providing minority students with this social-emotional learning yields opportunity for familiarity and care which Piaget explained motivates individuals (Hunt, 1963). According to Hamdani & Darling-Hammond (2015) and Jones & Bouffard (2015), adhering to the social-emotional needs of adolescents through social-emotional learning leads to increased intrinsic motivation through care and familiarity; social-emotional needs are not less important, but rather just as important as academic needs. Ironically, Yeager (2017) explains once students do not see their grades as the finality of their academic performance, they become more motivated in school.

The specific social-emotional needs educators strive to meet through the Responsive Classroom and PBIS are the same needs described in Piaget's (Hunt, 1963), Scarborough (1977), Bondi & Wiles (1979), Holman (1979) Noddings, (1984), Eccles et al (1993), Oldfather & McLaughlin (1993), and Davis (2006). Utilizing the PBIS framework helps eliminate disparate discipline through educator training and a tiered-disciplinary protocol to restore and mend the behavioral infraction (Martin, Sharp-Grier, & Smith, 2006; Wood, 2014; Sprague & Tobin,

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2016; Sprague & Tobin, 2017). Disparate discipline is a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 according to Title IV and Title VI (Wood, 2014). Therefore, implementing the PBIS framework with fidelity is an ethical and legal benefit to school districts. The backbone of PBIS for schools is Noddings Care Theory (1984).

History of Caring

Throughout the period of adolescence, students have necessary requirements to transition into successful students; this includes, but is not limited to, caring from the prominent adult figures in their lives including their educators and administrators (Scarborough, 1977). Middle school students undergo a vast array of changes to their physical, mental, and emotional bodies throughout this trying time of their adolescents; one reason middle schoolers constantly move in their desks is their bodies are growing at a rapid rate (J. Williams, D., lecture at YSU, June 22, 2006). Along with the physical changes occurring throughout this fragile time period, middle school students have other “transescent needs” that mature and need nurtured (Scarborough, 1977, p. 10). Scarborough (1977) identifies some of the most important needs for these students, including:

- “knowledge of the basic concepts of human relations.
- an understanding of the peer group.
- to work with another person, small groups, large groups.
- to be encouraged and rewarded.
- to be free from high emotional pressure.
- opportunities to develop personal interests and concerns.
- to experience group acceptance. “ (p. 110)

By being “cared-for” these needs can be met throughout their scholastic and non-scholastic environments (Noddings, 1984). Through methods of care, students' will have fuel to ignite their intrinsic motivation in the academic setting

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(Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). This intrinsic motivation occurs without gaining a reward, it is a "new interest...with the achievement of goals" (Piaget, 1936 as stated in Hunt 1963).

According to Noddings (1984), in order for true care to occur between the "one-caring" and the "cared-for" it is imperative for there to be reciprocity between the two parties (p. 10). It is not possible to care for an adolescent, or any individual, if the "one-caring" does not disregard objective views and enable their emotions to decipher the demands of the one being "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984, p. 14). Without the response from the "cared for," the true act will not genuinely become acquired in order to meet all the "physical, emotional, and intellectual needs" of adolescence (Noddings, 1984, p. 10; Scarborough, 1977, p.10). When an individual feels that a person is acting genuinely towards them, their relationship will improve and flourish. Accepting and providing care are the quintessential objectives of humans (Noddings, 1984, p. 173).

Unfortunately, there is not a written prescription for adhering to the needs of middle school students through caring; it takes time, patience, developing a relationship with the adolescents while sensitive to their needs, and "ethical caring" (Clarke, 1977; Morphis, 1977; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). Noddings contrasts "natural caring" and "ethical caring" for educators and parents, because both are essential for an adolescent and both place the adolescent as a "cared-for." When individuals progress from natural caring, which is the most innermost form of caring as a parent, to ethical caring, which is "dependent upon, and not superior to natural caring" occurring as an educator, the educator must undertake the role as caring-for

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opposing the student (Noddings, 1984). However, the educator cannot genuinely acquire this role if the caring they want to propose to students is wary, and/or the one being cared-for, the student, is nonresponsive (Noddings, 1984). Students know if an educator is disingenuous and will not respond to them. Teachers caring for their students is an ethical responsibility called moral education.

Moral Education

Noddings (1984) explains in moral education there needs to be an educator caring and students receiving; therefore, educators must promote the students to be the students' own version of excellence and not the cared-for's version (Cohen, 1979). To attain the students' version, students have to feel the genuine caring from an educator; being in a secure, safe environment ranks high against other adolescent needs (Bondi & Wiles, 1979; Noddings, 1984). Again, teachers caring for students to develop an authentic relationship will not work if the educator is not sincere or is forced in their actions. Bondi & Wiles and Holman explain that there are fewer and fewer students receiving the necessary requirements of the "family security" need at home, therefore, educators can help fulfill this by caring for students at school through activities and programs creating the "sense of a home environment" (p.29). Researchers claim evidence for the decreasing number of students having the security need fulfilled at home include: divorce, broken home, parents work hours, suicide, and criminal activity involving adolescents (Bondi & Wiles, 1979, p.4). Noddings (1984) warns the "one-caring" that it is possible to transcend into trying to fix problems for a "cared-for"; there are appropriate times to ignore the objective thinking and promote our emotions to help care (p. 25-26). Using emotions to reach

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the “cared-for” is necessary, because feelings are an essence of caring; students will know the caring is not genuine without feelings, and middle school students also need caring role models to establish how to care during this sensitive time (Holman, 1979; Noddings, 1984).

Holman (1979) discusses how Old Mill Middle North School devised a program to adhere to the transescent needs (Scarborough, 1977) of adolescence dependent on being "cared-for" (Noddings, 1984). Although there is a list of these needs, educators utilized adolescent input to specify the ones with the greatest need; these educators instilled a program enabling students to work with caring adults which is essential in developing an environment with the “cared-for” receiving and giving themselves back to the "one-caring" (Holman, 1979; Noddings, 1984).

When caring for the “cared-for,” the “one caring” is searching for the pertinent emotions that will initiate reciprocity between the two respective parties (Noddings, 1984). In the scholastic setting, reciprocity assists in laying the foundational support for the future relationship between the educator and the student; the student is the one being “cared-for” (Noddings, 1984, p. 59-60). Finding the pertinent emotions to initiate reciprocity consists of meeting the needs of the adolescents; this, in turn, will empower educators to discover the methods to harness in their scholastic environment to maximize learning (Sadker, Sadker, & Cooper, 1973; Clarke, 1977; Morphis, 1977; Scarborough, 1977; Bondi & Wiles, 1979; Cohen, 1979; Holman, 1979; Noddings, 1984; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Scarborough (1977) explains there are many transescent needs of adolescents, educators must take it upon themselves to reach out

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to the students and adhere to their many needs (Cohen, 1979). By accepting the role as “caring one” for students, educators create the elements necessary for inclusion (Noddings, 1984; Cohen, 1979).

In the inclusion process, the teacher, “one caring,” submerges into the student by receiving them and illustrate in their mind the “cared-for’s” thoughts and emotions (Cohen, 1979; Noddings, 1984). Cohen (1979) explains that the relationship between teacher and student is an example of one that cannot move into “complete mutuality,” because there will be a shift in authority (p. 92). The reason for this relationship is not for the student to become the “one caring,” so there will not be a complete shift just reciprocity. Although the teacher recognizes and respects the perspective of the student, the student cannot move into a relationship that is based on bilateral competence (Cohen, 1979; Noddings, 1984).

Gilligan (1986) delves a bit deeper in exploring the psychological needs of differing genders and how morality is understood. Throughout the years of psychological research, there has been a significant removal from occurrences in women's lives and published "psychological [theories]" (Gilligan, 1986, p. 325). Gilligan explains her critics misinterpret the measurement of moral development if "social class and education contribute to moral development while experiences typically associated with gender are essential irrelevant" (p. 327). Essentially, males develop their moral ethic of caring differently throughout adolescence because of the separation at birth; females come from a female and attach to their mother as a caring role-model, whereas males have to separate from the female and reattach themselves to a male as a caring role-model (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986).

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Admitting to the gender experience influencing moral perspective enables research to allow the possibility that a lesser score on Kohlberg's stages may not signify a "lower lever of moral development but may signify a shift in moral perspective" due to the difference in genders emotional and psychological maturation (Kohlberg, 1971; Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986). Gilligan (1982) explains the confusion stems from a misinterpretation of the female gender scoring differently than a male in ethical caring; instead of researchers furthering experimentation with this idea, it was assumed females were subordinate to males.

Gilligan (1986) recognized her critics' arguments that her data did not represent all women in all societies and ethnicities of the world. Researching women's diverse experiences and placing that facet and the gender importance into research was her acknowledgement; Gilligan (1986) claims that there is a sex difference in morality, and her research only represents her sample; however, there is now the recognition of the difference. Most of the samples from previous research were dominated by the male sex, therefore not recognizing the female experience (Gilligan, 1986).

Almost twenty years later, Noddings (2001), explored the hazards of the scholastic environment conceding to the demands of politicians and not creating an environment valid to caring for students and genuine education. The educator concerns themselves with the needs of the student and adheres to these needs in order to help them flourish, however, deciding the specifics in daily education without enabling student input is detrimental to the caring relationship (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Noddings, 2010). When the environment is based on coercion, the

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"apparently positive outcome" may have a dangerous effect on the student (Noddings, 2001, p. 36). Using the care perspective with students produces question from coercion, because the cared-for may not feel respected; there may be a more beneficial means of caring for the student (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Wentzel & Miele, 2016).

Instead of an environment with coercion, the one-caring should stop and listen to the concerns of the cared-for, "reject authoritarian coercion," and dwell in the possibility of alternative conversation (Noddings, 2001, p. 36-37). As the educator, the caring relationship's primary concern is "care and trust," not acting autocratic (Noddings, 2001, p. 37). Nodding (2001) questions the educational entity as "caring about" teachers and students; "caring for" the entity would require a caring relationship on each level of the educational system concluding with the ultimate goal of being a student-centered environment (Noddings, 2001, p.37).

Noddings (2001) explores the lack of caring from politicians through each level of the education system to the teacher and student relationship in the form of pressures of standardized testing. Noddings (2001) and Scarborough (1977) recognize the needs of adolescents, specifically the need to not feel high stress during their scholastic experience. This need is not met when students' sleep is disturbed from the pressures of testing (Noddings, 2001). Noddings (2001) continues to explain that students are feeling separated and set in their scholastic setting, concluding that the scholastic environment is not a safe place creating a place conducive to authentic learning.

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Educational reform has shown significant changes over the last fifty years, and Noddings (2001) explains that some of the writings describe that education is truly about the "present experience [for the student]" and not a basis of test scores (p.38). The students should be able to experience education in its purest form; their daily experience should fuel their passion and stimulate their intellect (Noddings, 2001, p.39). For these to occur the "one-caring" must facilitate the environment for the "cared-for" through induction and dialogue (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Noddings, 2010). Throughout induction the one-caring must fully receive the cared-for in a mutually responsive relationship; the cared-for will not reciprocate the caring relationship if they feel their individual needs are disregarded (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Noddings, 2010).

If students convey a passion for the arts or another area and are not tested, our school system still forces them to take the same classes as others to determine their success and the success of the school (Noddings, 2001). Forcing the cared-for into a scholastic path not adhering to their adolescent needs is not modeling a caring relationship; this is an example as caring as a virtue not as a relationship (Noddings, 2001). Noddings (2001) explains this is "pedagogical fraud," and accounting test scores to determine scholastic success is an inconsistent analysis of student learning and not enhancing the caring relationship (p.40). Creating and strengthening a caring relationship will yield satisfying results for the cared-for and the school districts when the criteria for their success is based on caring (Noddings, 2001; Wentzel & Miele, 2016).

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Over the next decades, Noddings continued her research on caring in the scholastic environment. More specifically, she added the importance of four components: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (Noddings, 2010). Adolescents look for role models throughout their lives to assist in meeting their need of security (Scarborough, 1977), and the impact of a role model may be an unintentional influence on the adolescence (Noddings, 2010). Hence, it is imperative for a secure adult to set responsible and admirable examples for students, especially teachers. In the aforementioned analysis of Noddings' earlier work (1984), the teacher-student caring relationship is analyzed and rated as essential to be positive in the lives of students, because it may need to substitute for a lack of caring in other areas. Noddings (2010) continued with this idea in further research discussing that negative presence in students' lives may unintentionally influence students' future relationships.

If a student "internalizes" the inadequacy of an uncaring relationship, this may fester and mold the student's basis for future relationships when they are the one-caring (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2010, p. 147). Therefore, it is a monumental responsibility for teachers to hold themselves to a high standard when setting this example for students; modeling a healthy caring relationship has long-term effects, and teachers do not "care in order to model caring; [educators] model care by caring" (Noddings, 2010, p. 147).

