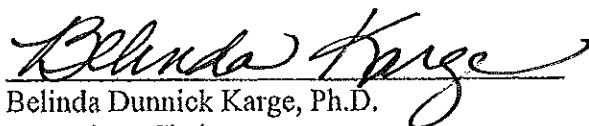

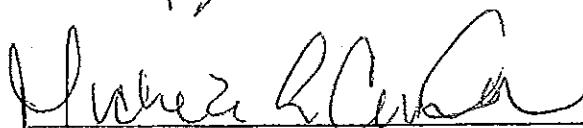


ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, HOW RESILIENCY AND MOTIVATION HELP TO SUSTAIN AT PROMISE STUDENTS TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET IN URBAN SCHOOLS., was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Leadership in the School of Education, Concordia University Irvine.


Belinda Dunnick Karge, Ph.D.
Committee Chair


Reyes Gauna, Ed.D.
Committee Member


Michele Cunha, Ed.D.
Committee Member

The Dissertation Committee, the Dean, and Senior Director of the Doctor of Education Program of the School of Education, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

Heather Vezner, Ph.D. Dean
School of Education

Kellie Albrecht, Ph.D. Senior Director
Doctor of Education Program

COPYRIGHT PERMISSION
AGREEMENT

Concordia University
Library 1530 Concordia
West
Irvine, CA 92612
www.cui.edu/library
librarian@cui.edu

I, Adrian Rios, warrant that I have the authority to act on any copyright related matters for the work, How Resiliency and Motivation Help To Sustain At Promise Students To Develop a Growth Mindset in Urban Schools., dated 12/9/2022 to be included in the Concordia University Library repository, and as such have the right to grant permission to digitize, republish and use the said work in all media now known or hereafter devised.

I grant to the Concordia University Library the nonexclusive worldwide rights to digitize, publish, exhibit, preserve, and use the work in any way that furthers the educational, research and public service purposes of the Concordia University.

This Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of California. This Agreement expresses the complete understanding of the parties with respect to the subject matter and supersedes all prior representations and understandings.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

My electronic thesis or dissertation can be made accessible via the Concordia University Library repository with the following status (select one):

☒ Option 1: Provide open access to my electronic thesis or dissertation on the internet

☐ Option 2: Place an embargo on access to my electronic thesis or dissertation for a given period from date of submission (select one):

☐ 6 months ☐ 1 year ☐ 3 years

Permission Granted By:

ADRIAN RIOS

Candidate's Name (*as appears in academic records*)


Signature of Candidate

VITA

Adrian Rios

Concordia University Irvine
1530 Concordia West
Irvine, CA, USA 92612
Adrian.rios@eagles.cui.edu

EDUCATION

Ed.D.	2022	Concordia University, Irvine Educational Leadership
CCC	2014	University California Los Angeles College Counseling Certificate
MA	2006	Azusa Pacific University, Orange Regional Campus Education/Administration
MA	2002	Azusa Pacific University, Orange Regional Campus Education/ Counseling/Pupil Personnel Services
BA	1999	California State University, Fullerton Major: Speech Communication Minor: Art
AA	1996	Rancho Santiago Community College Liberal Arts

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1993-Present	Activities Supervisor, Teacher, Counselor Lead Counselor, Dean of Students Santa Ana Unified, Tustin Unified, Norwalk La Mirada Unified, Long Beach Unified School District
2003-Present	Adjunct Teacher Rancho Santiago Community College District

HOW RESILIENCY AND MOTIVATION HELP TO SUSTAIN AT PROMISE STUDENTS
TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET IN URBAN SCHOOLS

by

Adrian Rios

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Education
in
Leadership
December 17, 2022

School of Education
Concordia University Irvine

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand how in today's urban educational system many students who come from impoverished areas and are overlooked while not being provided with the proper essentials to succeed in school. Many *at promise* (formerly known as at risk) students rely heavily on motivational techniques, educational theories, and leadership approaches to help validate their chances of establishing a growth mindset for sustainability and success. The problem is many urban schools fall short and stakeholders rely heavily on community providers for additional tools needed to stay afloat. Many at promise students have not been led to secure a pathway to success as the dropout rate has steadily increased. It is imperative for urban education to adopt a variety of educational theories, including, but not limited to the path goal theory, grit theory, growth mindset theory and situational approach theory which can provide students with beneficial approaches to secure a bright future and be able to graduate and fulfill their dreams.

A mixed methods triangulation study was conducted to gather quantitative and qualitative data. Primary data was collected from participants who were interviewed one on one along with creating two separate focus groups within secondary education. The instruments used consisted of quantitative secondary data such as the California Office to Reform Education and Panorama Surveys (2019) that were gathered from 9th -12th grade students from two Southern California High Schools which focused on social emotional learning, school climate, relational support, growth mindset and motivational strategies. The findings within this study have revealed that students who follow the Growth Mindset model will learn to excel and most who adopt Grit Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs will have a better opportunity to overcome barriers and learn to become successful and prosper while receiving a quality education. Key words: At-risk, At-promise, urban schools, resiliency, growth mindset, motivation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Problem Statement.....	6
Background.....	6
The Problem	8
Purpose of this Study.....	10
Motivational Theories	10
Significance of the Study.....	13
Research Questions	14
Conceptual Framework	15
Variables That Deter Student Motivation.....	16
Definition of Terms	19
Summary.....	21
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	23
Primary Needs	23
Motivation Strategies.....	24
Motivational Approaches	26
Effective Principles	27

Content Based Approaches.....	27
Resilient Learners	28
Barriers	29
Benefits of Effective Leadership	30
Servant Leadership	31
Facing Adversity	33
Goal Oriented	34
Four Theories to Guide the Work.....	35
Risks Faced by At Promise Students.....	39
Situational Approach Theory	39
History of National School Reform.....	43
State Challenges	44
Localized Student Impacts	48
Low Socioeconomic Areas.....	49
Drop Out Crisis.....	50
Attempting to Acclimate	52
Parental Support	54
Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports	60
Big Concern.....	61
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	63
Research Design and Rationale	63
Setting and Participants	64
Sampling Procedures	65

Instruments and Measures	66
Validity	70
Data Collection	71
Data Analysis.....	73
Narrative Structure	76
Ethical Issues	77
Summary.....	78
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	79
Survey Topics	79
Secondary School #1	84
Secondary School - #2.....	85
Learning Environment at School.....	86
Mental Health:	93
Personal Well Being:.....	95
Q.1: During the past week, how often did you feel.....	96
School Climate	99
Responses	103
21 Question Survey Results.....	104
Summary.....	119
Qualitative	119
Quantitative	120
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE STUDY	122
Gap Analysis	125

Steps	126
Participant 1 Response	128
Participant 2 Response	129
Hypothesis	129
Findings for Research Question 1:	129
Hypothesis 2	130
Findings for Research Question 2	131
Hypothesis 3	132
Findings for Research Question 3	132
Hypothesis 4	133
Findings for Research Question Number 4	133
Recommendations	134
Summary.....	137
Epilogue.....	139
Author's Perspective	139
REFERENCES	152
APPENDICES	169
Appendix A: CITI Certificate.....	169
Appendix B: Questions for Focus Group	170

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. 1.	Interview Questions and Data Collection.....	68
Table 2. 1.	Interview Questions and Data Collection.....	109
Table 4. 1.	Interview Questions and Data Collection.....	112
Table 4. 2.	Research Questions and Data Collection	114
Table 4. 3.	Research Questions and Data Collection	116
Table 4. 4.	Positive Impact on Growth Mindset.....	118

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. 1.	Conceptual Framework	16
Figure 2. 1.	The Habitat Factor-Growth Mixed Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset Pyramid, 2021	37
Figure 2. 2.	Situational Approach Theory Model: Leadership Theory & Practice Model, 2013	42
Figure 2. 3.	Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Learning Needs Pyramid, 1943	53
Figure 2. 4.	Adrian Rios' Pursuit to Happiness Infographic Matrix, 2022	62
Figure 3. 1.	Adrian Rios' Parents, Teachers, Students Creating a Pathway to Success, 2022	75
Figure 4. 1.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	80
Figure 4. 2.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	82
Figure 4. 3.	Interspersal Well Being Panorama Survey Results, 2021	83
Figure 4. 4.	Learning Environment at School Panorama Survey Results, 2021	88
Figure 4. 5.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	89
Figure 4. 6.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	90
Figure 4. 7.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	91
Figure 4. 8.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	92
Figure 4. 9.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	93
Figure 4. 10.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	94
Figure 4. 11.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	95
Figure 4. 12.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	96
Figure 4. 13.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	97
Figure 4. 14.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	98
Figure 4. 15.	Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	99

Figure 4. 16. Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	100
Figure 4. 17. Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	101
Figure 4. 18. Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	102
Figure 4. 19. Core Survey Results, 2021-2022	103
Figure 4. 20. Convergent Parallel Design	106
Figure 4. 21. Multiple Methods	107

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to take the time to acknowledge and thank my committee members, Dissertation Chair, Dr. Belinda Karge, Committee Member, Dr. Reyes Gauna, and Committee Member Dr. Michele Cunha. I would also like to dedicate my dissertation to my parents Cruz Serrano Rios Sr., Bertha Moreno Rios, brothers Cruz Rios Jr. Edward Moreno Rios, and Ronnie Rios. My immediate family members for their amazing support. My lovely wife Graciela Arellano Rios, amazing children, Giselle Faith Rios, Aidan Rock Rios, Alec Sky Rios, service dog Rock C Rios. My grandparents Jesus Hernandez Moreno, Luz Baez Moreno, Cruz Rocha Rios, Victoria Serrano Rios. My amazing football coaches for instilling hope in me to walk by faith and not by sight. The Legendary Coach Dick Hill, Murphy Tamaro, Hall of Famer Charlie Shaw, Steve Shaw, Gama Santana, Ben Haley, Bill Haley, Coach Drake, Tim Sheehan and to the 1991 Sunset League Football Championship Team. Comeback season! titled, "We want the Sunset!" To my Saint teammates who left it all out on the field to make Coach Hill the winningest coach in Orange County History. We did it! To the LULAC Organization for their amazing support and contribution. Representatives from Santa Ana College, Santa Ana Unified School District, Long Beach Unified School District, Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District and Tustin Unified School District for their amazing friendships established along my personal journey. To all my cohort 12 members, you are the most amazing team that anyone could call upon for assistance and motivation. To all my loved ones, family members and friends who have passed on to reach the pearly gates of the promised land. To all my colleagues and students who believed that my pursuit to greatness was within reach. I will forever be embedded and grateful that you will forever be in my heart. To all my friends that I grew up with, you have left an imprint in my mind and my heart that helped shape who I am today. To future generations,

especially all my nieces and nephews who may feel as if they are faced with too many hardships, keep your mind sharp by educating yourselves and I hope that I have provided a foundation that can motivate you to be enriched. Remember to always try your best by equipping yourselves and never give up hope. It takes heart, motivation, resiliency, grit and ganas to make your dreams come true. I want to be the first to tell you that you can do it and be successful no matter what you are up against.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Quality instruction for students living in poverty is essential. Underserved urban schools in the United States typically receive federally funded Title 1 funds to provide all children with a significant opportunity to receive a fair equitable, high-quality education. The goal is to close the achievement and opportunity gaps to help students in need. Title 1 funding is administered to school districts based on students in poverty and who are underperforming. Furthermore, these funds can also be used for students who are neglected, delinquent or at-risk of failing to meet state standards. According to the Bakhshi et al., (2017), quality education ensures inclusive and equitable quality education that promotes lifelong learning. Many students are overlooked and are not provided with the key elements to experience success which leads to them inheriting an impoverished lifestyle (Gauna, 2017). Many underserved urban students are impacted in a negative way having to come up with their own solution-based approaches. These situations are often temporary fixes getting minimum wage jobs and ignoring their chances of earning a quality education. The California Drop out Research Project (Yatchisin, 2007), states that California's High School Dropout rates cost taxpayers \$46.4 billion annually. The schools in the community and supplemental programs cater to students who have dropped out of school and have not received a quality education to prepare them for a better society.

According to Foxen and Unidos (2019), administrations at the Federal, State, and local levels have not always invested in prioritized programs that can help urban students succeed and move ahead. According to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) signed into law in 1965 but President Barrack Obama re-signed in 2015 on the 50th anniversary, funding per student averaged about \$13,189 spent per pupil within a given school year. In the fiscal year 2022, ESSA is funded at \$17.5 billion; this is a \$1 billion increase from the previous year.

Every Student Succeeds Act of (2015), ESSA requires state and their local agencies to prepare a published letter and annual report. The purpose of this letter is to provide information and guidance to assist school districts with meeting and reporting the proper requirements. According to the California Department of Education (CDE), what is imperative is that school districts work alongside of County Office of Education stakeholders to allocate school level expenditures and the impact of reporting cycles. (CDE, 2018) The goal is for stakeholders within all educational entities to report the per pupil expenditures of Federal, State, and local funding and disaggregate by the source of funding that is allocated. Each report must include a brief description of the proper steps taken.

The California Department of Education (2015), states that Local Educational Agencies (LEA's) are to prepare and publish annual report cards that specify data elements. The CDE has engaged in County Office of Education (COE) stakeholders to seek input on how school districts allocate and track down school level expenditures. School districts collectively are responsible to demonstrate their needs based upon setting a projection of targeted goals, services, and sustainability. Title 1 funding is mainly used by stakeholders who can decide what the funding will be allocated for, whether it be for parent programs, professional development, or technological purchases (Mapp, 2012). Narrowing these gaps will mean investing in more research to identify effective approaches or increasing Title 1 spending per child.

In the United States, each underserved urban school has the option to provide the necessary resources to enhance school-wide expectations, strategies, and programs to help improve the growth mindset through engagement and effective learning approaches. Students who are resilient can learn if they are given the resources and strategies from school representatives to move forward (Dweck, 2019). Students who are eager to learn can develop a

growth mindset where they can learn to think outside of the box and continue to strive for excellence. Resiliency in students is what helps them to push forward and teaches them to work through tough obstacles and make great strides towards success. Numerous school sites have a variety of programs that can help students learn and focus better on what matters most. Teaching students how to become resilient learners and teaching them to cope with their shortcomings and disadvantages by providing strategies such as restorative practices, social emotional learning approaches can all be beneficial for students to develop a growth mindset (Hande & Karge, 2021). Dweck (2019), explains that when students develop a growth mindset it fosters a belief that they have control of their intelligence. Some schools do make student-based decisions and adopt programs that enhance students' learning. In poor urban schools, this is rarely the case even when stakeholders know there are specific skills that could help urban students in poor communities succeed. Students who develop resiliency or adopt a growth mindset theory of intelligence are equipped with tools to learn and succeed in education (Dweck, 2019). Small victories in their educational trajectory can motivate to achieve long-term planning through self-efficacy.

According to Lumsden (1994), students who enter the public-school with curiosity, creativity, and confidence have a high tendency to want to succeed. Urban students in poor communities who struggle could capitalize with access to information designed to persevere and become successful, by giving them the key to the academic culture they cannot access at home (Auerbach, 2007). Many urban students learn to build perseverance inside of the classroom and adopt a mindset that keeps them focused and moving forward no matter how many failed attempts they experience (Jensen, 2009). This attitude toward learning is an example of what

serves to as having a growth mindset and it enhances their chances of reaching their full potential (Dweck, 2019).

According to Ginsburg (202), resilience is defined as the development of students' *Seven Cs*, which stand for Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping, and Control. When students become competent in these skills, they know how to handle difficult situations effectively. Resiliency is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties or toughness (Jensen, 2009). Competence is built through trial and error and working on skills repeatedly while learning to not give up on oneself. Students who join Science Technology Engineering and Mathematical programs realize that portions of the curriculum may be difficult for them to understand, but once they learn to become successful and positive behavior is reinforced, students grow and learn to develop competence where they excel (Gauna, 2017). Providing underserved urban students with an opportunity to build knowledge can be a crucial characteristic for them to experience success (Amen et al., 2019). They can learn to focus on their abilities, which can help build confidence in themselves by adjusting to inconvenient situations. Peer Assistance Leadership programs can help students to confide in each other and will allow them to gain confidence in their own abilities (Gauna, 2017). Allowing students to get better and understand what it takes to make good choices is imperative for growth while creating a secure environment.

Connection is provided for students in distinguished programs such as the Winners Reaching Amazing Potential program, (Long Beach USD, n.d.). Creating a safe space for students where they can express themselves helps them build a safe space to adapt and connect with others. When students learn to connect with their peers while participating in groups, this can be a key element for them to collaborate and create a sense of security with their peers as

students experience really affects their success (Gauna, 2017). Character is built through Title 1 programs like Project Guided Language Acquisition Design, which helps students improve on language acquisition and literacy. This also helps students to affirm their own identity while building upon their own abilities (Deussen et al, 2014).

Students who learn to build character focus on improving traits that they can establish themselves to develop courage and conscientiousness. Schoolwide associated student body programs develop servant leaders by helping these students' put others before themselves while creating a school culture that can be nurturing to develop good character (Khalifa et al., 2016). When aspiring students are willing to contribute and add to the solution, many benefits come out of a positive learning environment. When students learn to adopt coping mechanisms while facing traumatic events or having to deal with their emotions, they will become resilient and prepared for any obstacle that lies in front of them (Gauna, 2017). Freshmen mentorship programs teach students to cope with barriers that lie within their pathway, and it helps students to build upon themselves and their thresholds where they can learn to build resiliency.

According to the US Department of Education when students learn to control their own educational pathways by joining a program like Talent Search, they can learn to take ownership of their 4-year plans, interest profiler, and get exposed to becoming a versatile student. Talent search is a program that will allow students to achieve their goals and take ownership of their future careers (Clay & Lewis, 2022). Students who take control of their personal lifestyle and establish stability learn to become resilient by not allowing anything to get in the way no matter what the circumstance they are up against. Peer Leaders Uniting Students, Winners Reaching Amazing

Potential, Guided Language Acquisition Design, and Talent Search are all programs that can assist to support underserved urban students to flourish in the education system.