The second component in Noddings (2010) development of moral education through caring is dialogue. Similar to how a leader should not dictate, the conversation between a teacher and student should not be heavily on-sided nor a

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constant exchange of criticisms (Nodding, 2010). The one-caring should be trying to decipher the needs of the student, so the teacher can help them become the best version of themselves (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2010). Conversing with the student should consist of open questions welcoming authentic conversation that can lead to the one caring to adhere to the specific needs of the student (Noddings, 2010).

Just as practice assists in improving other elements, practice needs to occur for the cared-for to implement caring (Noddings, 2010). Educators have to present situations in which the student acts in a caring manner and receives the appropriate recognition for the ideal behaviors (Noddings, 2010). In a scholastic setting, it is possible to confuse acknowledgement with "rewards" and this can evolve into confusion for the cared-for (Noddings, 2010, p.148). If the student believes they should receive a tangible gift for caring, this reward substitutes the true lesson: the sincere instinct of caring (Noddings, 2010). Through the second component, dialogue, this confusion can be avoided and leads the one caring into the fourth component, confirmation (Noddings, 1984, Noddings, 2010).

Confirmation throughout the caring process is an essential constituent to assisting the student develop and strengthen their ability to care. By confirming students' actions as negative, but recognizing the intent lessens the anger and/or embarrassment within the cared-for and permits the caring relationship to continue between teacher and student; the cared-for feels the confirmation as authentic caring from the one-caring (Noddings, 2010). Noddings (1984, 2010) explains if a child feels anger and/ or embarrassment, this hinders the induction process in which the one-caring will not truly know the needs of the student. Therefore, the components of

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the caring process must occur authentically and simultaneously along with "personal knowledge" of the cared-for; unfortunately there is not a prescription for this process, so it has to occur with the individuality of each student (Noddings, 2010, p. 148).

Induction may only happen with genuine dialogue to enable the teacher and student to understand and accept one another, the practice of caring, modeling caring behavior, and the confirmation of positive rationale of behaviors (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2010). Progressing from Noddings Care Theory is the necessity for adhering to students' social-emotional needs in schools.

The Social-Emotional Learning Approach

Educating middle school students does not come with definitive directions. All students and classes are different; not all students derive from the same home life. These inconsistent variables create a vortex of possibilities that cause negative attitudes of students towards education. Learning the components that influence how students feel they are perceived in the scholastic environment enable educators to determine the essential elements that students merit. Students sprouting from diverse environments need different methods to adhere to their needs for engagement. Varying methods for student engagement depends on the different students; there is not a set of directions an educator can follow that holds for every student. Educators have to understand the interests and values of their students to engage them to create a safe, effective learning environment. Eccles et al., (1993) explores the development of students from elementary students into middle school students; studies explain students' motivation significantly decreases following students' movement into middle school (p. 556). Eccles et al., (1993) and Oldfather

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& McLaughlin (1993) state that a decrease in student motivation is a result from a fragile and/ or deteriorating relationship between teacher and student (Davis, 2006, p. 194; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2005) explains SEL as a means to “foster...self-awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.”

Through engaging students in the classroom, Davis (2006) explains teachers can help students through the uncomfortable phases of middle school and adhere to their diverse components (p. 194). Engaging students through motivation and their interests enable educators to contribute to their academic success in the classroom; feeling success in academics increases students’ motivation (Davis, 2006, p. 207). Nottelmann (1987) found results that were conflicting with other analysts about middle school students self-esteem, and one reason is because Nottelmann used self-esteem as a variable without taking into consideration all of the aspects of one’s self-esteem; one element not taken into self-esteem is a middle school student’s perception (a Eccles et al.,1993, p. 556).

Adolescence is a challenging progression which occurs on a student’s journey to develop into an adult. Scarborough (1977) identifies certain developmental needs of middle school students, and these needs adhere to their social, emotional, mental, and psychological maturation (p. 110-111). Specifically, these needs enable students to fully evolve into an adult; without these needs, students may not feel complete or whole within themselves. Enabling students to meet these needs with their assistance, educators help them flourish in the academic environment through engagement. If

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these needs are not met, the progression into and during adolescence becomes even more trying for the students (Scarborough, 1977; Eccles et al., 1993). Jones & Bouffard (2012) and Wentzel & Miele, (2016) explain the progression from the academic environment into the real world takes consistent exposure over time. A method multiple researchers are promoting is the social-emotional learning approach.

Hamedani & Darling-Hammond (2015) & Jones & Bouffard (2012) explain that educational facilities have evolved into enriching the emotional and social needs of the students in grades kindergarten to twelfth grade. Throughout the mission to enrich these needs, educators hope to inspire students to reach out and engage in their community which can only occur through fostering the "students' capacity to know themselves" (p.2). Incorporating social-emotional learning approach connects schools to the community and creates authentic opportunities for adolescents; this provides the opportunity for a negative correlation between stimulating students' opportunities for favorable adaptation to the real world and lowering the components contributing to students' failures (Durlak et al., 2011; Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Weissberg, Kumpfer & Seligman, 2003). Hamedani & Darling-Hammond (2015) discuss the manner in which schools harness the social- emotional approach; this includes supporting the caring relationships (Noddings, 1984) by "challenging students with an engaging, relevant, culturally responsive, and high quality curriculum [that provides] engaged learning opportunities" (p. 4). The hope is for these students to better the lives of themselves and others (Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015).

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According to Hamedani & Darling-Hammond (2015), out of 2063 students in the sample, 363 students were enrolled in a social emotional setting, and the findings from these students were consistent:

- Students enjoyed school more
- Students had an increased "engagement in school" (p. 6)
- These students were more inclined to assist others to contribute to their community
- These students "[e]xpressed ambitious goals" for themselves beyond the high school level (p. 7)

This research also included how the social emotional scholastic environment was adhering to the needs of students in "urban, diverse communities" (Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015, p. 7):

- This approach to learning has to be clear for the students.
- Through genuine caring (Noddings, 1984) and fervent relationships assist in the foundation of an effective scholastic environment
- Students "psychological needs are not secondary to their academic needs" (p. 7)
- Using the social emotional approach to education enables students to build relationships with stakeholders in the community to "inspire responsibility, engagement, and action" (p. 9).
- It is necessary to remember the adults' needs in the academic setting, too; they cannot adhere to the students' needs if their needs are not fulfilled.

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Benson (2006) explains in a sample of sixth through twelfth graders of 148,189 students in a nationwide sample, only 29-49% of students solidified their social needs were met. In this same sample, only 29% of students felt cared for in their scholastic environment. This statistic supports the need for an increase of caring environments to enhance students' academic experiences and increase their success in future endeavors (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Davis, 2006; Noddings 2010; Gilligan, 1986;). The aforementioned analysis is after researching the responsibility's the education system has to students in reference to the communal perspective.

Jones & Bouffard (2012) explain the systems approach to incorporating SEL into a district that has successful results. The essence of SEL is based into "three conceptual categories: emotional processes, social/ interpersonal skills, and cognitive regulation" (Jones & Bouffard, 2012, p. 4). When harnessing the systems approach to incorporating SEL each district will vary the details to purposefully adhere to the specific and diverse needs of their students, faculty, stakeholders, and community (CASEL, 2005; Jones & Bouffard, 2012). In order to be most effective, the systems approach also needs to be consistently engrained in the daily scholastic experience (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

The acronym SAFE stands for the four characteristics Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger (2001) describe for a social emotional program in a school:

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- Sequenced- Are the activities connected and coordinated paving the way to specific learning targets?
- Active- Are there active methods of learning?
- Focused- Is there an integral part that adheres to the students' social or personal skills?
- Explicit- Are the objectives specific social emotional learning skills and not general to students' development?

There are not a vast majority of SEL programs working across the nation, however, there are consistent variables present that restrains the effectiveness and positive development of the systems approach to SEL (CASEL, 2005). Jones & Bouffard (2012) explain:

- SEL cannot be added as a resource period or a thirty-minute class. It needs to be integrated throughout the scholastic culture with fidelity; if it is not, it dissipates into the school day.
- The school faculty and stakeholders cannot view SEL as not part of the core virtues and mission of the district/ school. If the stakeholders do not buy into SEL as heavily as the Common Core/ academic standards, it will not succeed, because it is not using the systems approach.
- The social emotional learning systems approach requires all elements within the scholastic environment to fuse general rules with social emotional learning skills. SEL needs to accompany students in the classroom, in the hallways, in the cafeteria, in college readiness classes, throughout after-school activities,

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etc. By fusing both, students will compensate for not having an SEL class, and they will practice these skills until they become a habit.

- As discussed in an aforementioned paragraph, it is crucial to have faculty master specific SEL skills prior to incorporating it into the scholastic culture. Rarely, does a faculty have extensive training in social emotional elements, however, it is imperative for a school/ district who is beginning SEL to provide the needed professional development to the faculty and staff.

According to Greenberg et al., (2003) and CASEL (2005), adolescence should be nurtured and competent in academics in heterogeneous social situations with regard to individuals from various economic backgrounds, and act reverently to others. With accordance to research, utilizing social emotional learning results in a positive correlation with students having higher success in life and becoming higher quality members of society (Durlak et al., 2011; Eisenberg, 2006; Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Weissberg et al., 2003).

Although SEL is displaying positive effects on adolescence social and academic development (Durlak et al., 2011; Eisenberg, 2006; Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998), there is a need for extensive research to analyze the relationships of the data and variables (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Hamedani & Darling-Hammond (2015) specify the need for further analysis to: "better theorize how social emotional learning can and should be conceptualized and practiced to most effectively meet the needs of students from different

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backgrounds and engaged in diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic schooling...[and]...better understand how to leverage the practice of social emotional learning to engage, educate, and empower students who are...'left behind'" (p.11).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is an adopted framework aligning to adhering to students' social-emotional needs.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports: Framework of Social-Emotional Learning

CLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) students show to be "overrepresented" in confining academic environments (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). As previously explained, middle school adolescents have diversified physical, mental, emotional, social, emotional, and psychological needs (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986; Davis, 2006; Noddings, 2010; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). In addition to these needs, CLD students are in contention with their cultural needs that are not consistently met with an analogous scholastic environment (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Resulting from these needs not being met, CDL students are then "overrepresented" in special education (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act was enforced in 2004, and Response to Intervention (RTI) was a division to meet the needs of students prior to special education identification (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). This division advocated PBIS to meet the diverse needs of CDL students through "intensive, systematic, and evidence-based interventions" including students with behavioral concerns (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19).

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School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports was originally subsidized in 1998 through the Office of Special Education Programs; this funding was renewed for a five-year plan in 2018 (PBIS; Lagerwerff, 2016). PBIS is a framework developed for school districts to boost positive behaviors from students through a "multi-tiered approach to social, emotional, and behavior support" (PBIS; Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013; Gomez, 2017). This three-tiered avenue is a proactive approach to meeting students' needs (Fallon, O'Keeffe, & Sugai, 2012).

Tier I reaches 80% of students through "universal supports...[using] evidence-based" conventions (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). To implement Tier I in a school, Farrell, Collier-Meek, & Pons (2013) explain the necessary step:

- Preparation- the school staff has to be fully motivated and trained and a PBIS team must be created
- Implementation- the PBIS team develops "three to five positively stated expectations for students" and continue staff training (p.41)
- Evaluation- in the evaluation step the PBIS committee will develop criteria to assess the implementation step

Tier II implements varied small-group intervention to meet students' needs (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). To implement Tier II in a school, Ennis & Swoszowski (2011) explain ten effective steps:

- Create a team with an administrator, representation from every grade and department, counselor, and psychologist.

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- After receiving consistent feedback from teachers, the PBIS Tier II team uses this to focus in on no more than three issues to develop group intervention. Limiting the issues for intervention allow the team to implement with fidelity.
- The team decides which office discipline referrals (ODR) drive participation in the agreed interventions. An essential component of this step is revisiting the data driving this intervention and how it parallels with student data.
- Deciding which individual(s) will lead interventions in accordance with the PBIS framework is the next step. The team can look into community stakeholders to complete this step.
- After choosing the individual(s) heading the intervention, the team decides upon materials for the intervention. These materials work with the implementation of the intervention for the most "consistency, accuracy, and success" (p. 43).
- Collaboration will help lead the team to choose instantaneous positive reinforcements for the intervention(s).
- The person(s) heading the intervention has to use a simple, cost-efficient procedural assessment.
- During the intervention, it is essential that the leader and students have transparency about when the intervention is complete. This is decided by the PBIS team and the person leading the intervention.

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- Following the completion of the intervention, students will increase a tier of intervention if necessary, or if they are successful in this intervention, they will then participate in a lower tiered intervention.
- The PBIS team decides the "short-term and long-term goals" of the specified interventions (p.44).