Problem Statement

Background

This study will determine if at-risk students, (formerly known as at-risk students) in underserved urban school settings can aspire to receive a quality education and be provided with a pathway to success that will help motivate them to graduate and opt-out of dropping out of school. Education Policy holders, Hess and Noguera (2022), state that 50% of students who come from inner city schools nationwide, and who live in impoverished areas do not graduate high school. According to Dynarski and Kainz, (2015), one in six adults on the planet cannot read and write effectively and 99% of this population has illiteracy levels in developing Countries. There are 115 million children between the ages of six and eleven, one in five that are not in school. This negative impact takes a toll on society which accepts impoverished students to run a higher risk of become homeless and living on the streets trying to survive on their own without a quality education.

According to Fine (1986), National Center for Educational Statistics stated that 26.9% males and 10.7% females dropped out of school to go to work. Many adolescents leave school because their family members need money, and many do not have a choice but to go to work to help support their families. Although there is a significant reason for at-risk students who sustain their education and graduate, there are also detrimental effects for students that are behind and quit. According to (Fenzel & Richardson 2017), far too many students come to school with unmet needs that come from violence, chronic absenteeism, low morale, and low parental involvement which may cause them to drop out of school. Many students lacking an

educational upbringing may miss the opportunity of a lifetime to establish a foundation for themselves and to secure a better future. According to Engzell et al., (2021), “losses are up to 60% larger among students from less educated homes” (Pg.1). There are many urban students who experience learning loss and do not understand the importance of recovery and how to capitalize on what education has to offer. Lack of stability, structure and significance start to take over and many of these students may not know how to recover from the detrimental gap that they have experienced. According to Anguiano (2012), most students who drop out of school end up in poverty and never really find a solution to get out. Dropouts have a higher risk of unmet needs and may not have learned the necessary skills to understand how to function and to adapt appropriately in society (EdSource, 2021).

Additionally, there are major effects that can cost underserved urban schools a lot of time, money, and opportunity when many of their students are not finishing and completing their education. According to Keller (2021), the average daily attendance determines a school district's funding and when students are absent, it has a catastrophic effect on the implementation of programs and incentives that school districts can provide for their students. When students are not in school, a detrimental crisis occurs creating a domino effect on what students are supposed to learn, and what content knowledge they may have missed out on. According to Ramirez and De La Cruz, (2016) completion gaps exist within learning gaps and achievement gaps where many urban students fall within the spectrum of having a lower likelihood of attainment and finishing school. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), state that a person with less than a high school diploma will gain approximately \$365 to \$606 a week, while a person with an advanced degree will receive \$997 to \$1,561 a week. It is imperative for school districts

to provide primary resources and the necessary elements that will encourage their students to stay in school to become fully academically equipped and earn a chance to become successful.

The Problem

A significant problem of this sequential explanatory mixed methods study is to find out whether underserved urban students are being provided with the proper fundamentals to succeed in school. According to McKenzie (2019), a bill was passed to remove references to “at-risk youth” with “at-promise youth” in California’s Education Code and Penal Code because far too long at-risk students have been described as students living in difficult situations. This term creates failure for many students who are vulnerable. Many of these urban students often find themselves adjusting to learning independently which forces them to attempt to find solutions on their own. In underserved urban schools many at-promise, (formerly known as at-risk) students are overlooked and not given the equitable opportunity to acquire the necessary skill sets to stay in school and become productive members of society (Jensen, 2009). Many at-promise students who lack the content base knowledge and innate desire to learn, lose focus and revert to alternative options that have negative outcomes. These students lack the necessary skill sets to function properly, which creates educational hardships that set them further behind. Many of these students have a higher risk of not mastering the common core state standards to succeed in school and have a higher chance of becoming deficient in all the core subjects. According to (Brown et al., 2021), students who are not developing the necessary characteristics to help them overcome their obstacles tend to suffer most by creating an empathy gap where decisions are made based on their current emotions that lead to negative results. Students from low socioeconomic underrepresented areas tend to adopt a survival mode mentality while missing the benefits of having a healthy educational mindset (Jensen, 2009).

Most of these at promise students struggle fundamentally and have had a tough time equipping themselves to move ahead. Students raised in inner-city poverty experience a variety of additional obstacles that deterred them from having a fair chance of experiencing success and do not know otherwise. According to the Centers for Disease Control (2019), students who have experienced the worldwide pandemic were forced to learn independently online for a year and a half and then were asked to return, while experiencing learning loss and became socially emotionally challenged and detrimentally affected. A lot of students had a difficult time adjusting to a computer screen and missed out of the cohesiveness of collaborating face to face with their peers (Centers for Disease Control, 2019).

According to Zierer (2021), the corona virus led to drastic measures around the world, which have also affected the education system and learning performances of students. There happens to be a connection of a downward spiral where many of these students ended up lagging in areas where they have succumbed to a lack of support and resources due to the pandemic. They learned to become accustomed to the way things are and some do not realize that other outlets can help them overcome their shortcomings.

There are many other challenges that occur with students who fall short of meeting their personal objectives and cannot fulfill their promise to themselves. According to the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), which originated to close the achievement gap because many underserved urban students have the tendency to read below grade level expectations, fall short of language fluency, and do not meet mathematical computations as there are a lot of obstacles that keep these underserved urban students from meeting their projected goals and personal expectations. According to the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (2020), standards-based instruction is when teachers and students have a clear understanding of

expectations and where they may be headed to meet projected guidelines. Many students who fail to understand these criteria usually do not accomplish the expected goals and are required to take remedial level courses just to catch up. Underserved urban Schools are having to become creative and provide extra incentives such as specialized programs for their students to bring them up to par and teach them the basics. Urban students are having to take remedial classes and spending extended days, summers, and nights to relearn the basic elements of education and hope to have successful outcomes.

Purpose of this Study

Despite the unprecedented circumstances that many underserved urban students face, research studies have shown that there are some specific approaches that can help students get closer to reaching their personal goals and aspirations (Dweck, 2019). The purpose of this study is to determine how resiliency and motivation can help to sustain at promise students to develop a growth mindset in Urban Schools.

Motivational Theories

There is a major significance in students' educational performance that comes from a variety of motivational theories. Each of these theories presented has a correlation and major benefits for students who may be seeking to experience educational stability. There are four theories that have a major significance for underserved urban students who may be seeking a way to understand, connect and become successful. Many of these students would be able to transform and have a major impact on student learning outcomes that will help guide them to capitalize on additional opportunities.

The following theories that have a significant impact on students who are interested in learning effectively are situational approach theory, path-goal theory, grit theory and growth

mindset theory (Duckworth, 2016). Each theory can play a crucial role in the impact of students who may be seeking academic success. All these theories have established importance and can play an integral part of guiding students to become resilient learners. Students can experience the benefits of becoming successful in school and learn to rely on each theory that is important to them personally. Each of the four theoretical approaches can each have its partial advantages for at-risk students who may be seeking to help stimulate their mind and develop intellectual growth.

The situational approach theory supports the relationship between students and their leaders, while focusing on behavioral patterns to help students learn the necessary skill sets to become more confident in their work. Leaders learn to adjust their teaching approaches to accommodate the needs of the students. A second theory for students to take into consideration would be the path-goal theory, which also supports the relationship between students and their leaders who follow the achievement-oriented model. This model focuses on directive leadership, supportive leadership, and participative leadership that can assist with student performance and satisfaction (House, 1971). Students who become resilient learners build upon their self-efficacy when they are confident in themselves and their work. They learn to key in on performance outcomes, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological feedback. According to Bandura (1977) personalized belief in our ability to succeed affects behavior, where we become convinced that we will be successful again. Positive and negative experiences that students face can each have an influence on their ability to perform a given task.

A third theory is the grit theory. Angela Duckworth (2016), believes grit is passion and sustained persistence applied toward long term achievement, with no particular concern for

rewards or recognition along the way (Pg.1). Students are geared towards success and have the desire to achieve success. Grit theory can help all students.

The fourth theory that this research is based on is growth mindset theory. David Yeager and Carol Dweck (2012), state our beliefs about intelligence, and the ability to change mindsets can have impacts on how students approach and respond to challenges and orient goals.

Underserved urban students who experience setbacks are more likely to be challenged but some may try harder because of their personalized expectations and experiences that give them a mentality that they can accomplish any given task (Dweck, 2015). Many underserved urban students learn to develop resiliency where they are eager to succeed and will not give up on themselves by adopting new leadership skills and approaches that will help them to establish resilient behaviors. When underserved urban students inherit an eagerness to take charge of their educational experiences, they do what it takes to get the job done and accomplish their goals.

When students become pursuants of resilient approaches there are tendencies that signify the importance of adopting leadership skills. This may include focusing on team-building approaches that will compliment resilient behaviors and approaches to help them become creative (Senge, 2012) Often, students who face hardships are against odds of becoming successful (Jensen, 2009). If underserved urban students can learn specific leadership skills that can help them to become essential to a school organization, each approach can lead to reaping many benefits. It would be advantageous to learn from others and adapt to teaching and mentoring others. Whenever students inherit effective leadership, many have the tendency to continue to share what they have learned with others. There are many advantages for urban students to become accustomed to a creative environment where leadership is implemented

properly. Effective leadership teaches all eager learners that taking charge and leading change can be advantageous for many.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to discover if urban students are provided with the proper fundamentals, so they succeed in school. Solution-based approaches such as motivational strategies, educational theories, and leadership skills can influence students to stay in school and operate while enhancing their growth mindset that will help guide them to sustain educational resiliency and become successful (Senge, 2012). It is also essential to highlight and identify the characteristics of students who do succeed in urban education as well. The behaviors that are most related to positive outcomes come from hard work, perseverance, resiliency, which can be beneficial to everyone (Duckworth, 2016). According to Tugade and Fredrickson (2004), there are many urban students who have had academic success with high IQs, but on the contrary, there are also students who struggle daily, who show grit and demonstrate that hard work can create positive results, improvement, and sustainability.

Dedicated students who work through the daily grind and work consistently can highlight that they are meeting their projected standards. Often it may take students multiple times to learn what they may be seeking to master inside of the classroom. According to (Bonezzi et al., 2011), achieving a goal often requires engaging in goal-consistent behavior for an extended period. According to (Foland, 2017), Performance Management at the University of North Carolina, is important for students to have SMART goals, which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound that will allow students to get organized. Most students who have attained personal success, is because they have learned to adopt an understanding of each goal that they are trying to attain. It is imperative to have each educational goal broken down into

segments so that students can know what to expect ahead of time is a vital piece. Many urban students who learn to focus on SMART goals and learn the proper elements of success will have a better chance of establishing a growth mindset that will stimulate their interests and help with their educational performances and attainment.

Essential characteristics that underserved urban students attempt to sustain are empathy, self-control, and trying to keep calm under stressful situations just to accomplish a goal. Issues to be investigated in this study are whether students are being provided with the proper essentials to acquire each strategy, theory, or skill that will help prepare them to overcome each obstacle that is against them as students. When students learn to build resilience and become aware of it, they can learn to maintain control of any situation and think of new ways to tackle problems or concerns (Jensen, 2009). Resiliency goes beyond bouncing back. It is the ability to thrive mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, regardless of what may be happening in a student's environment (Markel, 2021).

Research Questions

The general research question being investigated consists of the following: *How at promise students can establish a growth mindset while sustaining educational resiliency to succeed in school?*

- 1) How can urban students who experience obstacles learn motivation strategies to sustain educational resiliency?
- 2) How does receiving a quality education provide at promise students (formerly known as at-risk students) with a pathway to success or graduation?
- 3) How do underserved urban school students succeed in developing a growth mindset even when they are not being provided with the necessary tools to learn at school?

4) What is the relationship between a high school quality education and student's educational aspirations?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework consists of a youth development framework that is in critical need for establishing better engagement strategies to address the Latinx population increases in comparison to structural inadequacies of public institutions. According to Erbstein and Fabionar (2019), the focus is to adopt the unique needs of Latinx youth and their families, which there are students whose developmental needs are not being met. Such intricacies focus on high incarceration rates and poorly developed supported infrastructures that have a major effect on students and their educational attainment.

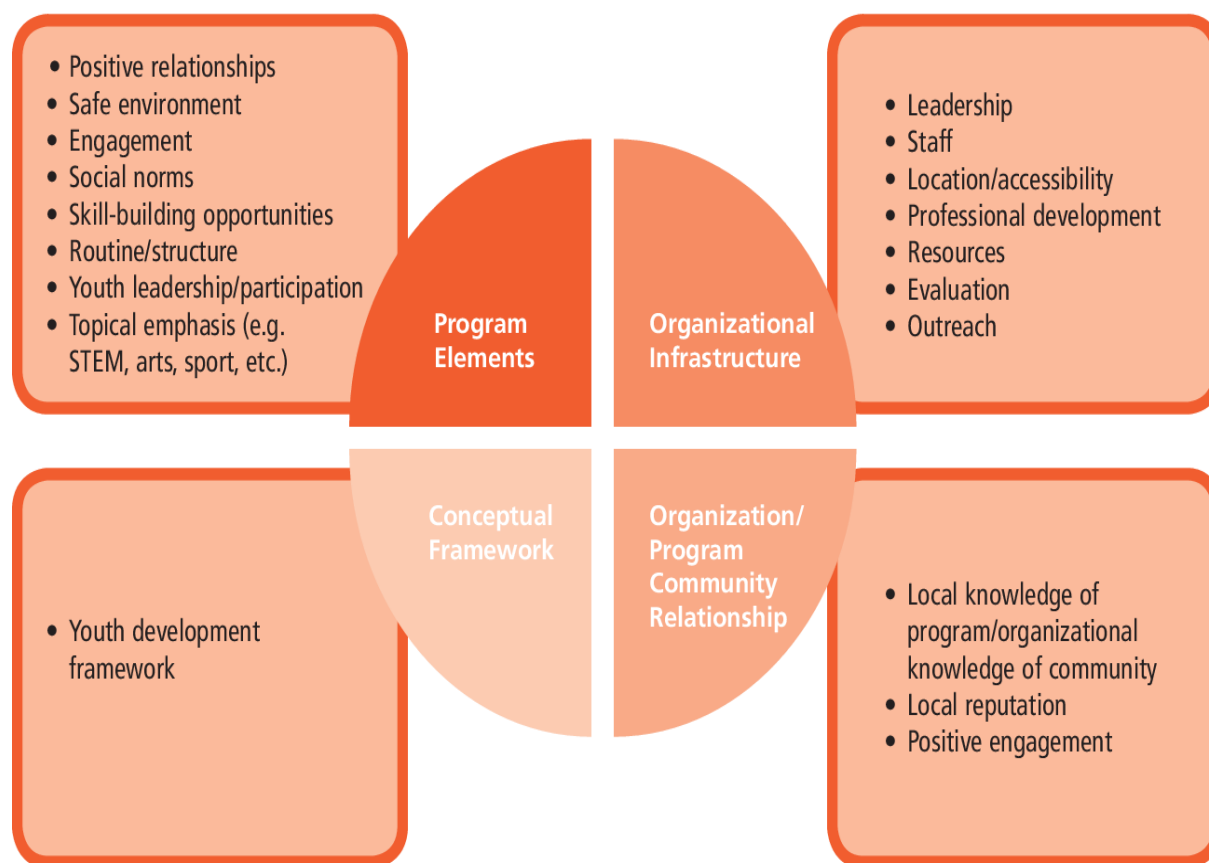
At promise students can benefit from inheriting and focusing a variety of program elements presented in the conceptual framework. The framework aligns with providing all the necessary elements that at promise students need to become successful. At promise students are eager to inherit positive working relationships while engaging in personal conversations such as small talk that will help stimulate their interests and provide a haven of trust where they can feel safe while focusing on learning. An inclusive, and respectful climate is fundamental for culturally responsive practices. Once they build confidence in themselves, they learn to become engaged in the learning process and they start to believe in the system where they adopt school wide social norms. Many at promise students who are challenged start to realize that they need to establish a routine for themselves where they can build on their skill sets and abilities to flourish.

In the organizational infrastructure phase, leadership is at the forefront that provides the groundwork of systems, protocols and processes that provide structure to the organization. Both positive structure and staff practices are necessary for culturally responsive programs. When the

procedures and policies are implemented properly the effort from students is geared towards accomplishing the goal and objectives.

Figure 1. 1

Conceptual Framework



Variables That Deter Student Motivation

There are a variety of variables that can deter students from becoming motivated in school. Many underserved urban students who live in poverty come from dysfunctional families where they often fail to attend quality schools. Some of them become bored, and they have the tendency to lose focus and choose other paths like join gangs because they are not provided with

the appropriate support at school or at home (Senge, 2012). Most of these urban students do not understand the significance of success because it is a challenge for them to identify with their peers where they often feel out of place. There are many students who grow up in these urban settings who experience a variety of setbacks and lack the proper motivational strategies to become successful in school (Jensen, 2009). They are faced with daily challenges and lack the proper support and motivation to really understand what it takes to be resilient, gain momentum and overcome obstacles.

According to Northouse (2016), the path goal theory supports the relationship between students and their leaders who follow directive leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership, and the achievement-oriented model. The outcomes of student performance and satisfaction become relevant when students adopt additional motivational strategies to succeed in school. The directive leadership approach initiates structure that will teach students the proper way to stay motivated and succeed. Most students who lack support at home are seeking it from someone who they respect such as a mentor, teacher, or leader. According to Hooper and Bernhardt (2016), “the driving force behind high performing instructional leaders is a laser-like focus on strengthening teaching and learning, as well as improving student achievement results” (page 21). It is important for students to have the proper support that will allow them to have an approachable relationship with their teachers that will provide a true connection with them. When students receive these approaches and are led by such a great leader, it is vital that most urban students will feel like they must try their best to be successful. Students have the tendency to become accustomed to the supportive leadership style where teachers are providing approachable and empathetic characteristics for them to succeed.

When students choose to participate in class, it is because they are geared towards success, and they have the tendency to be engaged and want to participate in lessons (Northouse, 2016). Teachers provide participative leadership that will allow students to be part of the decision-making process. Urban students become motivated to participate as a leader among their peers. When teachers are achievement oriented, they will challenge their followers to perform at their highest level reaching their full potential. Once students see impressive results, they get motivated to always try their best. Additional theories such as Growth Mindset theory will allow students to establish growth and posits their beliefs about intelligence and the ability to change mindsets having impact on how students approach challenges (Dweck, 2016). Grit Theory is one that combines resilience, ambition, and self-control, while perusing goals. (Duckworth, 2018). Finally, the Situational Approach Theory differentiates situations while demanding different types of leadership that will benefit all students.

Limitations and Delimitations of Study

There are a variety of limitations within this study that may affect the internal validity and reliability of the research process. This research may lack generalizability due to the homogeneous population of this study. Urban education continues to undergo a variety of changes with personnel that may affect the learning environment of students who may be seeking to receive a quality education. Furthermore, participants may be limited with this research study because the students are within the same school district. This research study may not provide a global perspective from a variety of school districts across the country. A variety of self-reporting surveys will be included in this study. The self-reporting may lead to a bias due to the researcher being an educator within the same school district.

Definition of Terms

Growth Mindset Theory: Thrives on challenges and sees failure not as evidence of unintelligence but as a springboard for growth and for utilizing existing abilities (Dweck, 2021).

Grit Theory: the product of talent and effort, when combined leads to skills combined equals achievement (Duckworth, 2016).

Path-Goal Theory: a leader's behavior is contingent on the satisfaction of its followers guiding students to choose their best paths (House & Mitchel, 1975).

Situational Approach Theory: leadership style that is best suited to the task. (Hershey & Blanchard, 1996)

Resiliency: the capacity to recover quickly from adversity and to be able to bounce back from inconvenient situations (Fuentes et al., 2022).

SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound (Rubin, 2003)

At-Risk Students: Students who are exposed to harm or danger (Donnelly, 1987).

At Promise Students: Refers to students who still may fail to earn a high school diploma for a variety of reasons such as attendance, lack of motivation or experiencing an economic disadvantage (Rios, 2019).

Urban Students: Students who are more likely to live in low-income areas have been educated in underperforming schools and may be 1st generation college-bound students (Teach.com, 2008).

Title I: Funds that are effective evidenced-based educational strategies that close the achievement gap and enable the students to meet the states challenging academic standards (CDE, 2017 retrieved: <https://californiadashboard.org> (2021)).

Dropouts: Students who have left school prior to the completion of the school year (Ed source, 2021).

Chronic Absenteeism: This is a primary cause of poor academic achievement when students miss at least 10 percent of days of school in a school year. CDE (Monje, 2021).

Achievement Gap: This is the persistent disparity in academic achievement between minority and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts. (Ansell, 2011)

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP): This is a tool for local educational agencies to set goals, plan actions, and leverage resources to meet those goals to improve student outcomes CDE (Harris, 2021).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS): This is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. PBIS creates schools where all students succeed. Retrieved: www.pbis.org

Affluent students: Students having a great deal of money, wealthy (Aisch, 2017).

Transformational leadership: A leadership style that causes change in individuals and social systems. Creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. (Burns, 1978).

Detrimental Effect: This something that is harmful or having a damaging effect on it. (Collins et al, 2021).

Solution-based: These students develop default problem patterns that are based on their experiences.

Every student Succeeds Act Per Pupil: Expenditure Reporting Requirement CDE (Bauer et.al, 2018).

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID): This fosters a safe and open culture for students and teachers in collaboration in classrooms. Retrieved: <https://www.avid.org/what-avid-is>

Strategic management: Process of setting goals and procedures (Kenton, 2021)

California Federal Education Funding: State funding that is allotted per student who attends school. CDE (Calderon, 2022).

Summary

At-risk students who come from impoverished areas are often overlooked and are forced to accept a subliminal education that they are succumbed to. Often underserved urban school districts are faced with an excessive number of financial challenges and will often fall short of providing the proper essentials for student success. The review of literature will provide the primary needs, motivating strategies, motivating approaches, effective principles, and content-based approaches that will help provide a better understanding. Specific details will key in on motivating factors, educational theories, and leadership approaches that will benefit students to become closer to reaching their projected goals and aspirations.

Organization of the Study

This research study will be conducted into five chapters. Chapter 1 will provide a variety of components such as the introduction, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, research questions, limitations of the study, definition of key terms. Chapter 2 will provide the existing literature to the problem and information that the current research is not conducting to solve the problem. Chapter 3 will present the methods of design, sampling, data collection approaches, instruments, and procedures. Chapter 4 will provide the

findings, themes, and analysis of the study. Chapter 5 will provide a summary of the research findings and recommendations for future research studies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This research study addresses issues about at-risk students' perceptions and how they can operate and learn effectively in secondary education within urban school districts.

Researchers have done little research about the overall perception of how underserved urban students learn best and how their attributes measure student success. Many researchers have questioned the daily practices and approaches that urban schools have utilized ineffectively and how additional training incentives may be needed for teachers to help schools operate efficiently and improve student performances, overall (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). According to Wong (1998), unsuccessful schools stress programs, while successful schools focus on pedagogical practices. Wong, purports that what keeps good teachers, is structure and sustained professional development that allows students to learn. Although there are many incentives when creating programs that benefit students, the approaches to teaching effectively are based on theory and practice to learning. Johnson et al. (2004), at Harvard's Project, stated out of 110 new teachers, 87% worked with mentors within the importance of pedagogical approaches. Good schools produce good teachers, and they are the ones who create good classrooms where students can learn most effectively. Many underserved urban students have suffered within the ranks of education because they have missed key elements related to effective approaches and practices to improve the educational quality of instruction.

Primary Needs

Many urban schools seek the best practices of providing wraparound services in meeting the primary needs of each student by providing social-emotional learning, trauma-informed practices, and college and career readiness (Phifer & Hull, 2016). Other issues that may have a detrimental effect on the way at-risk students learn can be related to those students who do

not have the same opportunity as their counterparts. According to Chen (2021), only 68% of students who live in poverty graduate, while the others get sidetracked and are lost in the shuffle due to experiencing too many hardships that take over their personal lives. Schools are becoming trauma informed where they are attempting to meet all the needs of their students who come from challenged upbringings. Ferguson (2001), states that students who experience traumatic events while living in inner city may be unsafe and continue to be part of an underserved population. Schools continue to fall short and struggle with being able to provide quality programs to sustain enrollment as parents are always looking for the best schools that can provide a quality education for their children.

One incentive for positive change is that underserved urban school districts are being directed to work harder towards improving quality instruction that can create a better working environment for students who may be struggling to adjust to the norm. When schools create an environment where students have equal access to opportunity, they are encouraged to implement motivational strategies to uplift students who would like to experience success. Merrow (1998), states that “we’re misdiagnosing the problem as ‘recruitment’ when it is really retention (pg. 2)”. Prominent schools provide teachers with significance, set clear standards, promote strong leadership, and implement motivational strategies that benefit students.

Motivation Strategies

Although learning motivational strategies are essential to student success, educational theories can also be a vital piece in setting a solid foundation for students to learn effectively as well. Leadership approaches are also an integral part that can help guide students to take ownership and excel. When underserved urban school districts are challenged to enhance a positive working culture for their students to learn effectively, the results can be student

engagement. According to McKinlay and Williamson (2010), in a positive, motivating environment, students feel free to give their best effort because they believe it will provide constructive results. Often when schoolwide expectations are in place, and students understand the importance of what their teachers are presenting to them in class, their contribution to their school culture can help them build upon their inner desires and aspirations.

There are a variety of variables involved when it comes to at-risk students gaining motivation and learning how to sustain it. Key factors consist of having supportive parents at home who are involved in their educational process and being able to build confidence in themselves (Henandez & Berla, 1994). When at-risk students experience success and inherit a driving force to want more, intrinsic motivation takes over that allows them to overcome the fear of failure and they learn from previous failed outcomes. All these factors have a key ingredient to individualized success. According to Fullan and Quinn, (2016, pg. 1) all systems go means that every vital part of the whole system school, community, district, and government contribute individually and in concert to forward movement and success. It is important to realize that all children can learn regardless of the background that they have inherited or where they come from. There are a small number of key priorities such as understanding which factors to sustain. A small number of key priorities are necessary to adopt leadership. It is important to be consistent with the message that is trying to be portrayed.

When collective capacity is taken into consideration it allows students to maximize the amount of what can be contained within their mindset. All students can learn, and all means all (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Joint forces that are team-oriented can be a key element to get the best out of the learning environment, which allows urban students to learn better. It is important to

utilize a variety of strategies with precision in making sure that what is presented is accurate for students who are trying to really gather all the information as possible.

Motivational Approaches

As many at-promise students rely heavily on their academic performance to mobilize, many of them seek additional theoretical approaches that can help guide them through the learning process. Students are eager to establish a foundation that has been adopted by their forebears and would like to understand the importance of why it is necessary to utilize application to each theory that is presented. There are theories that can have a significant impact on at- promise students' engagement and performance while becoming encouraged to work harder and excel within the learning environment. According to Chalupa and ter Haseborg (2014), motivation plays an integral role in language learning in particular because of the long-term effort involved in students gaining proficiency and being provided with the proper programs. Fonsot and Perry (1996), Educational Psychology, state that psychological constructivism refers to changes in thinking resulting from individual experiences. Many urban schools' primary focus is to implement motivational strategies that will enhance engagement and provide goal attainment.

Setting clear goals, building healthy habits, and adopting motivational strategies can all be beneficial for students who want to be successful. According to Halif et al. (2020), many types of learners and studies have shown that students with learning engagement will gain more enjoyable classroom experiences, learn more, and perform better academically. Students that learn to adopt motivational strategies can lead to high achievement in class and assist them to become organized in what they want to accomplish. Most students who are motivated to learn will do their best to stay focused and establish productivity while learning.

Effective Principles

Within today's underserved urban educational system, the foundational expectation is to build upon efficient principles that complement effective learning, consistently. Motivational strategies, educational theories, and leadership skills are essential. Students who choose to be engaged will learn and demonstrate intellectual growth. Students who come from affluent areas are often provided with the most appropriate resources and materials to succeed and have the tendency to be better prepared (Jensen, 2009). When underserved urban schools have proper support from their educational leaders, they can implement core curriculum standards and attempt to provide universal support to create the most inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students (Ainscow, 2020). It is imperative for these schools to be provided with full scope and sequence of steps that promote instruction on a wide spectrum of topics to support engagement, academic rigor, career exploration, and social-emotional development and competency.

Content Based Approaches

It is essential for teachers to teach effective content and to be able to see if the lessons provided have had an impact on learning based on the rigor of each assignment. When students are challenged and introduced to a curriculum with academic significance, it can help students to become impactful (Newmann et al., 1992). According to Ryan and Grotrian-Ryan (2016), the mentoring function of challenging assignments is ranked high as being extremely beneficial with regards to having an impact on student success. Underserved urban school sites often seek to provide an equitable stance in education so that others who struggle can be provided with additive interventions that will provide a higher probability to help students succeed. Many urban students who come from underserved urban schools want to be provided with the same type of

rigor and motivational strategies that will challenge them to utilize their skill sets and stimulate their minds. Since many urban students have not been presented with the same type of skill sets to succeed, whether it be due to underlying factors such as being overlooked, lack of significance, absenteeism, or not having a highly qualified teacher in place, they may be overtly challenged to adjust on their own and be expected to follow sequential steps involved with the learning process.

Many underserved urban students who struggle academically and have become credit deficient have always been classified as being at-risk due to not being able to meet specific academic standards and fall further behind. When students are at-risk, they are at will and many of them can only hope to one day become at-promise while wanting to be accepted by others. There are significant strategies that each student will need to experience and utilize to develop a threshold that will help them overcome all negative perceptions and experiences while seeing positive results. According to Rios (2019), researchers have sought to reclassify at-risk students as at-promise students just so that they can be acknowledged positively and have a fair chance to succeed within the academic ranks. A variety of these at-promise students who seek to learn the necessary motivational strategies have strived to acclimate themselves on their own.

Resilient Learners

Many at-promise students learn to become resilient learners while building a threshold for themselves and have the tendency to establish perseverance that helps them stay engaged and connected to the learning process (Hernandez, 2021). When at-promise students make progressive steps along the way, they can learn to associate with peers and take on tactical approaches that will help them improve their daily skill sets such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking. According to Souers and Hall (2016), building strong relationships

creates a safe place to enable students to learn at prominent levels. Introduction to new concepts are ways to gauge at-promise students to be ready for understanding and meeting their personal goals and common core standards. Many of these skills can encourage students to become well-rounded and educationally proficient and look forward to gaining greater results.

Often many at promise students just need to be taught how to make progress once they are engaged (Hernandez, 2021). Then learn to continue to establish growth on their own. School support staff plays an integral role in ensuring that students are learning in a safe environment. Although many students grow up in environments where they are overlooked and are never given the proper support necessary to be successful. Intrinsic motivation takes over when students overcome a negative situation and learn to build a threshold of resiliency that pushes them to try even harder and get better results. Resilient students do not like to fail regardless of whether they have experienced a lot of traumatic events; they have the tendency to want to have significant outcomes.

Barriers

Many urban students are already faced with obstacles at home and maybe lacking the appropriate resources at school that are needed for them to function properly. Schools are supposed to be a haven for them where they can receive adequate education and build confidence that will allow them to stay motivated to succeed. Creating a safe and civil campus to sustain a positive working environment where students can learn effectively. According to Coutu (2002), students will learn to build bridges from their present circumstances to sustain a better future. Bridges will allow students to adjust to any manageable occasion to have a clear state of mind when learning. It is imperative that urban students find their purpose and a person's level of resilience will determine who succeeds and fails.

Resilient students possess three characteristics that they can build on their own by having influence from teachers' beliefs on how student perceive their own abilities. 1) creating self-awareness of having to accept their true reality, which allows urban students to realize that this is the way things are and to make a change, it is important to digest, accept and move forward. 2) be realistic by inheriting a deep belief in oneself, is necessary to succeed. The faster that a student realizes that they can only rely on themselves to make change, the greater they will be able to gain insight and become more resilient. 3) keeping calm under stress and having an ability to improvise and realize that this situation is temporary and that he or she will find a way out (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). When students adopt the ability to bounce back and have optimism, this will allow them to see the steps to move forward.

Benefits of Effective Leadership

There are many benefits for at-promise students who rely heavily on effective leadership to guide them through challenging circumstances. Many rely upon their teachers, mentors, and family members for additional support because they have established rapport, trust and believe that they will look out for their best interest in making the proper decisions for their future (McNally & Martin, 1998). When family feedback is constructive, eager seeking students realize that failure is not an option for them, but an opportunity to excel, grow and to take advantage of educated leaders that they can rely on (Blankstein, 2004).

Many at-promise students look upon distinct types of leadership qualities in others to engage with, so that they can learn, adopt, and apply that same leadership quality to their own work ethic. When effective leaders guide, influence, and engage a students' vision, there are many advantages that will motivate at-promise students to not give up on themselves and demonstrate resilient characteristics (Leithwood & Riehl, 2004).

According to Hochanadel and Finamore (2015), in an academic environment that teaches grit and fosters growth, students can learn to persist. Resilient students can draw upon strength to cope and recover from challenges shared by others. During this process, resilient students can adapt and utilize what to capitalize on and learn from others who will teach them not to make the same mistakes as they did.

Many at-promise students take on the pathway and approach that can help them to build upon their own strengths. According to Hooper and Bernhardt (2016) the driving force behind high performing instructional leaders is a laser-like focus on strengthening teaching and learning, as well as improving student achievement results. When students receive these incentives and are led by great leaders, it is vital that most students will feel like they must try their best to become successful as well. When students choose to participate in class, it is because they are engaged and are geared towards academic success while making great strides to the student motivation and learning (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Servant Leadership

While teachers become servant leaders, some learn to use less institutional power and control while shifting their authority to those who are being led and left behind. Servant leadership values community. It supplies a face-to-face opportunity for at promise students to experience interdependence, respect, trust, and individual growth (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leadership can be a key asset for at-promise students who may be looking to build upon their strengths and growth. Most students hope that they can meet their trusted leader halfway and that they may be guided in the right direction.

When at-promise students confide in their leaders, most hope that their leaders can supply wisdom and information to them that will help them build upon their own strengths. According

to Bransford et al. (2000), the primary educational focus for leaders is on research that explores how to help all at promise students reach their full potential. Setting the expectation that most students need to have a dependent relationship with their leaders can be crucial for most who are eager to do well. It is important for at promise students and their leaders to learn to build upon establishing a trustworthy relationship by communicating frequently.

It is imperative for leaders to build trust because there may be several students who are seeking to confide in someone, but do not know how to connect (Robinson, 2011). A lot of underserved at-promise students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds learn to shield themselves and become antisocial from those that are trying to help them (Chong et al., 2012). According to Kramer (1999), reliance is on integrity, strength, surety of a student, and instilling confidence is key. At promise students often learn to question someone that is trying help them and will choose to learn to accept or reject them based on what they are willing to provide them. It takes time to break through and establish growth with students because most feel that they have been let down before by others too many times (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004). When building student trust, they learn to build confidence in themselves and will also prosper intellectually, emotionally, and educationally (Noble & McGrath, 2015).

Underserved urban students attempt to learn how to maneuver their way towards excellence, often it can become overbearing for them to become successful on their own (Brooms, 2015). It is imperative for administrators, parents, teachers, and mentors to empower students while providing effective strategies for academic growth and success. Empowered individuals can consider varied perspectives and learn to make their own decisions (Brooms, 2015). Providing empathy for them can help students feel supported, especially when they want to give up on themselves (Hoffman, 2004). At-promise students want to be heard and others to

listen to them. Teachers need to let them know that they believe in them and that they confide in them to do well.

It is important for teachers to instill confidence in at-promise students so that they can learn what it takes to be the next leader or difference maker (Hall & Yarhi-Milo, 2012). Sometimes, at-promise students need teachers to validate them so that they can move forward. According to Hall and Yarhi-Milo, (2012), validation from others is one of the best tools to help emotionally sensitive people manage their emotions effectively. When teachers tell their students that they have the potential to succeed and establish a prestigious career, this can make a substantial difference in an at-promise students' approach. When teachers are attentive towards at promise students, this can instill desire that can help them build motivation for themselves and can help guide them to experience individual success.

Facing Adversity

Many underserved urban students who face adversity have the desire to prove others wrong. Failure is not an option for many, and these at promise students will do whatever it takes to become successful. (Blankstein, 2014). Students look for social reinforcers to be able to move forward (Cherry, 2021). Every obstacle that at promise students experience is a way for them to recreate an alternative solution even if it takes them multiple attempts to achieve the result that they may be looking for. Sometimes failing consecutively awakens them and their approaches towards success may shift a bit. At-promise students learn how to display the competitive edge that drives them to raise their expectations inside the classroom setting (Duke,1998). At-promise students are resilient and learn how to adjust no matter what their circumstances are or what they are up against. It is a constant battle for them to try to fit in, but once they are accepted it makes it easier to adjust.