Tier III can meet 1%-5% of students using functional behavior assessment (FBA) to meet individual student needs; these students have chronic behavioral issues (Cramer & Bennett, 2015, p. 19). PBIS explains the steps in the tertiary level of PBIS:

- Data-driven criteria- which outcome(s) from Tier II signify Tier III intervention
- Interventions matched to leaders- the individualized FBA-BIPs (function-based behavioral interventions) per student's need align with the "one-caring" for the student (Noddings, 1984)
- Assessing the interventions-what revisions, if any, need to occur for student success; this conversation is between the intervention leader and the PBIS committee.

The aforementioned tiered disciplinary approach helps eliminate disparate discipline in school districts. The discipline is providing possible ways to rectify reasons for the original transgressions, not just passing out consequences without subsequent meaning.

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Disparate Discipline

Throughout an educator's training in college, there are a multitude of classes stressing the diverse pedagogies necessary to adhere to students' multiple intelligences and essential differentiation to meet student needs. However, there are very few, if any, classes required to teach future teachers how to meet the culturally diverse needs of students to prevent or interject on disciplinary concerns. Martin, Sharp-Grier, & Smith (2016) state there is a constant lack of educator training in "multicultural education or culturally responsive training." Continuing on a path of the routine disciplinary actions yield the same outcomes; therefore, if a student is perpetually in in-school suspension or detention, it is not working. If teachers are not expected to teach every student the same way, then other factors need to be taken into account besides the infraction (e.g. home life, socioeconomics, culture).

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title IV) 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000c et seq. and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d et seq. protect students' rights that "discipline be administered in a racially nondiscriminating manner" (Wood, 2014, p. 402). There are two situations when there is discrimination: inconsistent approaches to students on the basis of race and "if a policy has a disparate impact of students of a particular race" (Wood, 2014, p. 403). The second situation usually occurs when the behavior of a student is subjective to the teacher and/ or administrator.

Wood (2014) explains in 2013 4th grade students took the 4th grade reading part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and only 14% of African American boys scored at least proficient, 8% of Hispanic boys scored at least

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proficient, and 42% of white boys scored at least proficient. The same year 42% of 9th grade black males had been suspended or expelled at one point in their educational career while 14% of white boys had been suspended or expelled at some point (Wood, 2014). The collected data office referrals are mostly intuitive behavior of black and Hispanic boys and drug and weapon infractions for the white boys (Wood, 2014). This data shows in numbers that the current realms of discipline are not assisting minorities in improving their behavior; it is reaping the same results. Also, it creates disparity and is racist for students of one race to be sent to the office more frequently than students of a different race.

When a student's actions do not meet the established expectations of a school and/ or classroom, teachers and administrators are lacking the training to discipline a student in direct relation to the transgression. Restorative practices are utilized in the framework of PBIS to mend the wrongdoing from the student (Sprague & Tobin, 2016; Sprague & Tobin, 2017). When a student is suspended from school, there is not "restitution and repair" to the damaging behavior that occurred resulting in the punishment (Sprague & Tobin, 2017, p. 14). Continuous research displays data supporting the paradox that suspension and expulsion alone have a negative correlation to "alienation, school failure, delinquency, mental health problems, and abuse" (Sprague & Tobin, 2017, p. 14). Implementing PBIS tiered disciplinary protocol will assist in the "restitution and repair" of the said behavior.

Through effective educator professional development and fidelity, the PBIS framework trains school districts to adhere to the social-emotional needs of students and avoiding "structural inequality" (Martin, Sharp-Grier, & Smith, 2006). Hence,

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students will not feel they are in a racially impaired environment which leads to more care and improved intrinsic motivation, and students with infractions will be taught by trained educators how to resolve the issues causing the misbehavior. Writing students off by simply suspending them or expelling them is a disservice to students because we are not adhering to their social-emotional needs. Educators are intensely trained on their learning needs, and they need the same training for SEL. Successful SEL in a district produces a more effective and safer academic environment. The Responsive Classroom is an approach within the PBIS framework.

Responsive Classroom: An Approach to Social Emotional Learning

According to the Northeast Foundation for Children (NEFC), the foundation that generated the Responsive Classroom approach, the SEL approach's intention is to "foster safe, challenging, and joyful...schools...by bringing social and academic learning together" (Northeast Foundation for Children, 2003, p.1) through maturing adolescence's interpersonal, scholastic, and automated skills (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014, p. 3). This approach is not a completely standards-based method for teaching; it is a method that coincides teachers' theories, conventions, and discourse about education to demonstrate a "teaching philosophy based in developmental psychology" (Wanless et al., 2014, p. 42). Developmental needs of adolescence reflect the transient needs explained by Scarborough (1977) and Noddings (1984) (Dr. Jane Williams, Lecture, June, 2006). Utilizing SEL approaches are viewed as a means for school improvement, and individuals have attempted to "include the Academic,

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Social, and Emotional Learning Act” in revisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014).

Teachers utilizing the Responsive Classroom approach are trained in various practices to apply in their daily classroom such as Morning Meetings, Interactive Modeling, Academic Choice, and Rule Creation (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry, 2013; NEFC, 2007). There are seven fundamentals that set the groundwork for the ten practices (NEFC, 2007). Morning Meetings begin the day with teacher-student interactions to foster this relationship and adhere to emotional and social needs through games and conversation (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry, 2013; NEFC, 2007). Interactive Modeling communicates "behavioral expectations for classroom routines through the use of demonstration, practice, and feedback" (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry, 2013; NEFC, 2007). Academic Choice is a practice encouraging students to own their education and gives the freedom to choose the appropriate work to master the learning targets (Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry, 2013; NEFC, 2007). Employing the SEL approach of the Responsive Classroom explains the teachers ended up with limited time explaining "basic skills and more time teaching analysis" and higher level thinking (Skibbe, Decker, and Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). Curby, Rimm-Kaufman, & Abry (2013) explain that SEL classrooms using the Responsive Classroom approach in the beginning of the school year concluded the year with increased educational and emotional reinforcement.

Fidelity of Implementation

Wanless et al., (2012) discusses the various factors affecting the implementation of the Responsive Classroom including "fidelity of implementation" as the fundamental principle coinciding with the effectiveness of school programs (p. 40). Greenberg et al. (2005) explains FOI (fidelity of implementation) being the level interventions are executed per their intention. Research on SEL interventions revealed intervention obstacles negatively affect the results of SEL (Durlak et al., 2001). To implement a SEL program with limited obstacles and develop a groundwork that is continuous to adhere to the needs identified in SEL, stakeholders should recognize the significant influence of teachers' relationships with the administration, intervention coaches, colleagues, and students; it is the teacher's fidelity that carries the most impact (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014).

Marshall & Caldwell (2007) and Ringwalt et al., (2003) explain, after analyzing SEL programs, the implementation is unequivocally affiliated to administrators backing and follow through of the program. The research completed by Wanless et al., (2012) supports the aforementioned statement about the relationship between administration and teachers effective impact on implementation and results; lack of advocacy from administrators was the largest issue with teachers during implementation in Wanless et al., (2012). Largely impacting implementation is another example of Noddings Care Theory (1984), but in this situation the teacher is being cared for by the administrator; through true reciprocity the implementation is more effective.

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The influence of intervention coaches was apparent in Wanless et al., (2012) because the teachers named this relationship as the most profound during implementation (Wanless et al., 2014). Kretlow & Bartholemew (2010) explore the importance of coaches harnessing a supportive relationship with teachers while presenting constructive observations in a one-on-one environment with teachers (Wanless et al., 2012). Prior to the coaches supporting the teachers, the teachers FOI was measured because it was believed to correlate with the effectiveness of the Responsive Classroom (Peterson, 2013; Wanless et al., 2014; Wanless, 2015). Wanless et al., (2014) explains it is not typical for teacher readiness to be assessed prior to coaching, but "certain teacher readiness factors (that are present before RC training begins) may directly relate to their likelihood of implementing RC with fidelity" (p. 1108). Wanless et al. (2012) discovered teachers' SEL beliefs did not directly correlate with their FOI, but their engagement during training for implementation with intervention coaches showed a strong correlation to their FOI. Abry, Rimm-Kaufman, Larsen, & Brewer (2013) discovered that the more teachers were trained by coaches in the Responsive Classroom approach, they more teachers used the practices, and there were "greater improvements in interaction quality" with the teacher and student. Although an exact procedure for coaching is unknown (Wanless et al., 2012), through authentic care and engagement (Noddings, 1984), the teachers recognized the importance of the intervention coaches in their implementation and the coaches can "alter the pathways set in play by teacher

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readiness characteristics that may make teachers less likely to implement with fidelity" (Wanless et al., 2014, p. 1108).

Professional beginnings are always stressful, however, the comradery of other colleagues can assist in the certain surprises of unexpected situations (Wanless et al., 2012, p.41). Wanless et al., (2012) explains teachers can disclose experience to other teachers to assist in improving situations, and Bryk & Schneider (2002) informs educators are more likely to be successful with implementation when having a team of colleagues collaborating. For effective teacher collaboration, research implores the important factors teacher must possess: regard for one another, self-respect, proficiency in professional positions, and hold value to morals (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Yost (2002) verifies that compelling professional alliances increase teachers' effectiveness which lead to success of program implementation (Han & Weiss, 2005).

Teacher-Student Relationship

The teacher-student relationship also shows to heavily influence the implementation of a SEL program in a school (Wanless et al., 2012). An increasing number in socioeconomic and ethnic diversity and smaller class sizes reveal a higher measure of implementation (Berends, Bodilly, & Kirby, 2002; Zvoch, 2009) and adopting practices associated with intervention shows a positive correlation with improving the student-teacher relationship (Abry, Rimm-Kaufman, Larsen, & Brewer, 2013). The Northeast Foundation for Children (2014b, "Guiding Principles") explains as important academic content is for student growth, it is just as important to adhere to the diverse needs of how students learn. For this relationship to progress

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the implementation, the teachers, one caring, must invest themselves into the students to gain genuine reciprocity from the students, cared for, through care and awareness (Noddings, 1984; Ringwalt et al., 2003).

The nourishment of the teacher-student relationship through fidelity provides a foundational approach to classroom management through the responsive classroom (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014). According to Jones, Bailey, & Jacob (2014) and Marzano (2003) classroom management through the responsive classroom approach thrives on four principles: the groundwork invested in a classroom before the students arrive, reciprocity between teachers and students in their relationship (Noddings, 1984), the scholastic atmosphere, and continuous reflection (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014, p. 19-20). Harnessing these principles in a classroom provide an instructor with the appropriate tools to implement social-emotional learning with fidelity through the responsive classroom by anticipating the needs of the pupils (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014, p. 20). Expecting the unexpected in the scholastic environment creates a culture that responds to the students and is well-equipped to supply them with the necessary "skills" to meet behavioral expectations with flourishing autonomy (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014).

Jennings & Greenberg (2009), Jones, Bouffard, & Weissbound (2013), and Jones, Baily & Jacob (2014), express the infrastructure of creating a responsive classroom through the teacher's matured social-emotional strengths. Leading teachers through professional development to nurture their own social-emotional skills prepares educators to develop and cultivate genuine relationships with their students

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(Noddings, 1984; Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014). In addition to professional development, school leaders have to strengthen their relationships with the teachers and students. All members of staff need to work as a cohesive unit to achieve the true culture of social-emotional learning; this cohesive unit must also set an example of authenticity with leaders and staff. In order to proceed with creating a responsive classroom, the authenticity of the teacher-student relationship is critical. Students must respond to the teachers with "reciprocity" permitting themselves to be "cared-for" by the instructor; only when there is true reciprocity can the culture of social-emotional learning through the responsive classroom grow and blossom (Noddings, 1984; Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014).

In the responsive classroom, it is imperative to understand and use practices knowing that the transient needs of adolescents are not superior to academia; both need to be implemented with precision and care (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Horsch, Chen, & Wagner, 2002; Hamedani & Darling-Hammond, 2015). Instructors should adhere to the academia of students with a social-emotional approach which has shown for higher achievement: supply students with unambiguous direction, assure adolescents their time for application and reaction, and allotting sufficient and differentiated time for students to become successful (Brophy & Good, 1986; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Horsch, Chen, & Wagner, 2002).