Goal Oriented

When teachers are goal-oriented, many challenge their students to perform at peak performances, while attempting to maximize their full potential. Once at-promise students start to see positive results, they become motivated to try their best consistently. According to Ding (2020), for students to build skills, the teaching materials presented to them must be coming from a goal-oriented teaching methodology that is developed to teach students to enhance and become logical at creative thinking. Weng et al. (2010), states that when teachers establish mind maps, they enhance one's attention, coordination, ability, planning and integration. One of the central concepts of logical creative thinking is to think outside of their comfort zone and redefine themselves as innovators, inventors and explorers that will help them to become successful. The goal is to build and connect with key concepts and reflect upon what works best for students. At promise students who learn to adapt effectively will gain motivation, sustain it, and really understand what it takes to become successful.

Projected goals within each individual school setting are proposed and often will decipher which programs can be implemented or adapted to help students who lack motivation and are not provided with the appropriate resources. According to Marzo et al. (2001), goal setting is the process of establishing direction for learning. Projected goals are based on the idea that first, a goal is set then the necessary actions are determined to achieve that goal. Many students who attend these urban schools come from needy areas and may not be as motivated to learn because the curriculum presented lacks relevance to their daily experience. Many of these students may be lacking to see the significance of not really being able to make a strong connection as to what they are learning in class which keeps them from seeing what lies ahead of them reaching their personal goals.

Four Theories to Guide the Work

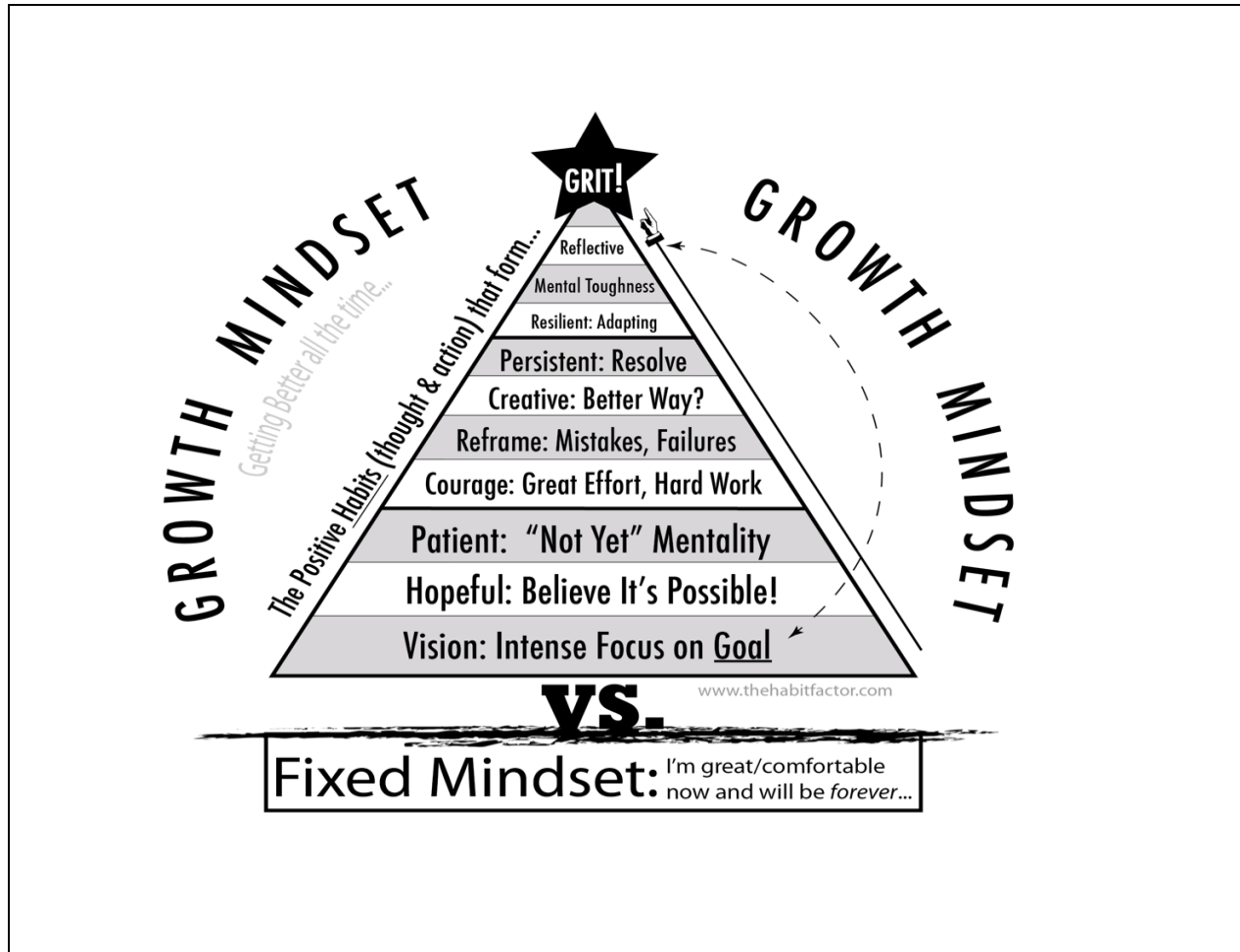
The first theory is known as the Growth Mindset Theory which views challenges and opportunities to improve learning and skills. According to Dweck (2015), “in a growth mindset, many students believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, brains, and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.” Students who may be seeking success also seek guidance from their leaders to learn to reinforce themselves with a threshold of resilient capabilities to grow. When students see intellectual growth, they naturally want more of it. At-promise students learn to become successful whereas success becomes contagious among their peers. Growth mindset teaches at-promise students to aspire more for themselves because once they make progressive steps along their pathway and experience success, they will feel that they can teach themselves to continue to accomplish additional goals that may have been out of reach beforehand. Students become accustomed to what success feels like and try to keep that feeling relevant. It is up to the individual student to always do their best especially when intellectual growth occurs within each learning phase of their journey. Students adjust to their individual needs and become accustomed to do their best to perform to the best of their abilities by maximizing their potential. Often students who are challenged enough attempt to defy the odds and will seek extreme measures to excel.

Students who do not understand the significance of receiving a quality education tend to adopt a fixed mindset and accept and rely on their present status. Often many of these students feel that they cannot change themselves and that their skills will remain mediocre, stagnant, and are not willing to put in the work to help develop their skills. Refer to Figure 2.1 regarding the benefits of establishing a growth mindset. According to Lumsden (1994), students who cannot

succeed need short-term goals and can focus on a strategy that will be more than likely to own the outcome. Often many students who have a questionable work ethic and choose to avoid any challenge may feel that their potential is predetermined and may not be willing to put any extra effort into experiencing success. Many students figure things out the way they are and accept the status quo, feeling misguided or defeated because they do not understand a legitimate pathway to success.

Figure 2. 1

The Habitat Factor-Growth Mixed Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset Pyramid, 2021



(www. thehabitfactor.com Fixed Mindset Pyramid, 2021 www. thehabitfactor.com)

Within each of the 10 steps involved in the growth mindset vs. fixed mindset pyramid, students who inhibit positive habits will be able to develop grit once they adopt resilience and are able to reflect on what they want to accomplish. Within the courage stage, at-promise students are encouraged to put in great effort and hard work to continue to move forward.

The second theory that can help at-promise students grow intellectually is known as the Grit Theory. According to Duckworth (2016), she summarized that grit is passion and sustained persistence applied toward long-term achievement with no particular concern for rewards. Grit combines resilience, ambition, and self-control in the pursuit of goals. Grit overlaps with achievement aspect of conscientiousness where students make efforts to achieve goals and with the dependability to have self-control. The engagement of grit and work performance shows a positive correlation between the two.

Many aspiring students who want to be high achievers are students who have passion and perseverance while learning to establish a willingness to overcome failure. No matter what setbacks are in place, it is important for students to realize that they are part of the solution and that each setback is a temporary deterrent. Students must learn to overcome any obstacle that lies in front of them and keep moving forward with excellence. According to Duckworth (2016), she states that grit turned out to be the astoundingly reliable predictor of who made it through and who did not out of West Point. Out of 4,000 potential students only 1,200 are selected which requires academic success and physical activity which both centered around developing the never give up attitude of grit. It is imperative for students to master their projected goals regardless of how long it takes them to accomplish each task while learning to develop grit.

A third theory known as the Path-Goal theory is geared towards understanding how leadership can operate and how well it impacts someone who wants to learn. According to House and Mitchell (1975), the path-goal theory states that a leader's behavior is important for superior performance as a function of its impact on subordinates' perceptions of paths and the attractiveness of their goals. Strategic thinking can help at-promise students inherit a vision of forethought that can help them to look ahead and see where they may want to be in the future.

The Path-Goal Theory focuses on achievement-oriented leadership qualities that can motivate students to succeed. Eager students who seek success have the tendency to rely upon their selected leaders who can instill achievement-oriented leadership qualities and help guide students to continue a successful path on their own. The stronger the leader the more influential and impactful they can be to assist students who may be seeking an opportunity to experience success. Effective leaders who challenge their students often get them to buy into their belief system that will help elevate their determination of success.

Risks Faced by At Promise Students

House and Mitchel (1975), states the specific relationship between a leader's behavior will depend on personality of the subordinate within the a given task-oriented environment in which students are working in. Students who are faced with risk factors may not know who to turn to receive these leadership qualities and have the same opportunity as others. Often risk factors take over and occupy a student's mindset with diluted concepts where it makes it difficult to think effectively. Students who experience this reality often have a difficult time of envisioning themselves to move along and get ahead in life (Gauna, 2017).

Situational Approach Theory

The fourth theory is known as the Situational Approach Theory supports the relationship between students and their leaders, while focusing on behavioral patterns that will help students learn the necessary skill sets to become more confident in their work (Hershey & Blanchard, 1996).

Many students come from impoverished areas, and they are plagued with the lack of opportunity. Most low socioeconomic areas rely heavily on support services that come from community-

based programs. Many of these crime ridden areas are taken over by gangs that have taken over the mindset of urban students where many lack the free will to think how they want to.

Situational Approach Theory supports the relationship between students and their leaders while focusing on behavioral patterns that will help students learn the necessary skill sets to become more confident in their work. Different situations will demand diverse types of leadership. Hershey and Blanchard (1996), states a situation within this context, is a set of values and attitudes which the individual or group must deal with in a process or activity and regarding which this activity is planned, and its results appreciated. See Figure 2.2 in reference to the Situational Approach Theory Model regarding the benefits of leadership theory and practice. A key element within the first stage of the Situational Approach Theory is titled, the “telling stage, which focuses on a high task, high relationship portion of the process (Hershey & Blanchard, 1996). Within the telling stage, students are willing to do whatever it takes to complete the job for a high reward.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder mindset is common among at promise students. There are many crime-ridden areas that deter the motivation of individuals that supplant their mindset to shift over to living in a survival mindset. When students are in survival mode their mindset is elsewhere and they develop a distorted thinking approach (Dweck, 2016). Students who come from these types of neighborhoods are deprived of the excellent opportunity that lies in front of them or they choose to opt out because they do not think that they are supposed to become successful.

What will it take for urban school students to adapt and make progressive steps to a brighter future if they are not provided with the proper skill sets, strategies, or theories to do so? According to House and Mitchel (1974) as cited in Northouse, (2016) the path-goal theory

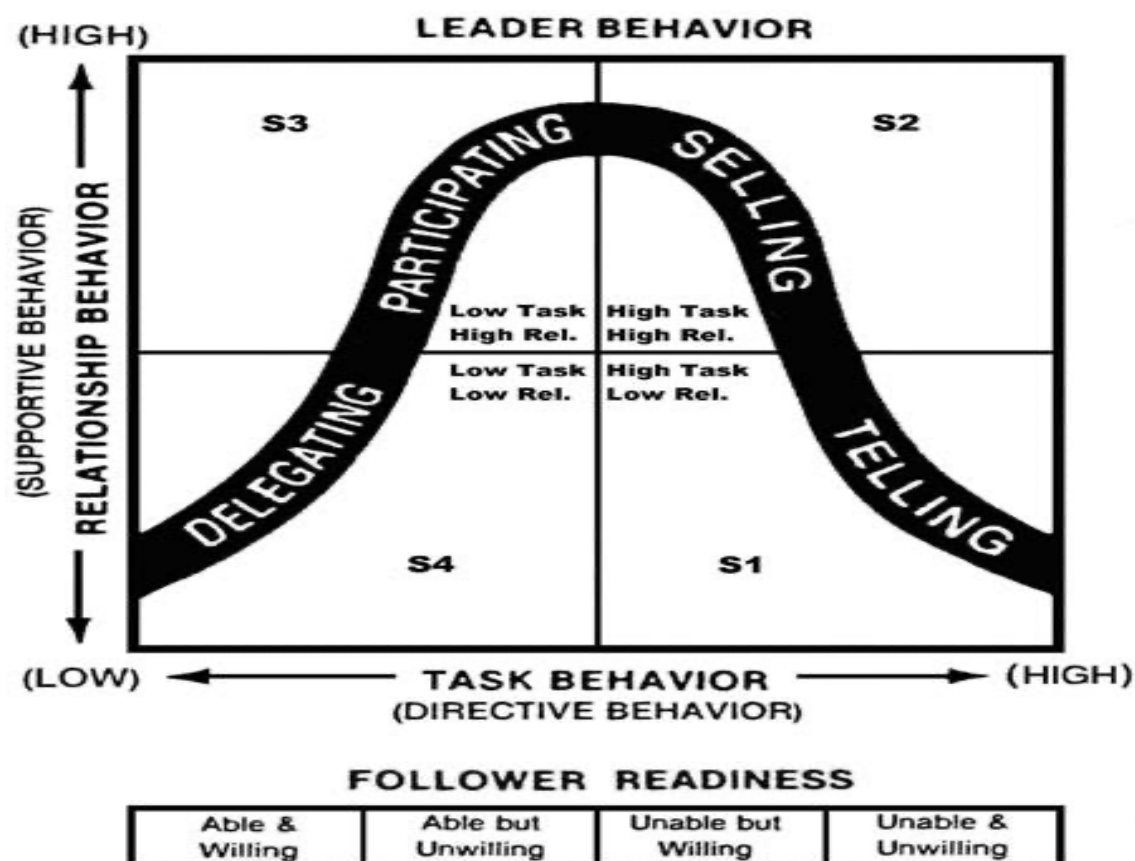
supports the relationship between students and their leaders who follow direct leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership, and the achievement-oriented model. It is imperative for each leader to meet the motivational needs of their followers. The outcomes of students'

performances become relevant when students adopt motivational strategies that they are familiar with. It is crucial for educators to contribute their wealth of knowledge to students and guide them with the sequential steps to learn how to become successful, regardless of what students may be up against.

According to Kim and Hargrove, (2013) as cited by Fenzel and Richardson, (2019) urban students of color, such as boys, often receive inadequate preparation for the level of academic work needed to succeed. Schools have always been viewed as a haven, where students can receive guidance, support, and the essential preparation to become successful. Duckworth, 2018, states that being a "good" person is more imperative than being "great" at something. (pg. 40) The strength of good leaders includes gratitude, empathy, honesty, and social-emotional intelligence (Northouse, 2016). If underserved urban school students were given an equal chance to learn, each motivating factor will enhance their way of thinking which can lead to them having an extensive growth mindset.

Figure 2. 2

Situational Approach Theory Model: Leadership Theory & Practice Model, 2013



According to (Northouse 2016), followers are competent but lack confidence, and the situational approach theory suggests that a leader leads with a supporting style. Leaders need to find out the needs of their students, seek opportunities to help them learn new skills, and become more confident in their work. Within this approach, leadership can really play a crucial factor to help guide underserved at-promise students to learn the necessary steps to build confidence in themselves. Any of these educational theories can help assist students with excelling in their academic performance.

History of National School Reform

Although there are school districts throughout the United States that have excelled and have raised their expectations, there are others that have faced harsh realities and have fallen short of meeting their projected goals (Datahub, 2021). Stakeholders have focused on American educational reform by implementing a variety of education standards and approaches that have been created for students to meet their learning goals. Equity based reform, school of choice reform and standards-based reform has all been the focus to make education a haven and better experience for each student to learn. According to United States National Commission on Excellence in Education (Gardner & Others, 1983), the former term a “Nation at Risk” was coined to help educational stakeholders to make a change. Since then, decision-makers, leaders, and administrators have attempted to redefine their vision, mission, and goal orientation. A Nation at Risk (Gardner & Others, 1983) states that the educational foundations of society have been eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our future as a nation. Many at-promise students who are underserved already face fierce obstacles in their daily lives are now faced with receiving a sub-par education and more than likely are not receiving the quality instruction that they well deserve (Green, 2016). A second term known as “No Child Left Behind”, (2002) was created so students could pass the California High School Exit Exam to accomplish subject matter competency and demonstrate success. After much debate and controversy, “No Child Left Behind” continued to demonstrate that there were additional loopholes in 9th grade English and 9th grade Math. Students were lacking in these arears to meet content area competency and the success rate was very low that were causing students to become credit deficient. Third, the emancipation of the Common Core Standards (2009), took another approach and was developed to allow students to become college and career ready and regardless of where they live or where

they come from, the motivation was geared to get all students to excel within the ranks of education (Karge & Moore, 2015).

Inconsistent and indecisive decision-making puts a damper on education because decisions are constantly being made that affect the livelihood of student performance (Bingham & Ray, 2013). It is imperative that urban education programs provide at-promise students with the best education possible and to prioritize programs based on student needs (Bingham & Ray, 2013). Sometimes problematic decisions must be made that deter these students from being able to have the adequate resources needed to be successful. According to the Obama Administration (Bonnett, 2011), a bold move needed to be created to provide the essentials of education such as the quality of teaching and curriculum and a way to fund them. Often many of these at-promise students fall short of success and never become acclimated within society's expectations and broken promises. Environmental and cultural forces shape the relationship between identity, race gender and school performance (Noguera, 2003). Students learn to become acclimated with who they can identify with and are willing to connect with others to attempt to assimilate and make progress.

State Challenges

Although many underserved urban school districts throughout the State of California may be seeking solutions for student achievement, it is difficult for them to maintain the proper resources due to limited funding. Providing a quality education can be difficult for some underserved urban school districts because they are heavily populated and limited with the required resources to move forward (Ostrander, 2015). According to Ortagus and Kramer (2022), California Federal Education Funding secondary education averages \$5,139 per student who attends school consistently for a complete school year. It is a vital element for students to be in

school so that they learn and so that schools can receive the proper funding to provide programs for their students. When students are not in school, they are missing a lot of information that will help them secure a bright future.

There are approaches across the state that school districts can apply for that will assist with the development of solution-based programs. According to Hays (2017), the Orange County Department of Education states that many school districts anticipate financial projections based on their Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), which determines their allocated funding. When school districts revise their annual budgets, they must produce a plan of action gathering input from community members, parents, students, staff, teachers, and administration. The Local Control Accountability Plan allows school districts to produce and sustain a 3-year plan of action where goals are implemented and presented to the state capitol to implement allotted budgets based on the school district's needs.

Although budgets can be unpredictable, the school district's focal point is to provide the best quality instruction that will be tailored to meet the academic needs of each student. School districts are frequently having to adjust their needs of where to place their teachers or decipher which specialized programs they should keep operating based on the solvency of their allotted funds. Highly qualified teachers, who are not tenured sustaining permanent status are usually the first employees to be let go during unprecedented times. Sometimes schools are forced to hire long-term substitute teachers who can provide daily instruction. This is an example of how students are not fully receiving highly qualified teachers who may be lacking the proper experience needed to keep the students engaged in learning. According to Vinovskis (2009), The No Child Left Behind Act, states that highly qualified teachers have full state certification or licensure and prove that they know the subject matter that they are teaching. Most of the time

school districts are faced with a crisis and forced to assign teachers who may not be completed with the appropriate credential or may be teaching out of their subject matter. How can school districts continue to operate ineffectively by not being able to provide a top-tier education of highly qualified teachers providing instruction for their students? According to the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (2020), highly qualified teachers have demonstrated competency in their appropriate subject matter. Additionally, many school districts lack the necessary resources and call upon outside agencies who are non-certificated employees to provide additional services that school districts may need assistance with (Ostrander, 2015).

Most community workers who work for nonprofit organizations require basic certification to be able to work with students in highly populated urban school districts. They are called upon to provide opportunities and support for students in need. Usually, highly recommended community organizations provide a variety of services such as academic support, academic advising, mentorship, leadership strategies, and restorative practices to help fill the gaps that schools may be lacking to provide (Datahub, 2021). According to the California Department of Education (2020), specialized secondary programs provide grants as startup funds for targeted content areas where students may need additional support in. More than likely underserved urban school districts are faced with annual budgets that can create financial hardships of not being able to hire the most qualified representatives that can provide quality programs for many struggling students in need and that have a desire to join support programs because they are in need for additional guidance.

Students who come from impoverished areas do not have the same opportunities as affluent areas because of limited finances and resources (Ostrander, 2015). If a school site is in an endowment zone neighborhood where school districts must rely on non-profits to come in and

provide their own resources. Some programs can be helpful but are restricted in what they can provide. Students who lack support and are in dire need of assistance from a mentor could use someone to become a pivotal role model in their lives (Sanderse, 2013). Students who are provided with the right fundamentals usually are better prepared and will understand how to show resilience and push forward through adversity. It is imperative to build a foundation so that students can learn to establish some continuity.

Many local school districts have struggled to sustain and provide a well-rounded curriculum for their students. Many at-risk students have left their local districts which has created a significant shift in enrollment. Districts are challenged and have struggled substantially to find ways to keep their students intact as there is a surge of declining enrollment. Parents are constantly looking for suitable programs to meet their children's needs and will opt out for mediocre programs for thriving programs. Families are often getting district permission to leave and go elsewhere to specialize in a program that the local district may not offer. According to Ed Source (2021), Los Angeles County is projected to have the biggest school district in the State of California and will project to have the biggest drop in enrollment of 19.98% by 2031. If underserved urban schools are already at a disadvantage, a drop in enrollment will also have a negative impact on future generations of students who may be seeking to receive a quality instruction and an effective educational experience. According to lbschools.net (2021), Long Beach Unified School District was recognized for their approaches and standardized curriculum by establishing a model example. They were awarded the American Broad Award as exemplary status for providing the greatest improvement and performance in achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic and various socioeconomical groups of students. This urban school district was recognized as America's best Urban School District. Long Beach's low

income, African American and Hispanic students outperformed their peers in other school districts in reading and mathematics (lbschools.net, 2021). State of the art charter schools are being built within inner city areas and are providing new classrooms, reduced student to teacher ratios, new equipment, new books along with sending a message to all that new is better. Many parents feel that smaller schools will provide a personalized education for their children and will be able to provide better resources.

According to Los Angeles Unified School District (2021), LAUSD is the second largest school district in the nation, houses over 600,000 students. A school district of this magnitude may be too big to be able to manage in providing the right programs and resources in place, which can be a tremendous challenge for students to engage in and understand the significance (Ed Source, 2021).

Localized Student Impacts

Many underserved urban schools have experienced a crisis with their students and have struggled to make progressive steps because their students are too far behind. Dixon (2019), states that being in school is different from learning and the world is experiencing a global learning crisis. Millions of children reach young adulthood without understanding the basic skills necessary to survive and adapt efficiently in society. Some students do not pay attention to classwork that is presented to them and fail to understand the significance which displays a learning gap. A lot of these challenged students end up failing and falling further behind, reading below grade level, and do not understand what it takes to catch up. They may be lacking inspiration and do not see the relevance of why it is important to study hard and pay attention to their teachers.

At-risk students who experience a variety of setbacks can be at a major disadvantage when it comes to learning the proper essentials. According to Kuh et al. (2006), student success is linked with a sequence of desired outcomes that confer to benefits on individuals and society. Learning the daily essentials of reading, writing, speaking, and having a sense of purpose are important deciding factors of success.

Low Socioeconomic Areas

There are many urban students who come from low socio-economic areas and who struggle with the daily duties of having a safe and secure place to study. Most of these students are underrepresented and have no one to turn to. How can the expectation be for these students to function properly, if they are faced with a ton of hardships and cycled with a ton of barriers that lie in front of them? Many urban students come from households where there are limited skill sets, because their parents did not receive a quality education. For example, many Hispanic parents come from impoverished areas, and they were forced to work and not receive a quality education, therefore many of their children are taught the proper essentials where many of them are learning on their own. Most of their growth is within the school system and they rely heavily on their teachers for guidance. If certain strategies are not available, then where are they going to receive what it is that they need to get motivated. Many first-generation students' parents were High School Dropouts, and this can either motivate or deter a student. Students can take that adversity and it can either work against them or motivate them to keep going. When students are faced with limited resources, families that lack the proper schooling, achievement gap, oversized classrooms, and qualified teachers. How can they be expected to function properly? Many urban students are having to face additional hardships at home, where they are latch-key students raising themselves, parents having to work multiple jobs, no school support that is provided and

lacking a secure place to study that is limited with noise. Most of these students are in dire need of Positive Behavioral Interventions & Systems of Support and need preventive measures just to be able to sustain an equal opportunity? Students who fall within this spectrum are at such a disadvantage and are still expected to make progressive steps to become successful.

Drop Out Crisis

In today's education system, a growing number of at-risk students are quitting and dropping out of school because they are lacking the motivation that they need to get educated and have a chance to succeed in school. The National Education Longitudinal Study that occurred in 1988 describes that many students drop out of school because they could not keep up with their schoolwork and did not have a good relationship with their teachers (Marsh, 1994). Many at-risk students are not prepared to meet the demands of their teachers and fulfill their district requirements for graduation, therefore choose to abruptly join the workforce unprepared. Many students lack confidence and do not fully understand the significance of being in school, getting equipped with the proper skill sets to function properly. Many students are not learning the necessary skills for them to adapt in society effectively. According to Edsource (2021), when education is not properly given, it can create gaps in education where learning loss occurs, and students may never really recover from what they have missed. Underserved urban schools need to continue to try their best to provide incentives where students will be engaged in the learning environment and continue to strive to graduate from high school.

Students who strive to meet the district benchmark standards and personal competencies may be at odds of accomplishing this task. School districts of high magnitude may lack the proper vision, support, language, and math development programs where students can prepare themselves to excel and become properly equipped. Enrichment programs such as Accelerated

Reader, ST math, Lexia, or Jiji can all help students to become proficient in their subject matter competencies, but it will take a quality systematic approach to be able to establish significant success.

Many at-promise students from underserved urban schools have the tendency to lower their standards and do not complete their expected outcomes, projected goals, or standards because of the lack of motivation that they may have. Urban students must foster good relationships with others, build trust and become relevant to what success has to offer. These students need to feel appreciated and respond to others when provided with the appropriate approaches and motivational strategies. According to (Hornstra et al., 2017), when schoolwork focuses on autonomous motivation, which deals with “wanting,” “fun,” voluntary,” interesting,” “important,” students have a higher success rate. When teachers are willing to provide incentives for their students, it can be an effective way to feel appreciated even more. When teachers establish a reward system that will point out the good, it can be crucial to student success, enhancing their motivation to do better. At-promise students tend to dismiss the importance of things when information is not clear to them because they need to know where they are headed and understand why strategies are presented to them.

Many at-promise students are already faced with obstacles at home and may lack the appropriate resources at school that are needed for them to function effectively. Schools are supposed to be a haven for students to receive adequate education and build confidence that will allow them to stay motivated to succeed. Creating a safe and civil campus and sustaining a positive working environment to learn effectively is essential for all students. It is imperative that at-promise students find their purpose and understand their level of resilience in school which will help determine whether they succeed or fail. Resilient students learn to adopt characteristics

that they can manage while they learn to build on their confidence. Resilience is a process of adapting well in the face of adversity and sources of stress (American Psychological Association, 2020). Bouncing back from difficult experiences can also include profound personal growth. It is important for students to keep moving forward no matter which circumstances lie in front of them. Inheriting a deep belief system is what can keep students from giving up on themselves. When students realize that they should focus on what they can control, it will help them to have a clear state of mind to be able to function properly. When students can improvise and realize that their situation is only temporary, they will learn to find a way to do better for themselves and come up with solutions.

Most students lack proper support at home and feel that they have limited resources because their parents are forced to work long hours to manage their family finances. At-risk students must contend with student poverty, parent education, home resources, and English language proficiency that is outside of their control (Schemo, 2006). Many urban students are having to face these additional hardships, where they are considered latch key students raising themselves, and can connect with their parents until the weekends.

Attempting to Acclimate

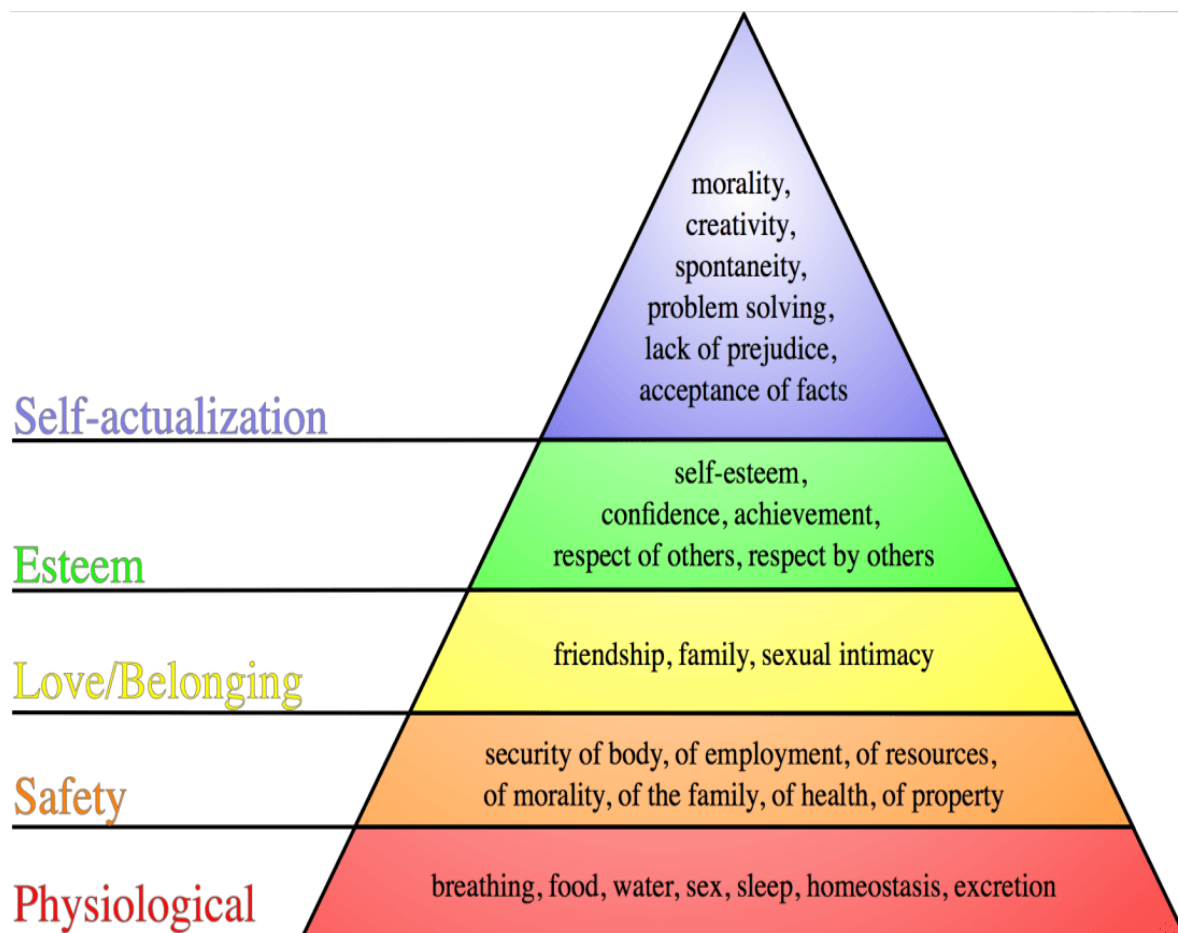
Some students' parents did not acclimate themselves well with education and do not fully understand the educational system here in the United States. Many urban parents do not fully understand the true significance of how important education can offer lifetime incentives for their children. Often parents may be working multiple jobs and do not have time to support and understand the true significance of how important education can offer lifetime incentives for their children. It can be difficult for parents to understand the curriculum that is being provided to them in school. Youth are particularly disadvantaged by a web of socially oppressive

circumstances that isolate them and limit access (Romero, 2017). Many at-risk students who come from disruptive environments will not be able to have a clear process of thinking because they are constantly up against obstacles that are overbearing for them to function properly. Many families may be struggling with the beginning stages of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

See Figure 2.3 for details to understand the steps involved in Maslow's pyramid which list the hierarchy of needs, such as having a difficult time in dealing with food, water, sleep, and homeostasis.

Figure 2. 3

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Learning Needs Pyramid, 1943



Parental Support

Urban students who come from households that have the proper support from both parents usually value education a lot more than others (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). Their outcome is a lot more positive, and the expectation is set for students to follow suit and become successful as well. Many at-promise students who have the right backing and support take advantage of the opportunity that helps them to reach new pathways. Their upbringing is a lot more meaningful, and students are taught to always give their best effort in school because the proper expectation to succeed is taught at an early age. According to the parent engagement toolkit (Goodall, 2018), parents who get involved in their child's education help them to stay engaged in the learning process. Many students rely heavily upon both parents for support because they may be having a tough time understanding the material presented to them in class. Students understand that they can sit down with their parents and ask them for help at any given time. Having a good support structure in place is what most students are trying to capture so that the process is easier for them to excel.

Most underserved at-promise students who do not have parental support and experience trauma have the fear of falling behind and will do whatever they can to not become a statistic in their own community. According to Jennings et al. (2019) trauma and adversity can disrupt the development of the important bonds that children need to reach their full potential. Students who try to create a threshold for themselves attempt to stay motivated among themselves. Many underserved urban students seek to break the educational gap within their family households. Although success does not come easy for them, they learn to keep their intrinsic motivation to keep them focused and moving forward. Once they see that their peers are moving along and getting ahead, they do their best to mimic and do the same. Students learn to adapt to

inconvenient situations and will always try to make themselves look good even though they may be challenged to meet their expectations.

It is imperative that at-promise students build upon their character and strive to be the best that they can be, inside and outside of the classroom. Urban students need to set precedence for themselves so that they can show an eagerness to excel and make great strides to win. When students start to experience success, naturally they want more and will become active learners to achieve more success. According to Sergnese (2016), there is a correlation between an active learning approach, motivation, and engagement as evidenced in achievement. It is important for urban students to try to sustain a balanced lifestyle at school and at home and the more support they have from their teachers, peers, and family members they can focus on what is important to receive a quality education. When the support structure at home is not present, it is difficult for students to take education seriously. It is also important for these students to understand why their education matters and what it can do for their future.

Often when at-promise students experience a lot of distractions, this can deter them from thinking clearly, and their ability becomes distorted. According to Chick (2014), metacognition includes a critical awareness of one's thinking, learning and helps students become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Students who know their strengths can actively monitor their readiness for any task or performance. When students encounter too many stressors, their affective filter takes over, and their mindset shifts. Students decode bits of information but often overlook critical points that can help them to be successful.

Once the proper foundation is provided for underserved urban students, their journey becomes so much easier for them to sustain success. Motivation can be the difference-maker to keep students intact and to keep thrusting forward. Students have the tendency to enjoy quick

gratification and it is imperative for them to be rewarded consistently. Instant gratification occurs immediately after an action is performed and creates motivation (Stearns, 2021). When students are motivated, their drive for success becomes embedded in their thought process and they become acclimated to that feeling. If students are focused, then they will inherit a decent work ethic for themselves where they can learn to thrive on their own. Students will be able to have self-fulfillment where they can push themselves to continue to do well. Students who embed themselves with others who understand the mantra of success, also inherit what it takes to be successful and will do whatever it takes to make it happen.

There are many at-promise students who are underserved and come from low socio-economic areas who struggle with the daily duties of having a safe and secure place to function properly. Many of these urban schools are 1st generation high school students who live in low-income households, attend underperforming schools, and have limited support at home because their parents were not able to receive a quality education like their children seek, which creates a learning gap. According to Hannon and MacKay (2021), the Liger Leadership Academy states that education levels affect the family income and if parents are not able to provide for their children financially, then students are forced to have limited resources to connect with around their household. Often, these are the results of underserved at-promise students not having the full exposure to educational opportunities that can benefit them with their education. If students are not encouraged by their parents, then it can be a challenge for them to do well in school.