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Components

Horsch, Chen, & Wagner (2002) explain six essential constituents in a responsive classroom:

- Morning Meeting
 - The Morning Meeting enables the teacher to begin the instructional day with the students while cultivating their relationships through care and trust. Through "greeting, sharing, a group game or activity, and a daily letter and news from the teacher" the individual teacher-student relationships are increasing in authenticity with mutuality; both members of this relationship and the student-student relationship are involved and the involvement is differentiated per students' needs at that time (p.368). Additionally, the students' scholastic needs are being met by communication skills, collaboration with peers, and recalling learning targets from class.
- Rules and Logical Consequences
 - This component addresses the practice of teacher and students creating classroom rules and expectations together in the beginning of the year. These rules are not meant to be intimidating or unreasonable; they provide students tools for success in the classroom. Also, consequences are unique for every occurrence.
- Guided Discovery

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- Learning through Guided Discovery promotes independence with students' own learning experiences but through cooperative education. Cooperative learning ties back into the previous constituents of a responsive classroom; the expectations of respect are utilized. Discovery enables students to understand a concept and not only recall information; workshop methods and student-lead learning promote students to own their learning. Adolescents can use this time to connect the learning to their lives and the real-world.
- Classroom Organization
 - Teachers contribute to the culture of their scholastic environment through the physical elements and arrangement in the classroom. Advocating different intelligences within the classroom gives students tools for achievement, and students being aware of the arrangement allows them to experience learning at different paces and ways.
- Academic Choice
 - Allowing students to have choice in how they will achieve learning targets adheres to their diverse interests and needs. When a student chooses to learn in a certain way or with a particular resource, they "develop a sense of ownership in regard to the learning process" (p. 369). Not only are they academically growing, but when a student knows their scholastic journey is dependent on their own choice, their self-esteem increases with autonomy.

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- Assessment and Reporting to Parents
 - Communication is a fundamental key to the success of a relationship. Instructors should take the initiative to communicate with parent(s)/ guardian(s) as soon as possible to foster the relationship. Teachers reaching out to parents should not result only from needed improvement in the student's performance or behavior; teachers should also contact home with affirmative feedback for parent(s)/ guardian(s). Communicating the positive feedback with home feeds relationship and increases rapport. In addition to communication, a student's family needs to be provided opportunities for involvement in the adolescent's scholastic abilities (e.g. parent night, a collaborative learning experience for students and parent(s)/ guardian(s)).

Horsch, Chen, & Wagner's (2002) research in the Responsive Classroom Approach show that along with students' growing autonomy, achievement, and engagement, teachers also reacted with more fervor and showed more effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers becoming more effective in the classroom leads to an increase in student engagement and intrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic Motivation

Hunt (1963) analyzes Piaget's research in psychology for explaining intrinsic motivation, and its development in a child although Piaget did not particularly focus on the motivational component of his study. With this being said, Hunt (1963) claims "[Piaget's] observations are in fact a highly important source of hypotheses about the

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development of motivation" (p. 263). In parallel with Piaget's stages of cognitive development, motivation begins during Stage III (Hunt, 1963).

Initially, the smiles during this stage were thought to be from social stimulation; however, Piaget studied the occurrence of smiles to be "emerging recognition" (Hunt, 1963). During this recognition, children were experiencing engagement through familiarity (Hunt, 1963). This coincides with the aforementioned research of the "one caring" and "cared-for" relationship adhering to students' transient needs to engage them in the academic environment to fuel intrinsic motivation; the care relationship stimulates the attention, the engagement through familiarity of students' correlates with the "emerging recognition" (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984, Hunt, 1963).

Piaget continues to explain accommodation as a continuation of Stage III (Hunt, 1963). During this time, the composition of the work being introduced to the child is refined according to the conditions most responsive to the child, in turn, this correlates with a teacher accommodating the diverse needs of a middle school student (Hunt, 1963; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). Concurrently with recognition, intrinsic motivation materializes when "the infant becomes intrigued by what is novel about his familiar circumstances," and the same holds true for an adolescent (Hunt, 1963; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Eccles et al., 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Davis, 2006; Froiland & Worrell, 2016). When the subject is interested in fresh concepts, opportunity arises to motivate the child/ adolescent to attain original goals previously untouched by the child/ adolescent (Hunt, 1963). The

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intrinsic motivation is also accompanied with the desire for reception from the work in question; these observations from Piaget would strengthen the reciprocity between the "one caring" and "cared-for" (Hunt, 1963; Noddings, 1984).

According to Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, Briere, Senecal, & Vallieres (1992), there are three categories for intrinsic motivation: "IM to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation" (p. 1005). Vallerand et al (1992) explains "IM to know" as executing an action for the gratification "that one experiences while learning, exploring, or trying to understand something new" (p. 1005). Finally, "IM-to accomplish things" is elucidated as participating in the assumed work "for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced when one attempts to accomplish or create something" (Vallerand et al, 1992, p. 1005). Enabling adolescents to "create something" in academia continues to yield higher intrinsic motivation (Vallerand et al, 1992, p. 5; Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002).

Gehlbach & Roeser (2002), explain the positive correlation between "autonomy" and motivation with adolescents (Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Yeager, 2017). When developing circumstances to support adolescents' intrinsic motivation, it is critical to remember that motivation is, "not a character trait but rather a state that manifests itself in diverse settings" (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002, p. 41). Allowing adolescents to have choice when being assessed in the classroom empowers them through decision-making; by choosing their preference of assessment intrinsic motivation is generated towards completing the assessment successfully (Gehlbach &

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Roeser, 2002). In addition to using autonomy to yield intrinsic motivation, teachers can also use grades (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002).

Supporting students and helping them emphasize on the process, not the final product of grades, will help alter their mindset (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Yeager, 2017). Knowing the totality of final points does not indicate their improvement, it will help them not associate poor initial grades with failure. By teachers permitting students to correct writing or equations after grading with one-on-one care, students will still experience growth in knowledge and be motivated to succeed (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings; 1984; Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Yeager, 2017). Implementing the essence of the process will help challenge students without the constant fear of failure.

Encouraging growth with adolescents in stimulating assignments will assist in preventing insincere praise for mundane tasks (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002). When praise overkill occurs from teachers, students recognize it and may feel the teacher is insincere or thinks they can only do well on simple tasks; this will produce a negative correlation between praise and intrinsic motivation (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002). However, by spotlighting the process and not the initial grade, students will develop a mindset focused on their intellectual growth not on the totality of points (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Yeager, 2017). Intrinsic motivation is a factor in helping districts with extremely high percentages of low socioeconomics; this displays that contextual factors do not always correlate to the success of a district.

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90/90/90 Research: High Achievement in Low Socioeconomic Schools

Throughout the realms of education, it is a social norm to discuss students' continuous struggle of high achievement rooting from hindrance of low socioeconomic status; specifically acknowledged in the mid-1900's (Murray & Herrnstein, 1994; Haycock, 1998; Carter, 1999; Haycock, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2007). However, in 1995, a study occurred in Milwaukee, Wisconsin with a school possessing demographics of at least 90% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunches, at least 90% of students were a minority, and at least 90% of students satisfied the district or state stipulations for high standards in an area (*see Tables 1 and 2*) (Reeves, 2001). The 90/90/90 research explains that although demographics influence students, it does not have to determine their success in education; the most significant influences in a student's education is school leadership and effective instruction which includes engaging students (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Carter, 1999; Noddings, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003; NEFC, 2007; Wanless, 2012).

Studies on 90/90/90 Schools were conducted for over four years at diverse educational settings; these schools varied on socioeconomics, ethnicities, grade levels, and consisted of over 220 schools and 130,000 students (*see Table 1*) (Reeves, 2003). Reeves illustrates that precise documentation occurred to explain any possible correlation between student achievement and specific methodologies increasing students' gains; it is imperative to acknowledge that throughout the 90/90/90 research, these gains materialized with the affiliation of the documented methodologies. There

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were specific common components of 90/90/90 scholastic environments: a precise spotlight on scholastic success, explicit educational curriculum, consistent progress monitoring with various feedback for improvement, priority on "written responses in performance assessments", and a continuous, collective effort on grading assessments (Reeves, 2003, p. 3-5).

The spotlight on student work included classroom and areas throughout the educational settings outside of classrooms which provided multiple opportunities to visually acknowledge students' achievement (Reeves, 2003; Skibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006). Endorsing pupils' success through multi-faceted showings enabled students to own their education and serve as a constant reminder how valued student achievement is in these environments (Reeves, 2003). Teachers were not given their specifics to focus for improvement, rather Reeves (2003) explains, they were encouraged to choose a select few targets to focus within the realms of their instruction that increased weaknesses in "reading and writing" through intervention (Greensberg et al, 2005). Throughout the 90/90/90 Schools, there was not a common intervention program for all schools; the prevalent component was a type of consistent intervention for the students in reading and mathematics (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006).

The spotlight on student success called for scheduling alterations directing an increase of time on "the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics and less time on other subjects" (Reeves, 2003, p. 4). The four-year research on 90/90/90 Schools from the Comprehensive Accountability Report of the Milwaukee Public

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Schools (1999) explains the increase of instructional time in the aforementioned subjects resulted in science and social studies test scores growing; after all, the foundation of both areas is reading and comprehension (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006).

Implementing consistent progress monitoring with various feedback for improvement equips the staff to adhere to the specific and multi-faceted educational needs of students. Reeves (2003) discusses the insignificance of standardized testing on student achievement; it does rate a school, but how do test scores from six months ago help a teacher plan intervention for a student (Marzano, 2006)? In addition to the intervention, an adolescent should be provided collective times to improve their achievement, because a student with low proficiency in a specified area should work to improve their skill set; this is how holistic student achievement increases (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). During Reeves (2003) discussion of this common element in 90/90/90 Schools, he delivers the metaphor of coaches in athletics providing observations to their players and teachers commenting on students' skills to help them achieve. It is completely accurate. If a student is provided evaluations on a piece of work that does not have an opportunity in the near future for improvement, the feedback will be ignored; however, given the appropriate opportunities to improve their abilities, students are more willing to be "coached" from their teachers and work towards "improved performance" (Reeves, 2003, p. 4; Greensberg et al, 2005; Marzano, 2006; Wanless, 2012).

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The most universal tendency of 90/90/90 Schools was the significance on "written responses in performance assessments" (Reeves, 2003). When students explain their answers through writing, teachers follow their thought process and can assess their work more effectively, therefore, the teacher can coach the students in an appropriate differentiated manner for the students' individual scholastic needs (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006; Skibbe, Decker, & Kaufman, 2006). In addition to teacher's ability to coach the students, students create and transform their thoughts into clear views when given the task to write and explain instead of circling an answer (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). In the schools participating in research, there were no alterations to the science curriculum besides relinquishing time to reading, writing, and mathematics, and over 80% of the schools experienced an increase in achievement in science scores from 1997 to 1998 (Reeves, 2003, p. 5). The Pearson "correlation between writing improvement and science improvement is striking: -.74," however it is imperative to acknowledge that the interaction between variables does not provide a sole explanation (Reeves, 2003, p. 5).

Incorporating a collective effort on grading students' assessments provides teachers with tools for consistency with feedback relating to the specific skills being evaluated with the best practice of implementing common assessments (Reeves, 2003, p. 3-6; Marzano, 2006). By utilizing an exchange of papers for student feedback, teachers can lessen the inconsistencies when grading. Reeves (2003) discusses the main inconsistencies are teachers implementing principles that are

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independent from the essential skills for the assessment and possible ambiguous specifications on the rubric (p.6).

When other educators discover research involving a dramatic increase in student achievement, they immediately look for the quick-fix that laid the foundation for the turn around. However, the 90/90/90 Schools did not write a prescription or buy a program that headed the improvements in their educational environments. In the aforementioned paragraphs, there were consistencies uncovered within the realms of the schools' cultures, leaderships, and instruction, but it is essential to note the districts did not fund this increase in student achievement; the leadership, staff, and students harnessed the achievement from the daily work (Scarborough, 1977; Vtgotsky, 1978; Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006; NEFC, 2007). Through continuous assessment of students' scholastic and emotional needs, these districts provided significant growth in student success (Clarke, 1977; Morphis, 1977; Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Reeves, 2003).

In the last century, the assumption was published that a student from a low socioeconomic area who is also a minority will not score as successfully on their achievement (Murray & Herrnstein, 1994; Haycock, 1998; Haycock, 2001). Creating this assumption hinders future minority students from a low socioeconomic area with their future endeavors. Teachers are already doubting their abilities before even meeting the students (Reeves, 2003). When a coach doubts the ability of his team, especially before assessing their strengths and weaknesses, the team does not stand a chance to reach their highest potential (Vtgotsky, 1978; Marzano, 2006). Noddings

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(1984) stresses the importance of "caring for" students, and in order for them to genuinely receive this care- especially if it is in place of a parental care, the students must feel it is honest; if this care is already tainted with doubt, it will not be positive nor will it adhere to their needs (Scarborough, 1977; Vtgotsky, 1978; Greensberg et al, 2005; NEFC, 2007). The ugly assumption of *The Bell Curve* cannot be present in 90/90/90 Schools (Murray & Herrnstein, 1994; Reeves, 2003).