There are many underserved at-promise students that are affected mentally by obstacles that are damaging to them psychologically. According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2020), Adverse Childhood Effects put a strain on children that normally would have a chance to think straight. Adverse Childhood Effects have a tremendous impact on

future violence victimization, perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. When providing the proper support for students in need, most will be able to have a safe nurturing relationship with their supporters where they will be able to thrive and focus on success. When students are teamed up with additional supporters and receive quality aid from great leaders, teachers, mentors, support staff, and parents this can be the difference that will allow them to want to stay motivated and try.

External factors such as providing a positive school climate can also instill hope in students who want to be part of a school district that provides the proper support as school climate has a link to different outcomes for students (Gauna, 2017). Tiberi (2021), states that school climate can be predictive of academic achievement and benefit a student's healthy development. There are many students that excel because they receive the right support and are taught how to become successful and are provided with effective methodologies. When schools allow students to join forces with teachers and create positive change, there are many benefits that help establish a positive school culture that can create tremendous results.

Programs that produce satisfactory results are implemented to help improve schools to function better such as the afterschool program, extended school year program, Saturday Academy which will allow students to put in extra time to learn and earn an effective outcome. According to Public School Review (2021), the benefits of attending summer school are academic, social, cognitive development, and personal enrichment opportunities. When students are resilient and put in an extra effort, they have the tendency to keep thriving and to try to take advantage of a variety of options.

Students who implement coping mechanisms that can benefit them while making progress towards their personal goals learn how to establish key elements toward educational

success. When students ask others to assist them and take responsibility for their actions, they learn to engage in problem-solving techniques (Ruben et al, 2007). At-promise students will be able to maintain emotional support which will help them to overcome their obstacles. According to Dunn (2008), coping mechanisms help people adjust to stressful events while being able to maintain their emotional well-being and establish resilience. Although there are many hardships that students deal with, many try their best to work their way through each aspect whether it influences their individual outcome or not. Many at-promise students who learn to sustain a mental balance while facing adversity can learn to gain intrinsic motivation that can help them to make progressive steps and keep moving forward.

Although many factors play a significant role in the lives of at-promise students, some often will try to do what they can to establish growth. When schools provide support structures that students need, they can have a significant influence in helping guide students to stay focused. Many students learn to become confident and create a platform for themselves where they feel that they can do all things no matter what they are up against. According to Bentley University (2021), the benefits of joining a support structure are that students will learn about themselves, they will learn how to work with a team, they will develop soft skills and they will gain leadership skills that they can apply in class. It is a vital part if students can get involved in some type of support group that will help provide moral support.

When students join clubs, specialized programs, college-bound programs, mentoring programs they will learn to create an identity for themselves. Getting involved in school organizations allows students to display leadership skills and to become independent thinkers and decision-makers. There are established college-bound programs such as the Puente Program, Advancement Via Individual Determination, and Gear Up that can help students to understand

all the necessary steps to become college and career-ready. According to Huerta (2021), the key to the Puente program is to provide a comprehensive strategic approach where underserved students will enroll into a 4-year University. These programs specialize in mentorship and provide direct pathways to help students reach their full potential and understanding the makeup of college-bound initiative programs.

Most college bound programs provide mentorship and can establish advantages for students to become successful and want to prepare themselves to become academically focused (Abu Zaineh & Karge, 2019). Students become inspired by their peers because they are led to make great decisions and are inspired to be held accountable. Most of the time when at-promise students are provided with the proper support, curriculum and understand all the elements of success, this is what can be the difference in allowing them to become successful.

There are specialized programs like Advancement Via Individual Determination that can help prepare at-promise students with college guidance, mentorship, and the implementation of motivational strategies that are embedded in their daily curriculum. Each student is provided with WICOR strategies that focus on Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization, and Reading and will also help them to stay organized (McMullen, 2017). Once students are accepted into a program like Advancement Via Individual Determination, they adopt goal-setting strategies that will prepare them for immediate success. Huerta (2013), states that teachers and students both need to work together in a positive, collaborative, and impactful environment that stimulates a lot of interest. At-promise students are provided with a sequence of steps that can be beneficial to their daily regimens such as creating a four-year plan, learning Cornell note taking, honoring a parent-student signed contract agreement, and learning about the benefits of college and career pathways.

At promise students who join Advancement Via Individual Determination develop a growth mindset that teaches them how to put in the extra effort that is required for them to build on new skills (Woolridge, 2017). Early foundational learning is critical for at-promise students to make substantial steps toward future learning incentives. According to Schiller (2019), building a foundation is the ladder to ensure a future where students can adapt and thrive to gain an understanding of one's emotions and feelings. Their mindset changes because their expectations rise, and they learn to establish a foundation that keeps them building upon successful traits. Students learn and understand what they must adopt to make it work and become successful. There is a consistent sequence of events that occur within the Advancement Via Individual Determination program that will allow students to experience instant gratification which helps them to consistently be recognized for what they have accomplished. The curriculum provided teaches them to stay prepared every step of the way.

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports is a program that allows teachers to reward students based on good behavior which establishes a connection and provides positive outcomes (Gauna, 2017). Giving students incentives to work hard and to randomly be selected to receive a special privilege of being rewarded is what helps motivate students to do well in school. Most at-promise students want to be recognized, which helps them feel happy and valued about their individual progress. According to Hatch (2017), Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports has a lot of opportunities for improved student learning outcomes where students can be rewarded. When students arrive at school on time, finish completed homework, show respect for others, they can be rewarded. These behaviors are all key characteristics that students can follow as they adopt what is expected of them.

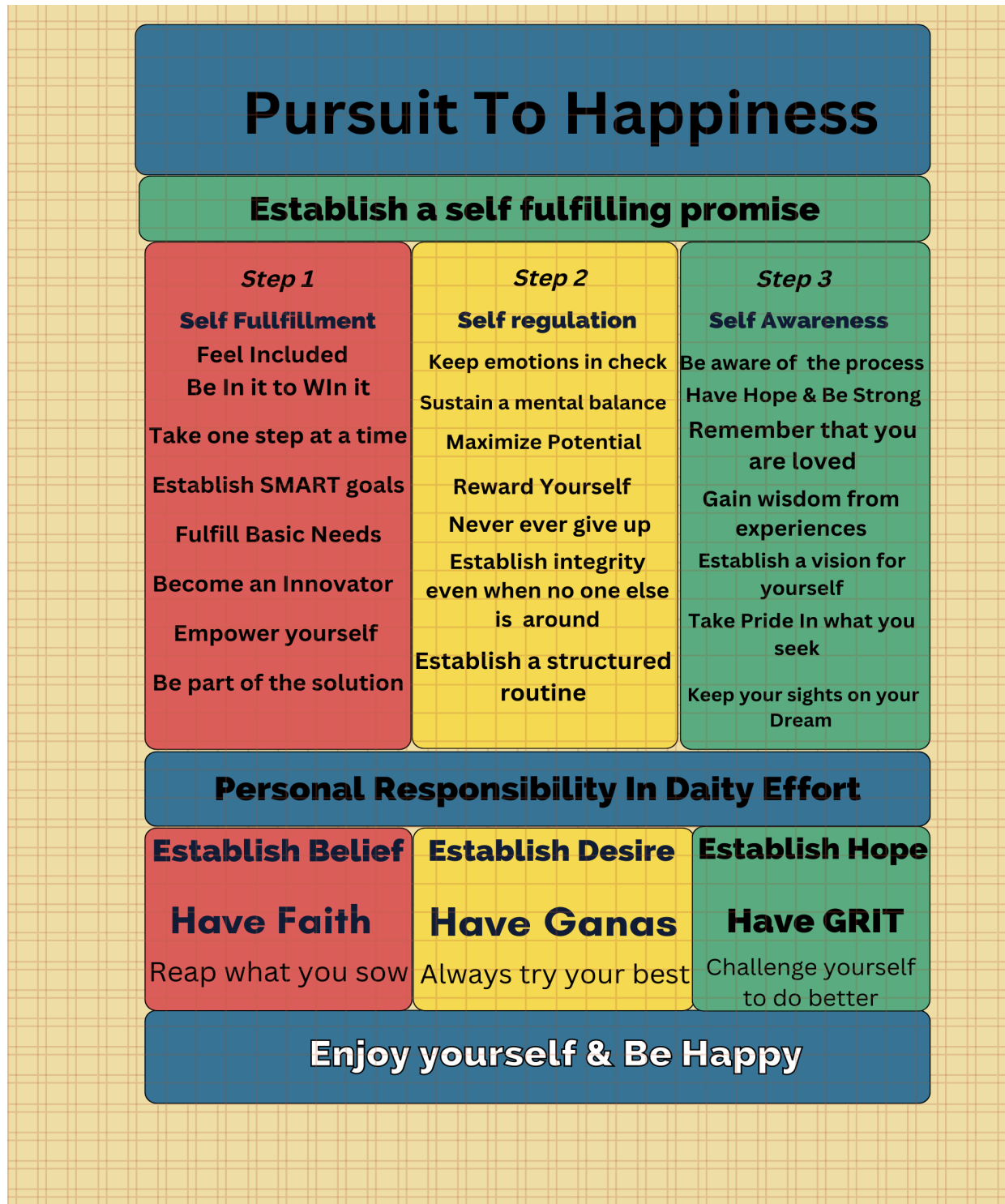
When school personnel can create a matrix that everyone can adopt and follow, then the structure of the school will be able to set precedence in setting ambitious standards for all to respect. (See Figure 2.4). According to Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (2021), support helps students develop the skills they need to benefit from core programs at schools. Schools are recommended to be creative and set up acronyms that represent a schoolwide approach that will help motivate students. Several types of approaches are adopted to represent each day of the week. Underserved at-promise schools must set up theme-based approaches for every day of the week such as Proactive Mondays, United Tuesdays, Motivated Wednesdays, Thriving Thursdays, and Fantastic Fridays. Urban schools must be creative so that their students can stay engaged in the learning process (Jackson, 2015). While at- promise students may be seeking to become leaders at their school sites, it is important that they attempt to demonstrate goodwill and become servant leaders among their peers.

Big Concern

Although Southern California school districts have reached a graduation rate of 83.2%, one of the biggest concerns is the increasing number of students dropping out of school. (Datahub, 2021). Approximately 4.5 % of urban students do not reach their 12th-grade year in school and end up quitting (Adams, 2015). Although not everyone fails, many students lag and do not finish their education. It has become apparent that there is a significant concern or problem that our society is faced with because many students are not being provided with the proper essentials to stimulate their minds and become successful. Most of these underserved urban students who fall within this spectrum rely heavily on motivation to succeed in school and learn the appropriate tactics to continue their education. In this study, inspiration, grit, persistence, and tenacity will be explored to gain great results.

Figure 2. 4

Adrian Rios' Pursuit to Happiness Infographic Matrix, 2022



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The preliminary goal for this research study was to find out if at-risk students developed a growth mindset while sustaining educational resiliency. Motivational strategies enhanced the growth mindset of underserved urban students who were eager to learn. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized to operationalize each of the variables. Each chapter was broken down into its appropriate components that demonstrated reliable approaches, such as the type of study, instruments used, strategies offered, theories studied, and leadership skills taken.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of this mixed-methods triangulation study was to gather two sources of data that were independent from one another. The researcher gathered data from staff members including administrators, teachers, support staff and classified staff that helped provide a better understanding of how underserved urban students function and operate within their educational obstacles. Gathering this data helped understand how underserved urban students who experience barriers can learn motivational strategies to sustain educational resiliency and succeed. The researcher provided staff members with a series of questions that focused on their personal experiences and having to overcome barriers themselves. Secondly, the researcher hosted individual interviews that helped gain a deeper understanding of this study to create reliability. A variety of questions were asked to each interviewee to gain a deeper understanding of their approaches and beliefs about education. At this stage in the research, key elements to solution-based approaches were utilized to adopt approaches and strategies that enhanced motivational theories such as the growth mindset theory, grit theory, path-goal theory, and situational approach theory that helped stimulate the mind and development of a healthy growth

mindset. This research study provided a harsh realization that many underserved urban school students have not been taught to adopt motivational strategies that can really enhance their success in school. A second source of data that was collected to gain a better understanding of the researcher's study was to collect the Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys focused on the socioemotional well-being of student's mindsets.

The following primary research question and sub questions were utilized to gain a deeper understanding of *How at promise students can establish a growth mindset while sustaining educational resiliency to succeed in school?*

- 1) How can urban students who experience obstacles learn motivation strategies to sustain educational resiliency?
- 2) How does receiving a quality education provide at promise students (formerly known as at-risk students) with a pathway to success or graduation?
- 3) How do underserved urban school students succeed in developing a growth mindset even when they are not being provided with the necessary tools to learn at school?
- 4) What is the relationship between a high school quality education and student's educational aspirations?

Setting and Participants

This study's sample consisted of gathering data from a centralized urban school district located in Southern, California. According to California School Dashboard (2022), this school district houses 55 school sites, with 34 elementary schools, 10 middle schools and 11 high schools that have a total enrollment of 43,917 students. 88.1% of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged. The selected school housed 9th-12 grade students totaling 1,575 students with the demographic breakdown of 0.3% African American, 0.1% American Indian, 1.8% Asian, 0.5%

Filipino, and 95.4% Hispanic, 1.1% White, 0.4% Pacific Islander and 0.4% other. The first high school selected has approximately 120 staff members. The second high school selected has a total of 3,323 students and 9th -12th grade students with the demographic breakdown of 0.1% African American, 0.2% American Indian, 0.3% Asian, 0.2% Filipino, 98.8% Hispanic, 0.3% White, 0.1% Pacific Islander. The second high school has approximately 135 staff members. The educational factors within the selected city were approximately 59.6% of people that live in the city have a high school diploma for persons higher than 25 years old, 15% have a bachelor's degree or higher aged 25 years of age.

The overall focus of the researcher's study was two urban school high school settings where the approximate age of participants were staff members who ranged between 19 to 65 years of age. Each of the adult groups selected were divided by age such as, 19 – 25-year-old high school graduates and/or college graduates, the second group of adults ages ranged from 26– 40-year-olds who were high school graduates and were working professionals and still may have been working on an additional college degree and the last group of adults ages ranged from 41 to 65 year-olds who were former college students and were working professionals having some experience in education. It was imperative to gain insight from adult groups whose age ranges varied that could establish a variety of point of views that could produce a diversified approach.

Sampling Procedures

To compliment getting a high participation rate within the researcher's study, the researcher requested administrators, teachers, support staff and classified staff to participate. The researcher had a meeting with two secondary high school principals and requested for them to assist the researcher in becoming familiar with their staff members and if they could recommend staff who they thought would be willing to participate in the researcher's study. The researcher

used convenient sampling and chose participants based on expert recommendations and by requesting staff members to participate. The researcher provided a consent form, a letter describing background and presented to staff members at a meeting. The researcher also set up a Zoom meeting to see who would be interested to participate in the researcher's study. The researcher made sure that the selected participants represented an equitable portion of participants that corroborated from different backgrounds. The researcher sought participants from different upbringings by making sure that participants represented different parts of the population. The researcher selected participants from four types of job descriptions such as classroom teachers, classified staff, support staff, and administrators. The researcher had a selected group of participants and gathered data from two focus groups, individualized interviews along with results that were collected from Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys. For the participants to sustain anonymity, the school site and district were both kept confidential. All of these selection methods were approved by the district research department.

Instruments and Measures

The instruments used in this study were Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys to gather secondary data that was utilized by two different secondary school sites that were distributed to students. Data was collected to gain a better understanding based on their responses. A focus group of 6-10 staff members participated in a series of interview questions to gain a deeper understanding. The focus group consisted of a 45 minute open ended interview on zoom where participants were asked a series of questions. Each school participant was given the chance to answer any of the questions and provide their point of view towards questions that pertained to their experience in education. Each staff member who participated in

the focus group consisted of certificated teachers, a teacher on special assignment, counselors, administrators along with classified staff members that were composed of a school resource officer and athletic trainer to gain a multi perspective on their beliefs. The goal was to create constructive validity and to provide a true reality. Gathering information from reliable staff members was utilized to create distinctive reliability.

Individual 30-minute interviews were also conducted with selected participants who were willing to participate to further elaborate on their perspective and beliefs on education. This was a way to gain additional insight and to hear a different perspective as many were willing to express themselves more because they were by themselves. Each individual participant was given 10 questions to provide their truth, while the researcher was managing the time. The researcher embedded some of the questions to be able to utilize and gain a better understanding by clarifying their answers. The individual participants were also given a series of questions displayed on a Google form that included a series of Likert scale questions and open-ended questions for staff members to respond to on their own with no time frame. Semi structures questions were also used to keep participants on track and so that they would not divert away.

See Table 3.1 for Research Questions and Instrumentation of Qualitative and Quantitative research approaches.

Table 1. 1*Interview Questions and Data Collection*

Research Questions	Quantitative	Qualitative
1)How can urban students who experience obstacles learn motivation strategies to sustain educational resiliency?	Teacher Surveys Likert Scale (Scale 1-5) Ex. Much Often Sometimes Almost Always To a Considerable Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire Ex. Can you name leadership strategies that are effective? • Interviews - individual and small focus groups
2) How does receiving a quality education provide at promise students (formerly known as at-risk students) with a pathway to success or graduation?	Teacher Surveys Likert Scale (Scale 1-5) Ex. Much Often Sometimes Almost Always To a Considerable Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient Sampling based on characteristics within a pool of respondents. • Visit Classroom teacher if needed
3) How do underserved urban school students succeed in developing a growth mindset even when they are not being Provided with the necessary tools to learn at school?	Teacher Surveys Likert Scale (Scale 1-5) Ex. Much Often Sometimes Almost Always To a Considerable Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews - individual and small group • Audio Visuals Write down what is said and heard
4)What is the relationship between a high school quality education and students' educational aspirations?	Teacher Surveys Likert Scale (Scale 1-5) Ex. Much	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journaling - Writing down key information

Often
Sometimes
Almost Always
To a Considerable
Degree

- Digital Record - coding Themes

Reliability

To establish reliability, the researcher gathered data utilizing a couple of instruments. A survey was administered to staff members, such as administrators, teachers, support staff and classified staff to get a better understanding and to create reliability. Additional individualized interviews were conducted to create a in depth firsthand knowledge, manage commitments, requiring participants to be consistent and truthful. Reliability can be enhanced if the researcher obtains detailed field notes by employing good-quality recording devices and by transcribing the digital files. (Silverman 2013 as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018). Once the data was collected, the researcher put the participants responses and coded them into themes. Gathering data from transcribing interviews enhanced knowledge and to key in on consistent use of information.