The uniformity of 90/90/90 Schools was explained by Reeves (2003) in reports from the Milwaukee Public Schools stating methodologies are: constant, "replicable," unwavering, rooted in writing, teamwork, and "performance assessment," and clearly targeted on student learning (Reeves, 2003), p.7-8). Despite the research and statistics, there have been critics of the 90/90/90 Schools and their success from the uniformity of the districts; however, there are unbiased perspectives published on the success of these schools. Carter (1999) and Haycock (1998, 2001) may differ on ends of the political spectrum, but both credit the success of 90/90/90 Schools to be on "effective teaching and leadership," and the students' demographics do hold the key to determining district achievement.

Testing the Research

Simpson (2003) explained the true essence of 90/90/90 Schools is determined if it can reach success in a completely different urban school district. In Virginia, the Norfolk District is an urban district with different demographics than the researched 90/90/90 Schools: 67% of students were black, 28% of students were white, and at

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least 65% of students "qualif[ied] for free and reduced...lunches" (Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003). Simpson (2003) explained the districts improvements:

- 100 percent...met the state benchmarks in writing...
- 100 percent of...high schools met the state benchmarks in chemistry
- 100 percent of...middle schools are fully accredited in earth science
- 100 percent of...middle and high schools showed positive trends in reading, literature and research (p. 43-44).

Along with the state achievement scores, the efficient methodologies of the staff attributed to there being two 90/90/90 Schools within the district, the gap was progressively closing between white students and black students, behavioral corrections lowered along with expulsion hearings and suspensions (Simpson, 2003). The Norfolk Public School District credits the increase in their schools to specific elements which do reflect the common best practices in 90/90/90 Schools: collaboration, feedback, time, action research, "teacher preparation and alignment," data analysis, common assessments, the family unit of the district including every adult, and cross-curriculum (Scarborough, 1977; Vtgotsky, 1978; Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Greensberg et al., 2005; Skibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006; Marzano, 2006).

Collaboration has been introduced to schools; but, in Norfolk they went beyond the common practice of meeting once a week and recording notes to planning their lessons through continuous and consistent collaboration with students' teachers. Reeves (2003) explains that the principals involved themselves in the collaborative process, because their faculty meetings and professional development hours were dedicated to staff members working together to plan with fidelity with the principals; any important information the staff needed from the leadership team was done so

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through emails (Greensberg et al., 2005; Skibbe, Decker, & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006; Marzano, 2006; Wanless, 2012). Additionally, principals did not lead these collaborative efforts, they sat and worked with the teachers; teachers rotated in expediting the meetings (Reeves, 2003). Utilizing the teamwork, the teams discussed and decided the criteria for mastery and collectively graded student work which was shown in the original 90/90/90 Schools (Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003; Wanless, 2012).

Also explained in the 90/90/90 research was the critical task of progress monitoring student achievement with feedback (Greensberg et al, 2005; Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). This feedback was not periodic or just at the end of quarters; teachers provided weekly observations to students displaying weaknesses which was parallel with Marzano, Pickering, & Bailey (2001). Marzano (2006) and Foerstarling & Morgenstern (2002) analyzed the essence of prompt, authentic, and precise feedback correlating with increasing student success (Marzano, 2006).

Additionally, the Norfolk Public School District attributed their improvements to scheduling (Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003). Leaders recognized the effect literacy and mathematics have on all subjects; the district allotted two hours of reading and one hour of writing, and an increase of mathematics in the daily schedule even though science and social studies were tested areas for the state (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). Noting the importance of these subjects and their immediate influence on achievement in other areas assisted students' success (Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003).

Increasing teacher accountability by releasing the reigns to the staff enabled them to alter their plans for improvement as deemed necessary (Reeves, 2003).

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Teachers committed themselves to action research through genuine reflection and assessment while collaborating with team members (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). A specific example of this is when high school educators discovered elementary teachers reported powerful gains with word walls; the high school teachers learned and mirrored this practice in their own classrooms (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006). In addition to instructional practices, teachers collaborated and shared "writing rubrics," cross-curricular projects, and "motivational practices" (Reeves, 2003, p. 11).

The fifth decision was to maneuver instructors into an area they were deemed to be more effective for student achievement (Marzano, 2003; Reeves, 2003; Greensberg et al., 2005; Marzano, 2006). Educational expectations are constantly changing and becoming increasingly more demanding with students' expectations; therefore, some educators in a specific subject may be more effective elsewhere (Reeves, 2003). Rather than ridding the district of their staff, the Norfolk leaders coordinated staff members in their specific skillset and experience; this decision salvaged the professional careers of educators and increased student success (Reeves, 2003; Marzano, 2006).

Educational jargon has well-adapted data analysis as a permanent fixture in assessing student needs; Norfolk Public Schools also credits their student achievement to data analysis (Reeves, 2003). Implementing a consistent use of student data enables instructors to truly adhere to the differentiated needs of students, and through steady monitoring and effective strategies students' success dramatically increased in the district (Reeves, 2003). Although, Norfolk recognizes the

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importance of assessing students, the district acknowledges that students are "over-tested" (Reeves, 2003; NEFC, 2007).

Harnessing the benefits of common assessments assists instructors in heeding to the individual scholastic needs of students without teaching on their independent or frustration levels. Previously discussed were state tests which do not provide useful and efficient feedback to students, teachers, or parents; the feedback is six to eight months later. Immediate and effective feedback from common assessments equips students to improve in skills which they display weaknesses, and students view these assessments as more valuable than state-mandated tests (Reeves, 2003).

The final component Norfolk recognized as essential to school improvement was the essence of every adult's interaction with the students (Reeves, 2003). Due to the economic situation surrounding these schools, students' interactions with individuals serving breakfast and driving the buses assisted in the effective school culture. Reeves (2001) explains how "[h]olistic accountability" notices the impact every adult who cares for students has on their successful days, not just the instructors (Noddings, 1984; Reeves, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003).

The research discussed in this section explains the instrumental role team members in a school district play in student success. Although demographics and parental involvement are favorable variables for student achievement, they are not essential to student achievement in the scholastic setting. The following charts are from the Milwaukee Schools Accountability Report (1999) showing the dramatic improvement of 90/90/90 Schools and schools following the 90/90/90 research that improved:

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Table 1

90/90/90 Schools

Schools	1998-1999 Percent eligible for free and reduced lunch	1998-1999 Percent minority	1998-1999 Percent scoring at/above basic
Kilbourn	92	92	100
Garden Homes	91	100	100
King Jr.	96	100	98
Westside Academy	95	100	96
Thirty-Seventh Street	98	100	94
Kagel	93	95	93
Thirty-Fifth Street	93	99	93
Pierce	96	96	92
Vieau	91	97	92
Clarke Street	98	100	91
Auer Avenue	94	100	90
Kluge	93	95	90
Urban Waldorf	93	98	90

Table 2

Schools approaching/close to 90/90/90

Schools	1998-1999 Percent eligible for free and reduced lunch	1998-1999 Percent minority	1998-1999 Percent scoring at/above basic
Keefe Avenue	93	100	82
Green Bay Avenue	93	100	84
Phillis Wheatley	97	100	81
Lee	98	100	85
Twenty First Street	93	98	78
Lincoln Avenue	91	71	96
Lloyd Street	81	95	89
Hawley	67	77	98
Clemens	82	99	86
Hopkins	97	99	87
Brown	89	97	90
Siefert	97	99	82
McNair	88	100	95

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The following definitions were taken from the Milwaukee Public Schools
Accountability

Report (1999):

Proficient-Competent in the content area. Academic achievement includes mastery of the important knowledge and skills. Test score shows evidence of skills necessary for progress in the academic content area tested.

Basic- Academic achievement includes mastery of most of the important knowledge and skills. Test score shows evidence of at least one major flaw in understanding the academic content area tested (p. 8).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Middle School students perceive they are viewed differently by various educators. The current investigation is a survey research study which asks students questions about how they perceive their intelligence in relation to feeling engaged in the classroom, to identify how a student perceives their scholastic environment, to explore if a student's parents' education relates to their scholastic perception, and to explore if a student's economic background relates to their scholastic perception.

Additionally, this investigation will explore student motivation. Specifically, research suggests a connection between engagement and intrinsic motivation of students in the scholastic setting. Moreover, there is included intrinsic motivation into the quantitative survey for the participants. Implementing a quantitative design will gauge the statistical significance, if any, of students' perception and their intrinsic motivation through engagement in the scholastic environment. The two sets of questions in the survey were based on the aforementioned research.

Research Questions

This research will discuss the following questions:

1. How do students perceive their intelligence relation to feeling cared for in the classroom?
2. How do students perceive their scholastic environment in relation to their intrinsic motivation?
3. Is students reported level of feeling cared for or intrinsic motivation moderated by their economic status?

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Research Design

The research conducted was quantitative. By granting each variable in the survey a numerical value, IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) was implemented. SPSS provided p-values to determine if there was a correlating relationship between the variables. IBM (International Business Machines) explains this statistical analysis provides the opportunity to make "data-driven decisions" which enable school districts to adhere to components of students' SEL that are lacking in the scholastic environment.

Harnessing the numeric benefactors of quantitative research permitted the evaluation of the possible relationships using just the data. There was not qualitative data to intrude on the validity of the actual numbers and possible correlating relationships. The data was collected through a survey given to middle school students, grades six through eight, in Austintown Middle School. The survey asked questions to the students about their perception of educators in the building caring for them (Noddings, 1984), about their perception of their school environment, about their parent(s)' education, about their socioeconomic status and intrinsic motivation.

Quantitative Research Variables

The outcome variables are the students' perceptions of themselves, their environments at home and school, and the students' intrinsic motivation. The survey also asked questions to the students that included age, socioeconomics, race, gender, and parents' level of education. According to Creswell (1994), the reason justifying utilizing quantitative research is a possible paradigm between variables which was the purpose of the survey.

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Context and Participants

Setting

The setting for the current investigation was Austintown Middle School. Austintown Middle School is a home to grades six through eight in a Category 7, urban school district (Typology of Ohio School Districts). In 2013, the typology requirements changed, and the Category 7, urban school districts are classified with the following contextual factors: enrollment of 4,608, median income of \$26,283, poverty of 64%, and 45% minority (Typology of Ohio School Districts). According to the District Summary in EMIS (Educational Management Information System) are 4,630 active students in Austintown Local Schools; 2,290 students are female (48%) and 2,340 students are male (52%). 2,290 students are on free/reduced lunches (49%).

From kindergarten through twelfth grade is the option of Falcon Online School. There are two versions of the online school: H.O.P.E. Academy and Falcon Pride Online. According to the Austintown Local Schools website, H.O.P.E. Academy is "designed to address the needs of middle and high school students... that [are] at risk of educational failure." Falcon Pride Online is a "web-based learning option" for students with a prominent role from their parent(s)/ guardian(s) (Austintown Local Schools, 2018). Online teachers did not distribute the survey to their students via Brightspace.

Participants: Students

According to the District Summary in EMIS (Educational Management Information System), there are 1,103 active students in Austintown Middle School; 569 students are female (52%) and 534 students are male (48%). In Austintown

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Middle School, there are 0.7% Asian students (5 male and 3 female), 12.7% Black or African American/ Non-Hispanic students (72 male and 68 female), 3.7% Hispanic/ Latino (26 male and 15 female), 0.4% American Indian or Alaskan Native students (2 male and 2 female), 5.5% Multiracial students (33 male and 28 female), 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (1 male and 1 female), and 77% White, Non-Hispanic students (395 male and 452 female).

There are 139 (12.6%) special education students identified in Austintown Middle School without including students assigned to the building through the Mahoning County. There are 13 students assigned to the building through the county whom are not included in the aforementioned numbers and will not be included in my research.

Behavior Referrals

Over the 2017-2018 school year, discipline data has been recorded and gathered for analysis; this includes only office referrals and referrals to the Dean of Students. This information is provided in Table 3.

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Table 3

2017-2018 AMS Discipline Data

	Aug./Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Out-of School Suspension	12	12	21	9	7	15
School Suspension	10	23	23	18	22	19
School Contract	22	45	57	59	66	87
Detention	24	42	49	36	53	36
Reprimand	54	32	22	18	37	11
Emergency Removal	0	1	0	0	0	0
Behavior Intervention	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bus Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expulsion	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	122	156	172	140	185	168
ODR	0.37%	0.65%	0.81%	0.83%	0.94%	0.87%

The ODR (Office Discipline Referrals) rate is calculated by the number of referrals per month divided by the number of students in AMS, and then divide that by the number of school days per month and multiply by one hundred.

The purpose of this data collection is for the PBIS Committee to meet and discuss possible interventions through the PBIS framework to meet the social-emotional needs of students. This step is intended for next school year (Tier II).

Staff

For the 2017-2018 school year, there are 146 staff members at Austintown Middle School. There are fifty-seven teachers (39%) within the inclusion core classrooms: twelve mathematics teachers, twelve language arts teachers, twelve social studies teachers, twelve science teachers, and nine intervention specialists. Twenty-two teachers (15%) are exploratory teachers and teachers working in a self-contained

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environment. There is one Dean of Students for the Austintown Middle School students, three guidance counselors (one per grade level), and three principals (one per grade level). Of the staff members considered to be full-time employees of Austintown Middle School, 10% have a bachelor's degree, 10% have a bachelor's plus fifteen hours, 25% have a master's degree, 9% have a master's plus fifteen hours, 46% have a master's plus thirty hours, and 0% have a doctorate degree.

Six academic coaches (4%) work in Austintown Middle School and travel to other district buildings along with one Dean of Students for the online students (Falcon PRIDE and HOPE) and a District Nurse. Austintown Middle School employs two school psychologists, a speech pathologist, a physical therapist, and an occupational therapist. Six teachers (4%) are part-time tutors. Forty full-time staff members (27%) are secretaries, paraprofessionals, janitorial and kitchen staff, a grounds supervisor, and technicians. There is one full-time School Resource Officer, a second SRO always working and a Medical Assistant (school nurse).

Social-Emotional Learning Culture

In Austintown Middle School, there is a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Committee made of six staff members including a guidance counselor, and three grade-level principals. Three of these members have completed Tier I and Tier II of PBIS professional development, there have been four committee members and four additional staff members who completed Tier I, and one member has completed Tier II professional development. This committee holds monthly meetings completing components of Tier I including, but not limited to: student input,

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well-communicated student expectations, staff surveys, and data analysis. The goal is to have Tier I complete by the end of this year.

WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) is a transitional strategy implemented as a peer-mentoring program between eighth graders and sixth graders. Eighth grade students who developed an interest for the program and met explicit requirements are paired with sixth grade students to guide them through their progression into Austintown Middle School. In the days leading up to the sixth graders first academic days in AMS, there are three orientation days to acclimate the sixth graders with their peers and WEB leaders (eighth graders). Throughout the school year, there are monthly meetings where the leaders head activities with their respective sixth grade students.

In addition to WEB, the school guidance counselors pilot a small group intervention divided by gender for girls and boys in each grade level needing additional guidance. These weekly meetings occur during exploratory classes and are meant to fulfill the diverse social-emotional needs of the involved students. Although this supports the social-emotional culture at AMS, the students are strictly chosen by teacher, principal, and/or guidance counselor referrals. The PBIS data is not driving the needs of the intervention groups.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of a combination of questions rooted in the Care Theory from school climate surveys (Noddings, 1984; Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al, 1992; Stove, Iglesia, Rial, & Liporace, 2012), and demographic information. The seven demographic questions

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asked the students' grade, gender, race, their scholastic grades in language arts, mathematics, and overall, and whether or not their family received free/ reduced lunch.

Regarding the questions relating to The Care Theory (Noddings, 1984), these were taken from climate surveys provided by PBIS. PBIS framework as social-emotional learning is explained in the literature review. The following twenty-one questions are categorized into students feeling Care (eight questions) and their perception of their Academic Experience (thirteen questions). Care questions were given the options on a Likert Scale of 0-5: 0=does not apply, 1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=somewhat, 4=a lot, and 5=very much. School Experience questions were given the options on a Likert Scale of 0-5: 0=does not apply, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither disagree or agree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. There were also three questions on bullying which were answered yes or no and never, a couple times a year, often, weekly, and every day (the latter question options were on a Likert scale 0-4: 0=never, 1=a couple times a year, 2=often, 3=weekly, 4=every day).

Sixteen items were included from the Academic Motivation Scale. Twelve questions were removed that discussed extrinsic motivation (Vallerand et al, 1992). The AMS questions were added in order to understand students' fuel for intrinsic motivation built from the fundamental foundation from adhering to their social-emotional needs (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984).

The AMS includes a total of twenty-eight questions which cover seven sub-categories of motivation. Four of the original seven subtopics were utilized in this survey: intrinsic motivation towards stimulating experiences, intrinsic motivation

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towards accomplishment, intrinsic motivation towards knowledge, and amotivation (Vallerand et al, 1992; Stover et al, 2012). Each subscale consisted of four questions; the sixteen items were proposed by Vallerand et al (1992) and "showed adequate internal consistency" in repeated examinations across various cultures (Stover et al, p. 2, 2012). The options to answer these questions were a Likert Scale to make the options equidistant (0-4) of why the student attends their scholastic setting. The options are: 0=does not correspond, 1=corresponds a little, 2=corresponds moderately, 3=corresponds a lot, 4=corresponds exactly. The Likert Scale options were slightly altered from Vallerand et al (1992) to limit confusion for middle school students.

Procedures: Data Collection and Management

Austintown Middle School administration distributed this survey for data analysis for the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Committee. The superintendent provided his permission with a letter of support to analyze this data for this specific research. In addition to other requirements, this letter was submitted to the IRB for approval. The survey consisted of a total of 44 questions, and it was distributed as a hyperlink to the middle school students. Distribution was consistent through homeroom teachers; all language arts teachers were asked to communicate the survey link to their classes. Teachers were given four school days to have all students complete the anonymous survey through Survey Monkey.

Analysis Plan

The data analysis plan for this investigation included the following steps. Initially, all demographic information was aggregated and reported. This provided the

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reader with a snapshot of the participating students. Secondly, reliability estimates, and Person's zero-order correlations was conducted in an effort to assess the quality of the responses. Regression analyses was used to address each research question separately. Item responses were turned into factors for the purpose of analysis.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the possible relationship between students' perception of their own intelligence in relation to feeling cared for in the scholastic environment, the possible relationship between the students' perception of their scholastic environment in relation to their intrinsic motivation, and the possible relationship between students' perception of feeling cared for or intrinsic motivation in relation to their economic status. In an attempt to explore these possible relationships, students answered an optional forty-four question survey. Seven questions were demographic questions, twenty-one questions were used from PBIS climate surveys to determine students' perception of Care and Academic Experience (Noddings, 1984; Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), and sixteen questions were used from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al, 1992).

The Care and Academic Experience questions were scored on a Likert scale except for a bullying question that was answered with yes or no. The questions utilized from the AMS survey were:

- Intrinsic Motivation to know (IMK);
- Intrinsic Motivation towards accomplishment (IMA);
- Intrinsic Motivation to experience stimulations (IMS);

There were four other subcategories of questions not implemented for this study from the AMS survey:

- Extrinsic Motivation –Identification regulation (EMIDR);

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- Extrinsic Motivation –Introjected regulation (EMINTR);
- Extrinsic Motivation –External Regulation (EMER); and
- Amotivation.

Description of the Sample

The survey was initially distributed via the school principal as data analysis for Austintown Middle School’s Positive Behavioral Implements & Supports Committee. Although the survey was used for continuous school improvement, the students were given the option of completing the survey. According to the District Summary in EMIS (Educational Management Information System), there are 1,103 students in Austintown Middle School; there were 725 collected responses (response rate of 65.7%), and the superintendent allowed these to be included in this research.

The following section will summarize the responses from the survey compiled of Demographic, Care, Academic Experience, and Academic Motivation Scale questions. Following the descriptive statistics, preliminary analyses are described. The preliminary analyses are followed by addressing each research question with an analysis of responses.

Descriptive Statistics

The surveys distributed to all students contained questions asking their respective grade levels, gender, race, grade point average, free/ reduced lunches, perceived intelligence in relation to their peers, if they have ever been bullied, how often they see another student bullied if ever, and perception on school safety in their school. The data for these questions is provided below.

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Table 1.

Grade Level of Participants

Grade	Frequency	Percent
6	209	28.80
7	228	31.40
8	283	39.00

Seventh grade participation mirrors the actual percentage enrolled in Austintown Middle School for the 2017-2018 school year. Approximately 32.8% of students enrolled in AMS are seventh grade students, and 31.4% of the completed surveys are from seventh grade students (EMIS). Likewise, 33.6% of students at AMS are sixth grade students, and 28.8% of surveys completed are from sixth grade students (EMIS). Additionally, 33.5% of students enrolled at AMS are eighth grade students, and 39% of the completed surveys are by eighth grade students (EMIS).

Table 2.

Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
MALE	311	42.90
FEMALE	372	51.30
TRANSGENDER	6	0.80
NONCONFORMING	10	1.40
PREFER NO ANSWER	26	3.60

These numbers reflect the trend of the total male and female students enrolled in Austintown Middle School. Female students are 51.3% of students who responded to the survey, and 52% of the students identify as female in Austintown Middle School per their enrollment (EMIS); male students are 42.9% of students who

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responded to the survey, and 48% of the students are identified as male per their enrollment (EMIS). It is important to note students are not given the options of Transgender, Gender Nonconforming, or Prefer Not to Answer when enrolling in Austintown Local Schools.

Table 3.

Race of Participants

Race	Frequency	Percent
WHITE	520	71.70
AFRICAN AMERICAN	100	13.80
ASIAN	12	1.70
HISPANIC	35	4.80
AMERICAN INDIAN	11	1.50
MULTIRACIAL	45	6.20
NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	2	0.30

The demographics of those individuals who responded to the survey follow the trend of all students enrolled at Austintown Middle School. Approximately 71.7% of students who responded identify as White, and 77% of students enrolled in AMS identify as White (EMIS). 5.3% less white students participated in the survey as a whole. A total of 13.8% of students who responded to the survey identify as African American, and 13% of students enrolled in AMS identify as Black or African American/ Non-Hispanic (EMIS). Additionally 6.2% of students who responded to the survey identify as Multiracial, and 6% of students enrolled in AMS identify as Multiracial (EMIS). Approximately 4.8% of students who responded to the survey identify as Hispanic, and 4% of students enrolled in AMS identify as Hispanic/ Latino (EMIS). Likewise, 1.7% of students who responded to the survey identify as Asian, and 0.7% of students enrolled in AMS identified as Asian (EMIS). A total of 1.5% of

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students who responded to the survey identify as American Indian, and 0.4% of students enrolled in AMS identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native (EMIS).

Lastly, 0.3% of students who responded to the survey identify as Native American or Other Pacific Islander, and 0.2% of students enrolled in AMS identify as Native American or Other Pacific Islander (EMIS).

Table 4.

Average Grade in Language Arts this Year of Participants

ELA GPA	Frequency	Percent
90	339	46.80
80	237	32.70
70	107	14.80
60	33	4.60
50 OR BELOW	8	1.10

Almost half of the students who responded to the survey acknowledged earning an average of an “A” in the 2017-2018 year in language arts. The combined number of students recognizing their average grade of a “B” or “C” was close to the same number of students with an average of an “A” for the 2017-2018 school year. Only 5.7% of students who responded to the survey chose an average of a “D” or “F” for the school year.

Table 5.

Average Grade in Mathematics this Year of Participants

MATH GPA	Frequency	Percent
90	253	34.90
80	229	31.60
70	122	16.80
60	79	10.90
50 OR BELOW	39	5.40

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There was a 12% deficit between survey responders having an “A” in language arts and an “A” in mathematics for the 2017-2018 school year. The combined percent of students acknowledging a “B” and “C” average grade in mathematics reflected almost the same percent of students with this average in language arts, 48.4% in mathematics and 47.5% in language arts, respectively. Over three times the amount of students recognized a “D” or “F” as their average grade in mathematics in relation to the language arts percent of students. Therefore, students openly perceive their language arts ability to be scholastically higher than their mathematics ability. The released 2017-2018 AIR Test scores that were released to the AMS staff show a similar trend in proficiency to students’ perception of their grade. After removing the 8th grade Honors Algebra students, the average proficiency score was 15% higher in language arts than in mathematics.

Table 6.

Overall GPA of Participants

GPA Overall	Frequency	Percent
90	309	42.60
80	272	37.50
70	114	15.70
60	24	3.30
50 OR BELOW	5	0.70

Approximately 42.6% of the 725 completed surveys display an overall grade point average of a 90% or higher which is the highest percentage of students per letter grade. The second largest group of students is 37.5% of students with an 80%-89% reported overall grade point average. A total of 15.7% of students who responded to the survey have an overall grade point average of 70%-79%. 3.3% of students who

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completed the survey have an overall grade point average of 60%-69%, and 5% of completed surveys report an overall grade point average of 50% or lower.

Table 7.

Family of Participants Receiving Free/ Reduced Lunch

Free/Reduced Lunch	Frequency	Percent
YES	299	41.20
NO	422	58.20

According to EMIS, there are 48% of students receiving free/ reduced lunch at Austintown Middle School; 41.2% of students who responded to the survey receive free/ reduced lunch.