Validity

Within the mixed methods study, the research is designed to collect data from a variety of instruments. Surveys, staff questionnaires and observations. Additionally, the researcher measured results from one-on-one interviews, focus groups and putting himself as the researcher in the cultural setting. This is an effective way to receive a clear understanding of behaviors and how students respond. It is essential to see how a culture sharing group functions and operates properly. It is imperative to create a valid study that can demonstrate reliable results and that can come from validated resources.

The researcher elaborated on the area of study that focused on how urban students who face obstacles can use motivational strategies that will enhance their growth mindset and establish educational resiliency. Within the research study, it was essential to conduct zoom meetings, interview staff members, visit schools, classrooms, and functions to see what really happens within the school setting. Seeing and understanding how teachers operate and how

students respond to what was presented to them was a key element. Once this information was gathered, the findings provided insight for a deeper understanding. Secondly, it was essential to create surveys that were clear and concise within each question so that participants will provide an honest answer. What can be avoided is to create a survey that displays guided questions, because the survey can be misleading and display invalid results. Lastly, once interviews were conducted, it was necessary to gather the findings and collectively code them according to their statistical significance. Validity in qualitative research is not the result of indifference, but of integrity (Maxwell, 2013) Making validity an explicit component of design can help address the issue. Sometimes, information that is gathered can have a skewed interpretation or have a bias because often researchers allow their own perceptions to get involved and determine their result. The research focused on respondent validation because it is the single most important way of ruling out misinterpreting the meaning of what people say and do. Based on their perspective, they know what is going on, as well as understanding how to identify biases and misunderstandings of what is observed (Bryman 1988, Lincoln & Guba 1985 as cited in Maxwell, 2013). Staying focused on the definitive results was a key element for successful research and it was important to try to rule out any type of validity threats as much as possible. In conclusion, when conducting research, it was important to utilize a diversified approach to produce reliable findings that will provide a valid result.

Data Collection

The researcher collected data by taking on a variety of quantitative and qualitative approaches while utilizing a couple of instruments. Data was collected from Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys, a participant survey, two focus groups of participants who were interviewed for approximately 45 minutes. Participants were provided a

series of open-ended questions and were asked to elaborate on their personal approaches, experiences, and beliefs within their education backgrounds. The researcher sought to gain insight and in-depth knowledge from each participant. Within both focus groups, several participants were asked to conduct additional one on one interviews for those that were interested to provide additional details on their perception of education.

There were several individual interviews that were conducted and recorded so that the transcription established attempted to be a reliable source. Journaling while writing down verbatim information was a key factor as well in the research study to reference back to when needed. It was important to specifically gather as much factual knowledge as possible that the researcher felt was important. Convenient sampling was conducted to gather data and to explain specific themes that were utilized to create concepts and establish significance that may be needed later within the researcher's study.

It was important to visit several secondary school sites within the same school district to witness if motivational strategies, educational theories, or leadership skills were being utilized effectively inside of the classrooms or around the school site. It would have been better to physically interview students, but because of Covid, the researcher used secondary data by interviewing adults who can relate and understand their students' perspectives. Adult participants were welcomed to be open and honest while being recorded during their interview sessions and were also welcomed to participate in a focus group of 6 to 10 participants. Each interview was hosted online in a Zoom conference that was being recorded. Once the data was gathered, all the information was coded into themes that reflected what was exactly said and then the information was transcribed. It was important for participants to be as specific as possible. These approaches were utilized to collect data efficiently.

Two sources of data recorded independently corroborated. These approaches were investigated to collect sufficient reliable data. There were several individual one-on-one interviews that were conducted and recorded so that the researcher could gather a better understanding of staff members educational backgrounds and upbringing.

Data Analysis

Based on data provided, each participant within each of the focus groups was allowed to share their point of views and other participants provided additional viewpoints on how they felt about education, motivation, growth mindset, fixed mindset, underserved urban education, at promise students, educational theories, and personal beliefs. Some of the results varied, while other findings overlapped one another which provided an in-depth understanding based on the information provided. Seeing the comparisons allowed the researcher to also collect a wide spectrum of results that created a variety of perspectives. The data from each of the surveys was gathered and coded into common themes.

Based on the aspects of coding, it was apparent that many themes were created based on what each participant suggested and displayed. Open Coding was organized into emerging core categories. Themes and variables were created based on the results provided by each participant. Some of the areas that were difficult for several participants was knowing the differences between at-promise students vs. high achieving students. This study needed to clarify that by providing more illustrations and examples that were relative. It was apparent that few participants focused on the importance of at-promise students because they may be used to the old term that has been used for many years, where students were usually called at-risk students. According to (McKenzie & Rios, 2019), the state bill was passed that does not change the

definition of “at-risk”, it merely replaces it with “at-promise”. (Pg.1) At-risk students will now be referenced to as at-promise students.

Delve was a user-friendly software program to analyze qualitative data and was easy to code words into specific themes. Each theme displayed a great significance of importance when breaking down specific words that were most utilized by each participant. Several methods were used to create reliability such as internal consistency, test and retest reliability and parallel forms of reliability. During the entire process of gathering feedback, delve provided some insight into which words really stood out significantly. Themes that were the most popular choice consisted of motivation, resiliency, observation, college and at-risk.

Themes that were not so popular consisted of obstacles, at-promise, trauma informed and strategies. After further review, it makes sense for the researcher to take on a whole new perspective of which themes to capitalize on within this research study. The entire coding process created a clear indication for the researcher and made it seem easier for the whole dissertation journey. It is something for the researcher to look forward to by keeping things organized and structured. The process was as easy as putting in the theme's name, coding it and clicking on the theme to see the results.

See Figure 3.1 to learn how to support urban students who face obstacles and want to enhance a growth mindset to sustain educational resiliency. Provided are motivational strategies, educational theories, leadership skills, creating a pathway to success, coping mechanisms and social emotional strategies which can assist students who may need guidance in seeking a pathway to achieve a brighter future.

Figure 3. 1

Adrian Rios' Parents, Teachers, Students Creating a Pathway to Success, 2022



Narrative Structure

Within the data analysis process, it was apparent that there were procedures involved to produce a variety of themes. It was evident that each participant had to produce a step-by-step procedure of how to secure their own findings. For example, managing and organizing the data was such a key element, reading emergent ideas was necessary to see which themes could be created, described, and classified the repeated words into themes are what helps to stay organized. Developing interpretations to see what was relative and finally visualizing the data and seeing the total number of themes allows each participant to produce their findings. After further reviewing each video presentation it was apparent that there is a lot of time, experience and expertise that goes into the research process. Each of their presentations had great samples that created some promise around the study that the researcher was seeking to embark upon.

This research study focused on a triangulation mixed methods design that highlighted the importance of understanding how a specific culture of at promise urban students needed specific motivational strategies, educational theories, and leadership skills to experience educational success. It was imperative for these students and staff members to adopt a variety of strategies that would assist them to become successful in education and sustain resiliency.

There are motivational strategies that can help underserved at-promise students develop a strong threshold and maneuver their way through inconvenient situations. Students who are driven have a better understanding of becoming goal-oriented and will seek assistance from their leaders. At times, many urban students were overlooked and not given the proper opportunity, therefore these students were disengaged and acted out as if they do not care. Many of these students sought after a chance to better equip themselves. A critical researcher can address

inequality in society or some part of it and advocate a recall for changes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). If schools have not provided the necessary elements for engaging their students, then change may be needed. Urban school districts that pay attention to detail and are proactive have achieved the best results. The overall goal of this convergent parallel research design generated shared patterns, themes, and concepts of a cultural description. This triangulation mixed methods design signified how motivational strategies, educational theories and leadership skills can enhance the growth mindset of urban school students who may be seeking ways to experience success in school.

Ethical Issues

There were many challenges in all stages of research that dealt with different criteria, whether it was designing the study, keeping things confidential, having informed consent for all participants that would like to remain anonymous. Also, when conducting interviews, it was important to have open-ended questions so that the researcher will not be able to sway in a specific way. Sometimes the interaction between researchers and the participants were a challenge because bias start to set in. It was up to the researcher to not allow a personal point of view to get in the way of what was being asked of each participant. Participants were challenged as well because they had provided insight, honesty and integrity while answering each question.

When evaluating or observing participants it was imperative to write what the researcher saw and try to be as accurate as possible when gathering information. An essential element was to always show respect for others and to be as flexible as possible to meet the needs of each participant. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), within a researcher's study the narratives are written in a literary approach that may limit the audience for the work and may be challenging for authors accustomed to traditional approaches to scientific writing.

Summary

The researcher conducted a research study that sought out to see if at promise students who come from underserved urban schools have accessibility to acquire motivational strategies, educational theories, and leadership skills to succeed. Secondly, the researcher gained insight and a wealth of knowledge within the mindset of at promise students who come from underserved urban schools. These students develop educational resiliency, while attempting to manage their thought process while being on survival mode, especially if they were coming from a high intensified area where they have experienced trauma. The researcher gained an understanding that traumatic experiences distort the clarity of their way of thinking. Students who delineate from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset have the tendency to learn more overall because they become accustomed to being engaged, gaining motivation, adopting leadership skills, and utilizing educational theories in the process of learning. Even though many at-promise students may lack the appropriate resources and opportunities, the researcher gained reliable insight in understanding what is essential and needed for students to become successful and more productive. The researcher found out which pathways were the most effective to sustain within underserved urban student's schools.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

When conducting the qualitative and quantitative research study, the experience was well thought out and all participants were receptive to providing key information. Each participant was willing to take a Google survey as well to provide additional insight in written format. During the individual interviews most of the participants felt comfortable and were willing to express their personal upbringing and how their experiences could provide insight to the research study. Students from two different secondary high schools provided results from the Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys that provided detailed information. Students provided insight on topics such as, school likeness, establishing positive relationships, interpersonal well-being, hope, social emotional well-being, school climate, learning environment and many other significant topics to educational needs.

Within the focus groups, there was a variety of participants that consisted of administrators, teachers, a teacher on special assignment, counselors, an athletic specialist, and a district safety officer that provided a spectrum of knowledge. Each participant was able to elaborate on each of their personal perspective and points of view, which created a spectrum of outcomes. Overall, the collected findings demonstrated mixed reviews and allowed the researcher to understand the mindset of what students were thinking and how they were operating.

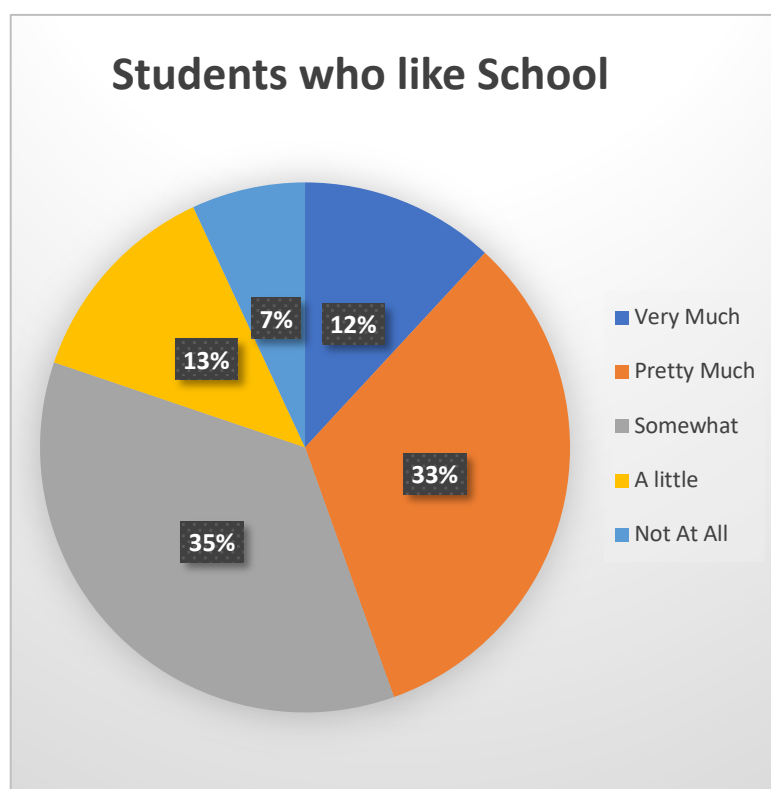
Survey Topics

Surveys were conducted within two secondary school sites that were in inner city Southern California. High School students were provided with the opportunity to give their insight within a variety of topics. The focus was on interpersonal well-being, social emotional learning, school climate, positive relationships, and more. Students were allotted a timeframe to complete each of the Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys. Once the surveys were completed, the data was collected, reviewed, and the findings were gathered.

The first survey question allowed students to reflect on whether they liked school. Refer to Figure 4.1 for the results. When 2,671 students were asked how they liked school, 871, (33%) of the students were favorable and stated that they pretty much liked school, while 323, (12%) liked school very much. Overall, 93% demonstrated some type of interest in school. When combining students who showed little or no interest or others who did not like school at all, 526, (20%) did not favor school at all. Nine hundred and fifty one students stated that they somewhat liked school was an indication that most of these students may not be fully engaged because they are faced with obstacles that deter them from fully being engaged and liking school fully.

Figure 4. 1

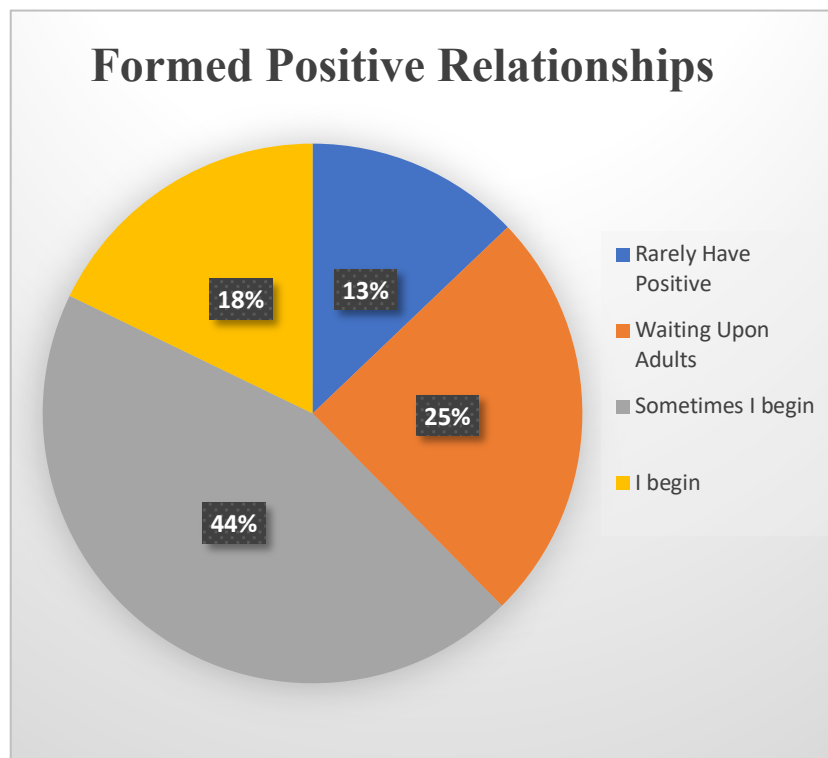
Core Survey Results, 2021-2022



The second question asked the participants, how have you typically formed positive relationships with adults this year? The results demonstrated that 353, (13%) of students rarely had positive relationships. Many had the tendency to wait upon adults to approach them to form a relationship. Only 471, (18%) students initiated forming a positive relationship. Figure 4.2 results demonstrate that while students initiate forming a relationship, others are open to others approaching them, which demonstrates the significance and importance of having a positive relationship with students. There is a connection between adults and students who form relationships and students will more likely want to attend school.

It is imperative for underserved urban students to establish positive working relationships with teachers, coaches, mentors, or adults that they can confide in (Lyonsa & Chan, 2021). When building trust with others, it allows students to inherit motivating approaches and tactics to achieve their personal goals that they may be seeking. The benefits can be extremely rewarding for students to rely upon for guidance. Often positive influences will allow students to stay focused, be encouraged to do better or have the confidence to ask questions when needed. Establishing positive relationships is essential to establishing growth where the results can be tremendous.

Most underserved urban students who seek out positive relationships with their leaders can benefit to establish positive change. Six hundred and seventy five, (25%) of the students stated that they were in a positive relationship. When students wait for others to establish a positive relationship with them, they may be missing out on an opportunity to excel. Four hundred and seventy one, (18%) have demonstrated leadership qualities by taking the initiative to begin relationships with adults.