Table 8.

Participants' Perception of Intelligence

Relative Intelligence	Frequency	Percent
LESS INTELLIGENT	56	7.70
THE SAME LEVEL	242	33.40
MORE INTELLIGENT	226	31.20
I DONT KNOW	198	27.30

The two highest groups of reported perception of intelligence are students who feel they are equally as intelligent as their peers and students who think they are more intelligent than their peers, 33.4% and 31.2% respectively. Approximately 27.3% of students reported not knowing how to perceive their intelligence in comparison to their peers. The smallest group was students who perceive themselves to be less intelligent than their peers, 7.7%. These numbers communicate most students at AMS do not feel less intelligent or do not know how they gauge with their peers' intelligence.

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Table 9.

Participants that Experienced Bullying this Year

Have you been bullied?	Frequency	Percent
YES	194	26.80
NO	527	72.70
Total	721	99.40

Four students chose not to answer if they experienced bullying in the 2017-2018 school year at Austintown Middle School. The collected surveys report that over 72.7% of students have not experienced bullying this academic year, and 26.8% of students who completed the survey did experience bullying in their academic environment this year.

Table 10.

Participants who Witness Bullying Weekly this Year

Have often seen bullying?	Frequency	Percent
EVERYDAY	62	8.60
WEEKLY	52	7.20
OFTEN	121	16.70
A COUPLE TIMES A YEAR	260	35.90
NEVER	224	30.90

The students who witness bullying is 69.1% which is similar to the amount of students who did not experience bullying during the 2017-2018 school year, 72.2%, at Austintown Middle School. This means 30.9% of students never witnessed any bullying at Austintown Middle School during the 2017-2018 school year. This percentage is close to the amount of students who experienced bullying at Austintown Middle School during the 2017-2018 school year. Within the 69.1% of students who have witnessed bullying 8.6% witness bullying daily, 7.2% witness bullying weekly, 16.7% witness bullying often, and 35.9% of students, the largest group, witness

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bullying a few times a year. These collected surveys report bullying to not happen consistently to a large group of students.

Table 11.

Participants' Feeling of Safety at School

Feel Safe At School	Frequency	Percent
YES	587	81.00
NO	133	18.30

Most students who completed the survey feel safe in their academic environment at AMS, 81%. Hence, 18.3% of students who completed the survey reported not feeling safe at Austintown Middle School.

Research Question #1

The first research question asks, *how do students perceive their intelligence in relation to feeling cared for in the classroom?*

In order to answer this research question, the items asking how much they felt cared for by their principal (Survey Question #9), teachers (Survey Question #10), classmates (Survey Question #12), and friends (Survey Question #13) were examined in SPSS. The distribution of the student responses to these four items are provided in Table 12.

Table 12.

Distribution of Cared For Questions

	VERY MUCH	A LOT	SOMEWHAT	A LITTLE	NOT AT ALL	DOES NOT APPLY
Principal (9)	17.20	19.90	33.20	11.40	8.60	9.20
Teachers (10)	28.70	33.40	24.10	6.90	3.70	2.60
Classmates (12)	11.20	23.90	38.20	16.30	7.90	2.20
Friends (13)	45.40	36.30	12.70	3.60	0.80	1.00

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After recoding the response to these items so that a higher value indicates a greater feeling of being cared for, the responses to all four items were summed to create a “Feel Cared For” score (FCF). The average score for feeling cared for was 13.97 ($sd = 3.41$). The skewness and kurtosis were within acceptable limits (-.64 and .27, respectively, Field, 2009).

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was considered the most appropriate analysis to address this research question. The Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variances indicates that homogeneity is tenable across the different levels of reported intelligence, $F(2, 521) = 2.21, p = .110$. The result of the ANOVA indicates that the amount of feeling cared for differs across the level of intelligence reported, $F(2, 521) = 14.86, p < .001$. Scheffe Post Hoc Analysis indicates that the significant differences exist between the Less Intelligence responders relative to the Same and More Intelligent responders, $p < .001$.

Research Question #2

The second research question asks, *how do students perceive scholastic environment in relation to their intrinsic motivation?*

In order to answer this question, the items asking students about their perception of their scholastic environment were examined in SPSS, and the specific items are provided with their distribution percentages in Table 13. These questions were measured on a Likert Scale, and the measures on Table 13 are as follows: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N=Neither Agree nor Disagree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree.

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Table 13.

Participants Responses to Feeling Cared For in School

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
You are happy to be at school.	10.50	27.90	35.00	9.50	14.20
The teachers at your school treat students fairly.	17.40	34.80	26.10	12.80	7.70
You feel safe at your school.	23.20	46.80	21.10	4.30	3.70
I am treated with as much respect as other students in my class.	23.20	39.70	22.30	7.70	5.20
There are teachers and other adults in my school I can talk to if I have a problem.	28.40	37.50	16.40	7.90	6.90
Most teachers in my school are interested in me.	8.70	33.40	37.70	12.10	4.40
People in this school are friendly to me.	15.60	42.20	28.10	8.10	4.30
My teachers are happy to be at school.	16.40	37.80	32.00	5.90	4.30
You have trouble getting along with your teachers.	2.80	7.90	18.30	30.20	36.70

Cronbach’s alpha results indicate a good level ($\alpha = .840$) of reliability in the responses to the 9 items in the table above.

The items asking students about their intrinsic motivation were also examined in SPSS, and the specific items are provided with their distribution percentages in Table 14. These questions were taken from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) and there are three groups of questions measuring intrinsic motivation towards stimulating experiences (Items 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15), intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment (Items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16), and intrinsic motivation towards knowledge (Items 2, 5, 8, 11, and 14) (Vallerand et al, 1992; Stover et al, 2012).

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Table 14.

Participants Intrinsic Motivation Responses

Item #	Item	A LITTLE	MODER-ATLY	A LOT	EXACTLY
1	I go to school because I need at least a high-school degree to find a high-paying job later on.	7.30	18.9	31.6	36.4
2	I go to school because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	15.70	32.1	23.3	15.6
3	I go to school because I think that a high-school education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	5.40	13.7	29.8	48
4	I go to school to prove to myself that I am capable of completing my high-school degree.	9.00	20	26.9	37.2
5	I go to school in order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.	4.80	16.6	32.3	41.9
6	I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.	16.40	27.6	26.2	18.2
7	I go to school because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.	7.30	18.6	29	38.2
8	I go to school because of the fact that when I succeed in school I feel important.	12.00	23.9	26.8	25.1
9	I go to school because I want to have "the good life" later on.	5.90	15.3	27.4	47.2
10	I go to school for the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.	11.40	30.9	28.6	20
11	I go to school because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.	7.30	19.4	30.8	37.1
12	I go to school to show myself that I am an intelligent person.	12.80	24.4	26.8	22.9
13	I go to school in order to have a better salary later on.	6.90	19.2	26.6	40.3
14	I go to school because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.	10.50	29.2	25.2	26.3
15	I go to school because I believe that my high school education will improve my competence as a worker.	8.70	23.6	29.7	32.4
16	I go to school because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.	8.40	23.4	25.4	33.8

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Reliability estimates for each of the factors of the intrinsic motivation were computed using Cronbach's alpha. These results are provided in Table 14.

Table 15.

Reliability Estimates of Intrinsic Motivation Factors

Factor	Items	α
IMA	6	0.812
IMK	5	0.825
IME	5	0.812

Cronbach's alpha results indicate good levels of reliability in the responses to the 16 items that made up these three factors.

A Pearson's Zero-Ordered correlation was conducted to examine the relationships between the perceived environment and the intrinsic motivation factors and the intrinsic motivation score. These results are presented in Table 16.

Table 16.

Pearson's Correlation of Research Question #2 Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
PERCEIVED_ENVIRONMENT (1)	1	-.431**	-.475**	-.448**	-.474**
IM_ACCOMPLISH (2)		1	.845**	.868**	.954**
IM_KNOW (3)			1	.867**	.947**
IM_EXPERIENCE (4)				1	.954**
IM_SCORE (5)					1

Note: ** indicates $p < .001$

As indicated above, the intrinsic motivation factors are singular with the intrinsic motivation score, as all are correlated at approximately $r = .95$ (Field, 2005). Therefore a simple linear regression was used to assess the relationship between perceived environment and intrinsic motivation holistically.

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A Curve Fit analysis was conducted to verify the linear relationship between the perceived environment (independent variable) and the intrinsic motivation score (dependent variable). The curve estimation indicated that a linear relationship exists, $p < .001$. The linear regression indicates that 23% of the intrinsic motivation score is explained by the students perceived environment score. This model was found to be statistically significant, $F(1, 718) = 218.49, p < .001$, indicated that how a student perceives the school environment may impact their intrinsic motivation.

Research Question #3

The second research question asks, *is students reported level of feeling cared for or intrinsic motivation moderated by their economic status?*

The items asking students about their intrinsic motivation created their holistic “Feeling Cared For” score as discussed in Research Question #1. This score along with the student responses (*yes or no*) for the socioeconomic question, *Do you or do any member in your family receive a free and reduced lunch?* (Survey Question #7) were examined to answer Research Question #3.

A Pearson’s Zero-Ordered correlation was conducted to examine the relationships between the SES and the intrinsic motivation score and feeling care for score. These results are presented in Table 17.

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Table 17.

Pearson’s Correlation Between Socioeconomic Status and “FCF” Score and Motivation Score

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Free/Reduced Lunch	1	.097**	.081*
IM_SCORE	-	1	.338**
FEEL_CARED_FOR	-	-	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on these correlations, a general linear model (GLM) was used to address this research question. The Levene’s Test of Homogeneity of Variances indicated that homogeneity was tenable across the levels of free/reduced lunches (yes or no) as an indicator of SES, $F(1, 712) = .331, p=.565$. Results of the univariate GLM, in which the intrinsic motivation score was treated as the dependent variable, and the feeling cared for score (independent variable) and SES (potential moderator), indicates that SES is not a significant moderator of the students reported level of feeling cared for on their reported level of intrinsic motivation, $F(1, 711) = 3.66, p=.056$.

Summary

The results yielded in this chapter have been analyzed using an independent samples *t*-test, a multivariate analysis of covariance, and Pearson’s zero-order correlation. Participants’ voluntarily completed a survey on Survey Monkey for the purpose to drive progression of their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation in Austintown Middle School. The survey was compiled from climate surveys (PBIS) and the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). The voluntary participants were Austintown Middle School students in sixth through eighth grades.

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Surveys were administered in language arts classes and provided to for this research with the permission of the superintendent and cooperation of the administration.

The cornerstone of this study was urban middle school student's perception on care and its possible relationship with intrinsic motivation. All students did not participate in the voluntary survey, however, the percentage distribution of gender, race, and free/ reduced lunches follows is representative of the entire population of Austintown Middle School (EMIS, 2018).

The survey questions measuring students' feelings of care were taken from PBIS climate surveys (Noddings, 1984, PBIS). There were four survey questions used to create a "Feeling Cared For" score which averaged to be 13.97 from the participants of the survey. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) stipulates that students' perception of care has a positive correlation to their perception of their own intelligence. Scheffe Post Hoc Analysis indicates a statistical significance between the Less Intelligence responders and the Same and More Intelligent responders.

Students were asked 9 questions taken from climate surveys about their perception of their academic environment (PBIS) and 16 questions from the Academic Motivation Scale to measure intrinsic motivation in the participants. The AMS questions are subcategories of intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment, knowledge, and stimulating experiences; these 3 subcategories were used to create an intrinsic motivation score. Then a Curve Fit analysis was conducted to verify the linear relationship between the two variables: perceived scholastic environment (independent) and intrinsic motivation score (dependent variable). The regression

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indicates there is statistical significance between a student's perception of the environment and their reported intrinsic motivation.

Using Pearson's Zero-Ordered correlation and a general linear model (GLM), there was not a statistical significance reported between socioeconomic status and the students reported level of feeling cared for on their reported level of intrinsic motivation.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The current research evaluated the possible relationship between urban middle school students' perception on care and their intrinsic motivation. This study analyzed the voluntary survey results from students of an urban middle school in Ohio; the survey was initially given to collect data for the school's PBIS Committee to drive their future conversations. The survey contained demographic questions, care questions taken from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). This chapter will explicate the findings, evaluate the outcomes in relationship to existing fieldwork, and discuss implications of the study.

Discussion of Results

The first research question investigated urban middle school students' perception on their own intelligence in relation to their perception of feeling cared for in the classroom. On the survey, students completed questions taken from climate surveys asking if they felt care from their principal, teachers, classmates, and friends (PBIS). These questions were combined to create a "Feeling Cared For" score that was used to distinguish the relationship between students' perception of their intelligence and their perception of feeling cared for in the academic environment. Noddings (1984) explains the essence of a relationship between teacher-student as "one caring" and "cared for." Teachers cannot be insincere when establishing the relationship. Without fidelity, students will not accept the care from the "one caring" and respond with reciprocity to complete the relationship. The relationship based on

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reciprocity can improve student success in the classroom through engagement; therefore, students' perception of their own intelligence can positively correlate to the amount of care they perceive in the classroom (Noddings, 1984). The results of the current research suggest an analogous association. This voluntary survey displayed statistical significance with students perceiving a higher "Feeling Cared For" score and students perceiving themselves to have a similar or higher intelligence comparable to their peers.

The second research question investigated urban middle school students' perception of their classroom environment in relation to their intrinsic motivation in school. On the survey, students completed questions taken from climate surveys asking about how students feel in their academic environment (PBIS), and students completed questions from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) measuring their intrinsic motivation through three subcategories: towards accomplishment, to know, and to experience stimulations (Vallerand et al, 1992; Stover et al, 2012). The three subcategories were used to create an intrinsic motivation score. Research states a significant decrease in the strength of teacher-student relationships in the middle school years, sixth through eighth grades, which causes a decrease in students' intrinsic motivation. (Eccles et al., 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin, 1993; Davis, 2006). It is not significant for teachers to think they are caring for students; students must receive the care to flourish their relationship with teachers through reciprocity. This relationship revitalizes intrinsic motivation that fuels engagement in academics through adhering to students' psychological, emotional, social, and mental needs (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Eccles et al, 1993; Oldfather & McLaughlin,

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1993; Davis, 2006; Wentzel & Miele, 2016). The results of the current research suggest analogous associations. This voluntary survey displayed statistical significance within a positive correlation between how students perceive their academic environment and their intrinsic motivation.

The third research question investigated if students' level of feeling cared for or intrinsic motivation was moderated by their economic status. On the survey, students answered a demographic question about their family's socioeconomic status (SES). This question along with the "Feeling Cared For" score measured by the care questions from the first research question, and the intrinsic motivation score taken from the three subcategories from the AMS used in the second research question were used to distinguish if there was a correlation between a student's level of feeling cared for and their intrinsic motivation with the SES as the moderator. Previous research explains students coming from lower socioeconomic households are expected to not be as successful in school (Murray & Herrnstein, 1994; Haycock, 1998; Carter, 1999; Haycock, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2007). However, research in social-emotional learning differs in parallel with socioeconomic status and student academic scores; student engagement leading to intrinsic motivation is a stronger factor than SES (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Carter, 1999; Noddings, 2001; Reeves, 2003; Simpson, 2003; NEFC, 2007; Wanless, 2012; PBIS). The results of the current research suggest analogous associations with social-emotional research. While the data did not show any trends on the SES question, these results may be a context specific anomaly.

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Implications of Findings

An invariable goal of school districts is for continuous improvement of districts: state scores as well as students' social-emotional learning. The Ohio Revised Code 3319.46 states each district is to "establish a policy and standards for the implementation of positive behavior intervention supports" (Lawriter; PBIS). This is in compliance with revisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2014). 90/90/90 Schools explain through adhering to the social-emotional needs of students, test scores dramatically increased; therefore, this study can assist districts in implementing their policy with confidence and help administration assist teachers without hesitation (Reeves, 2003). To improve scores on a school's District Report Card it is essential to stay out of Priority, Focus, and Watch status (Ohio Department of Education). When schools are in these categories, they are not attractive possibilities for families; families may opt to take their student to another district via open enrollment or a family from a neighboring district will not want to enroll their student in the said district. This is critical for school funding because the more students enrolled in a district equals more money from the state. When enrollment is down, this also means community commitment may waver which may result in levies not passing; this is another way the state can step into a district and eliminate jobs. Therefore, the aforementioned PBIS policy on social-emotional learning benefits the students' heterogeneous students' psychological, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual needs; hence, it also helps districts stay in good standing with the state and their communities (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984; Gilligan, 1986; Davis; 2006; Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013; Wentzel & Miele,

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2016; Gomez, 2017). Creating the policy per district is not the most trying piece of social-emotional learning; it is implementing the policy with 100% administration and teacher commitment.

Continuing the path of SEL for district improvement is ongoing to the administration level per school. Effective leadership leading to an unwavering relationship between administration and teaching staff is critical for implementing SEL (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014). Implementing SEL into a school with fidelity is one of the determining factors of its success, and fidelity of implementation is an explicit effect of administration supporting the program (Ringwalt et al., 2003; Marshall & Caldwell, 2007). Administrators must be in compliance with the aforementioned ORC law, and in addition, successful SEL in a school will create a more conducive environment for learning. This study explained students who perceive a more positive school environment are more intrinsically motivated in the classroom which leads to more success in the classroom. Focusing on students SEL in the classroom increases test scores as a byproduct (Reeves, 2003). When individual schools have better test scores with more motivated students, it positively reflects on the school leadership team. Therefore, administration must have a positive relationship with the staff to gauge how to present PBIS training for the staff to engage them. Treating the staff with a PBIS framework is a means to communicate the classroom expectations nonverbally.

On a teacher level, SEL implementation has to be completed with fidelity and everyday throughout the day. Students have to accept the genuine feeling of being “cared-for” by their teachers and this will help their relationship flourish through

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reciprocity (Noddings, 1984; Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014). Setting aside a time of day for SEL/ PBIS will not create an environment of caring because students must feel the care throughout the day at all times; it cannot be once in while. Throughout interactions with the staff and with daily assignments, students have to feel accepted and cared for; they have to know it is allowed to not master a learning target at the same time as another student. The importance is improving their abilities in the classroom, not one grade. When adolescents' focal point is the process of learning and not their number grade, their mindset changes, and they acknowledge the acceptance of learning at different (Gehlbach & Roeser, 2002; Yeager, 2017). This study examined in a research question the mindset of students who perceive themselves to feel more care in the classroom environment; these students see themselves as more intelligent than students who perceive less care in the classroom setting. This self-confidence helps them engage in the classroom and not easily give up from frustration.

Limitations

Social-emotional learning has to be incorporated into school districts, legally (Lawriter), however, there were limited examples of 90/90/90 Schools to explain in this research (Reeves, 2003). This study only used one urban middle school's survey results to examine, and every student did not participate in the survey. Also, although the research provides numerous methods to implement within the PBIS and Responsive Classroom framework, there is not a step-by-step guideline that would create an effective cohesive SEL environment in all districts, schools, and classrooms (PBIS; Peterson, 2013; Wanless et al., 2014; Wanless, 2015).

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Recommendations

This study examined the relationship between students' perception on feeling care in the academic setting and their perception of their own intelligence. Showing students who feel a higher degree of care feel they are more intelligent, respectively, suggests further research. Students who have a relationship based on reciprocity with their teacher and/ or principal accept being the "cared-for" one and this could possibly link to their engagement in the classroom; hence, making them feel more intelligent through engagement and having a positive rapport with the staff (Scarborough, 1977; Noddings, 1984). Further investigation could find what these students and students in other urban middle schools determine care looks and feels like in the academic setting. Expanding on students' determining care can help school districts strengthen their relationships with students to increase their self-confidence in the classroom. Specifically, administration and central office can provide professional development to staff members in addition to SEL/ PBIS training.

In addition to training staff, researching the staff mentality about SEL/ PBIS implementation can assist districts in developing cohesive and effective leadership (Jones, Bailey, & Jacob, 2014). A school leader has to anticipate hesitation and resistance when implementing a new framework with the staff. By researching the reasons behind the resistance, the administrative staff can adhere to the needs of the staff in order to continue implementation with fidelity. It is easy to have expectations of the staff to adhere to students' needs, but the staff's needs should also be met; after all, the teacher's fidelity of implementation carries the most importance with SEL success (Wanless, 2012; Wanless et al., 2014).

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A third recommendation is researching the specifics of students' scholastic environment. This study showed a relationship between students' having a positive perception of their scholastic environment and their intrinsic motivation. Further research could specify the components holding the strongest value to create a positive environment for urban middle school students in this and other urban middle schools (Scarborough, 1977).

Concluding Statement

The importance of this study focuses on the evolution of students in the scholastic setting. Students' needs have not changed over the years, however, society has changed, and schools have to help students meet their social-emotional needs to be successful in academics and in daily life. Academic growth cannot be truly attained without social and emotional growth from the students. In order to be successful academically, students' SEL needs have to be genuinely cared for and nourished; this cannot be accomplished without the commitment and dedication of every member of the staff. Generically going through the steps of SEL framework via the Responsive Classroom or PBIS will not yield an effective environment conducive to these needs. I am guilty of this. Students in my 2017-2018 class became accustomed to daily Greetings (i.e. Morning Meetings). When testing time came, I neglected to continue with these; my students asked me what happened to them because they enjoyed them so much. There needs to be complete commitment from the staff from the top down. Without proper professional development and education, administrators and teachers cannot fully meet the needs of diverse middle school students.

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URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

Appendix A

Survey Instrument

1. What year are you?
 - 6
 - 7
 - 8
2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Transgender
 - Gender Non-Conforming
 - I prefer not to answer.
3. What is your race?
 - White
 - African American
 - Asian
 - Hispanic
 - American Indian
 - Multiracial
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
4. How would you describe your average grade in language arts this year?
 - 90's (A)
 - 80's (B)
 - 70's (C)
 - 60's (D)
 - 50's (F)
5. How would you describe your average grade in math this year?
 - 90's (A)
 - 80's (B)
 - 70's (C)
 - 60's (D)
 - 50's (F)
6. How would you describe your overall grade this year?
 - 90's (A)
 - 80's (B)
 - 70's (C)
 - 60's (D)
 - 50's (F)
7. Do you or any member of your family receive free and reduced lunch?
 - Yes
 - No
8. Compared with other people your age, how intelligent are you?
 - Less intelligent
 - The same

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- More intelligent
 - I do not know.
9. My grade-level principal cares about me.
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
10. My teachers care about me.
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
11. My parents care about me.
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
12. My classmates care about me.
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
13. My friends care about me.
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
14. How close do you feel to your mother?
- Very much
 - A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
15. How close do you feel to your father?
- Very much

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- A lot
 - Somewhat
 - A little
 - Not at all
 - Does not apply
16. You are happy to be at school.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
17. The teachers at your school treat students fairly.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
18. You feel safe at your school.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
19. I am treated with as much respect as other students in my class.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
20. Most of my teachers don't really care about me.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
21. There are teachers and other adults in my school I can talk to if I have a problem.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
22. Most teachers in my school are interested in me.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
23. People in this school are friendly to me.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
24. My teachers are happy to be at school.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
25. You have trouble getting along with your teachers.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neither agree or disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Does not apply
26. Have you ever been bullied this year?
- Yes
 - No
27. How often have you seen someone bullied at school this year?
- Everyday
 - Weekly
 - Often
 - A couple times a year
 - Never
28. Do you feel safe at school this year?
- Yes
 - No
29. I go to school because I need at least a high-school degree to find a high-paying job later on.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
30. I go to school because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
31. I go to school because I think that a high-school education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
32. I go to school to prove to myself that I am capable of completing my high-school degree.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
33. I go to school in order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
34. I go to school for the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
35. I go to school because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
36. I go to school because of the fact that when I succeed in school I feel important.

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
37. I go to school because I want to have "the good life" later on.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
38. I go to school for the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
39. I go to school because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
40. I go to school to show myself that I am an intelligent person.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
41. I go to school in order to have a better salary later on.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
42. I go to school because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
43. I go to school because I believe that my high school education will improve my competence as a worker.

URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT PERCEPTION

- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond
44. I go to school because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.
- Corresponds exactly
 - Corresponds a lot
 - Corresponds moderately
 - Corresponds a little
 - Does not correspond

June 7, 2018

Dr. Karen Larwin, Principal Investigator
Ms. Dorothy Reppy, Co-investigator
Department of Counseling, School Psychology and Educational Leadership
UNIVERSITY

RE: HSRC PROTOCOL NUMBER: 185-2018
TITLE: Urban Middle School Students and the Relationship of their Perception on
Care on their Intrinsic Motivation

Dear Dr. Larwin and Ms. Reppy:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed the abovementioned protocol and determined that it is exempt from full committee review based on a DHHS Category 5 exemption.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Institutional Review Board and may not be initiated without IRB approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the IRB.

The IRB would like to extend its best wishes to you in the conduct of this study.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Hripko
Associate Vice President for Research
Authorized Institutional Official

MAH:cc

c: Dr. Jake Protivnak, Chair
Department of Counseling, School Psychology and Educational Leadership