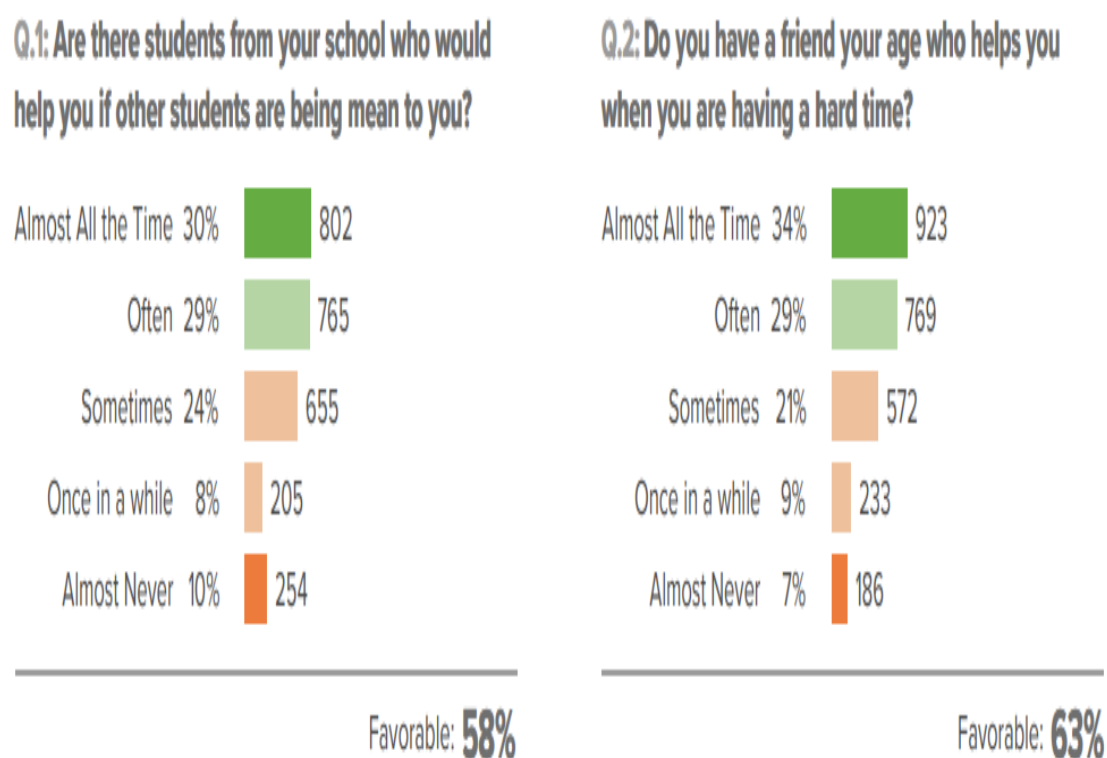
Figure 4. 2*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

In Figure 4.3 two questions are represented. First are their students from your school who would help you if other students were being mean to you? The results stated that 802, (30%) students felt that they would receive help almost all of the time. Seven hundred and sixty five, (29%) of the students often would receive help, while 655, (24%) felt that they would receive help sometimes. Most of the urban students who benefit from receiving assistance and support from others, felt good about receiving help. Two hundred and five, (8%) would receive help once in a while and 254, (10%) almost never would receive help. Figure 4.3 results demonstrate the interpersonal well-being of students is a vital piece for them to build confidence and feel good about themselves.

The second question in Figure 4.3, asked, do you have a friend your age who helps you when you are having a hard time? Nine hundred and twenty three, (34%) of the results stated all of the time, 769, (29%) often, 572, (21) sometimes, 233, (9%), once in a while, and 186, (7%) never. Many of the students stated that they could rely upon a friend their age and vent out with them when they were having a hard time. When urban students have the proper support, the positive outcomes outweigh the negative results.

Figure 4. 3

Interspersal Well Being Panorama Survey Results, 2021



At both secondary school sites, students were asked the same question, which type of adults helped you the most this year? Students were allowed to check, all that applied to them. 1436, (54%) stated Teachers helped, 601, (23%) stated that Counselors helped, 169, (6%) stated

that Therapists helped and 1524, (58%) stated that parents helped the most. Teachers and Counselors were both strong contributors within each school site having the most contact with students daily. Teachers and Counselors have access to establish working relationships, provide additional support, and contribute to provide guidance. Parents who engaged in helping their children out resulted with strongest findings. Unexpectedly, mentors and therapist resulted in demonstrating limited interaction with students due to a variety of factors involved such as being task oriented, working multiple sites and only calling out students only when needed.

Secondary School #1

Q.3: Which type of adults have helped you the most this year? (Check all that apply)

Teacher 54% 1436

Counselor 23% 601

Therapist 6% 169

Parent 58% 1524

Guardian 15% 383

Sibling 36% 960

Other Family Member 24% 622

Coach 17% 452

Mentor 4% 107

Spiritual Leader 2% 39

Social Worker 2% 59

No One 7% 189

Other 18% 473

At the second secondary site, students were asked the same question. The results were very similar when comparing both school sites. Teachers, Counselors and Parents were all strong contributors for students. 651, (59%) Teachers, 325, (29%) Counselors, and Parents 621, (56%) had significant results. Once again, both Teachers and Counselors have the most access and direct contact to establish positive relationships, provide additional support, and interact with students daily, while on campus. Parents who engage in helping their children out have the most impact at home. Mentors and Therapist both faired low due to having limited interactions with students due to being task oriented, at multiple sites and only calling out students when needed.

Secondary School - #2

Q.3: Which type of adults have helped you the most this year? (Check all that apply)

Teacher 59% 651

Counselor 29% 325

Therapist 6% 62

Parent 56% 621

Guardian 12% 130

Sibling 38% 417

Other Family Member 25% 281

Coach 19% 206

Mentor 4% 45

Spiritual Leader 2% 21

Social Worker 2% 25

No One 6% 63

Other 19% 215

Learning Environment at School

Within Figure 4. 4, the focus was on the learning environment at school that keyed in on the importance of safety, receiving help, feeling supported. The first question was asked, in the past month, how often did you feel safe at school? 841, (31%) of the urban students felt safe at school almost all of the time, 1066, (40%) often felt safe, 570, (21%) sometimes felt safe, 147, (6%), stated once in a while, 60, (2%) almost never. Figure 4. 4 results demonstrated that 71% of the students results showed that they were in favor of feeling safe at school, while others who were not so safe, felt challenged.

The second question that was asked included, was there at least one teacher or older adult in your school that really cared about you? Six hundred and fifty-six, (25%) stated almost all of the time, 813, (30%) often felt like someone cared, 692, (26%) stated sometimes they felt like someone cared, 326, (12%) stated once in a while they felt like someone cared, and 181, (7%) stated almost never did someone demonstrate that they cared about them. Figure 4.4 results demonstrate that 55% of the total participants felt that someone really cared about them.

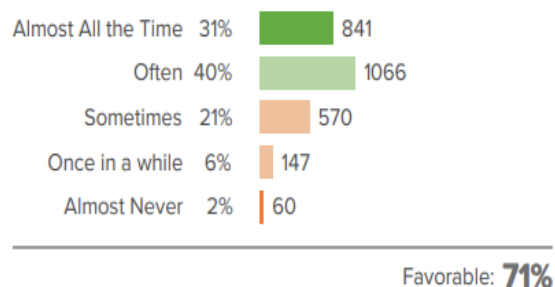
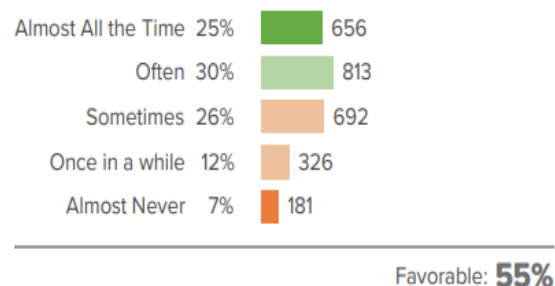
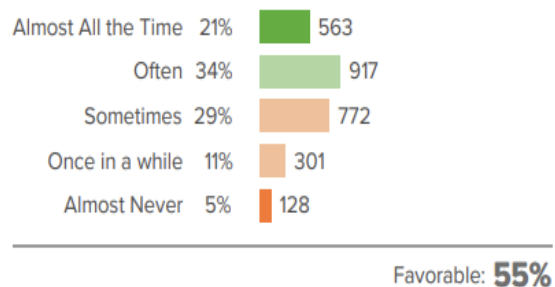
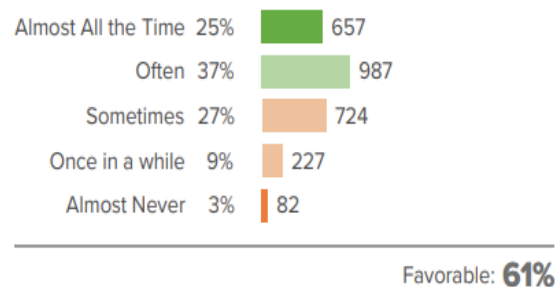
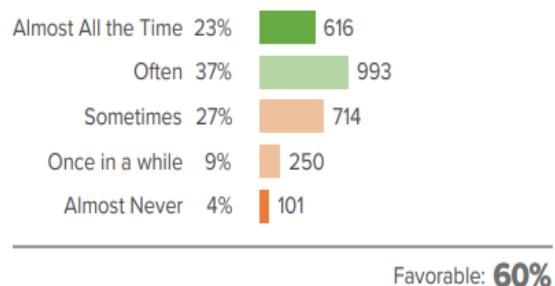
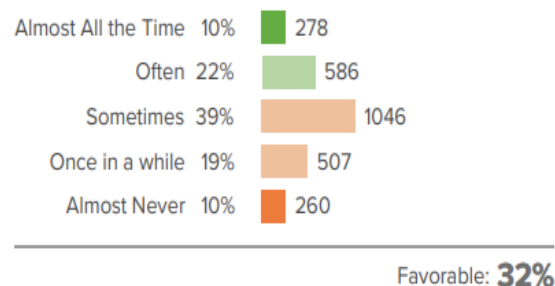
The third question that was asked, how often did your teachers care about your thought? 563, (21%) of the students felt that teachers cared about what they thought, 917, (34%) stated that teachers often cared what they thought, 772, (29%) sometimes cared what they thought, 301, (11%) once in a while they cared what they thought, 128, (5%) almost never cared what they thought. Figure 4.4 results demonstrated that 55% of the students were in favor that their teachers cared what they thought.

The fourth question asked, how often did teachers go out of their way to help students? 657, (25%) of the students selected almost all of the time their teachers went out of their way, 987, (37%) selected other, 724, (27%) selected sometimes teachers would go out of their way to

help students, 227, (9%) selected once in a while, 82, (3%) selected almost never. Figure 4.4 results demonstrated that 61% of the students selected that they felt the teachers would go out of their way.

The fifth question asked, how often did your teachers work hard to help you with your schoolwork when you needed it? 616, (23%) almost all of the time, 993, (37%) selected often, 714, (27%) selected sometimes, 250, (9%) selected once in a while, 101, (4%) selected almost never. Figure 4.4 results demonstrated that 60% of the students selected that they felt the teachers worked hard to help them with their schoolwork when needed.

The sixth question asked, how often did you get your work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute? 278, (10%) of the students selected almost all of the time, 586, (22%) selected often, 1046, (39%), selected sometimes, 507, (19%), selected once in a while, and 260, (10%) selected almost never. Figure 4. 4 results demonstrated that 32% felt in favor of getting their schoolwork done right away.

Figure 4. 4*Learning Environment at School Panorama Survey Results, 2021***Q.1: In the past month, how often did you feel safe at school?****Q.2: In the past month, was there at least one teacher or other adult in your school that really cared about you?****Q.3: In the past month, how often did your teachers care what you thought?****Q.4: In the past month, how often did teachers go out of their way to help students?****Q.5: In the past month, how often did your teachers work hard to help you with your schoolwork when you needed it?****Q.6: In the past month, how often did you get your work done right away instead of waiting until the last minute?**

Students were asked, how often are you able to access your school assignments that are online? One thousand and fifty-seven, (60%) selected 5 days per week, 242, (14%) selected 4 days a week, 328, (19%) selected 2-3 day per week, 74, (4%) selected 1 day per week, 65, (4%) selected almost never. Refer to Figure 4. 5 to see the findings. 31% were in favor of accessing assignments that are online, while learning from home. This is an alternative way for students to be engaged in the learning process by having the opportunity to work from home.

Figure 4. 5

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022

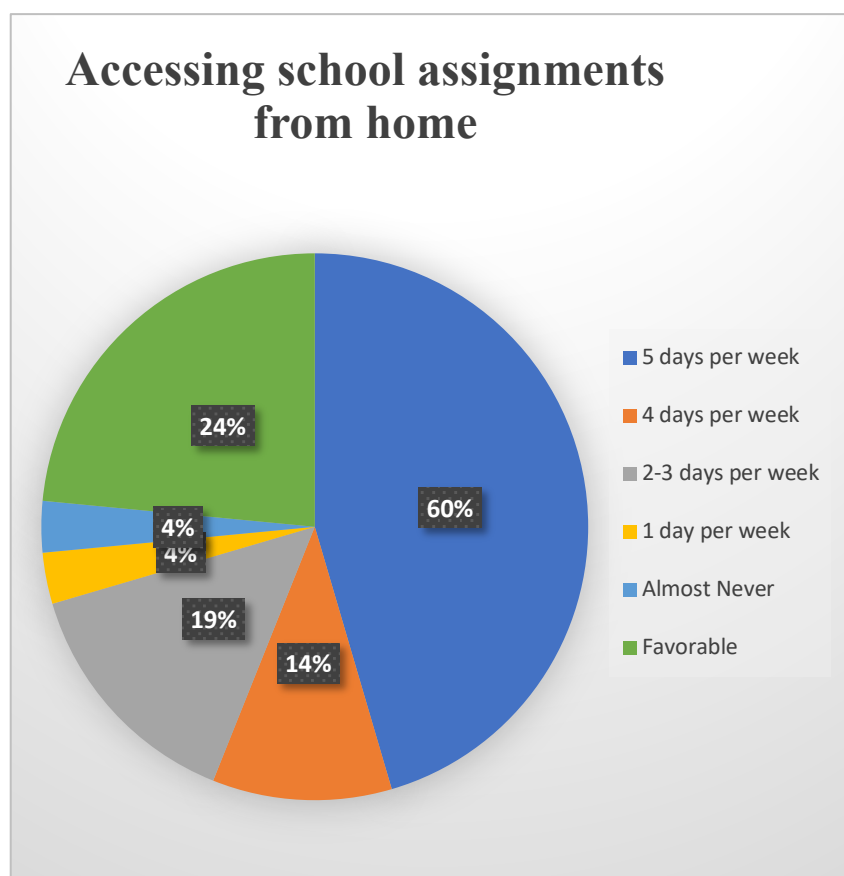
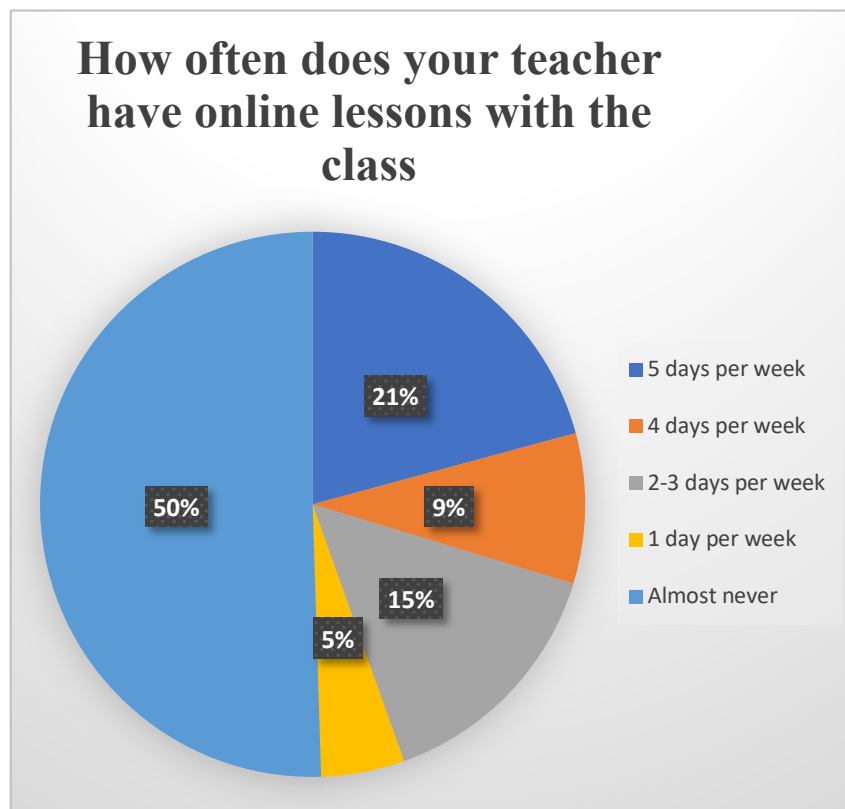
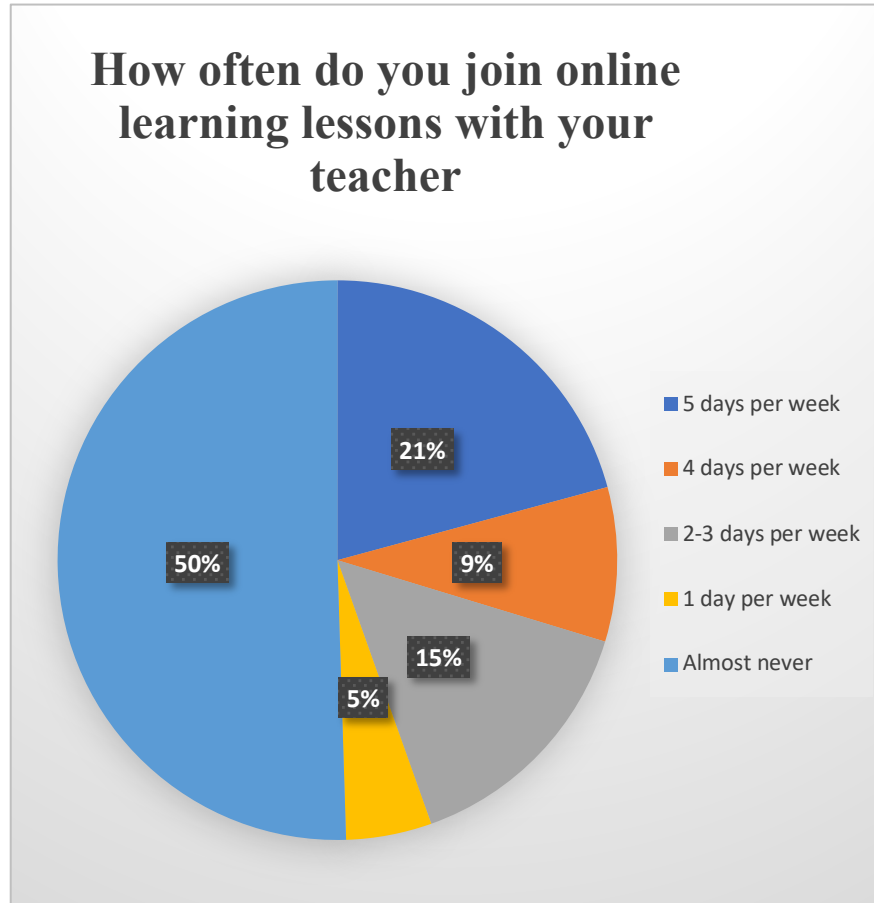
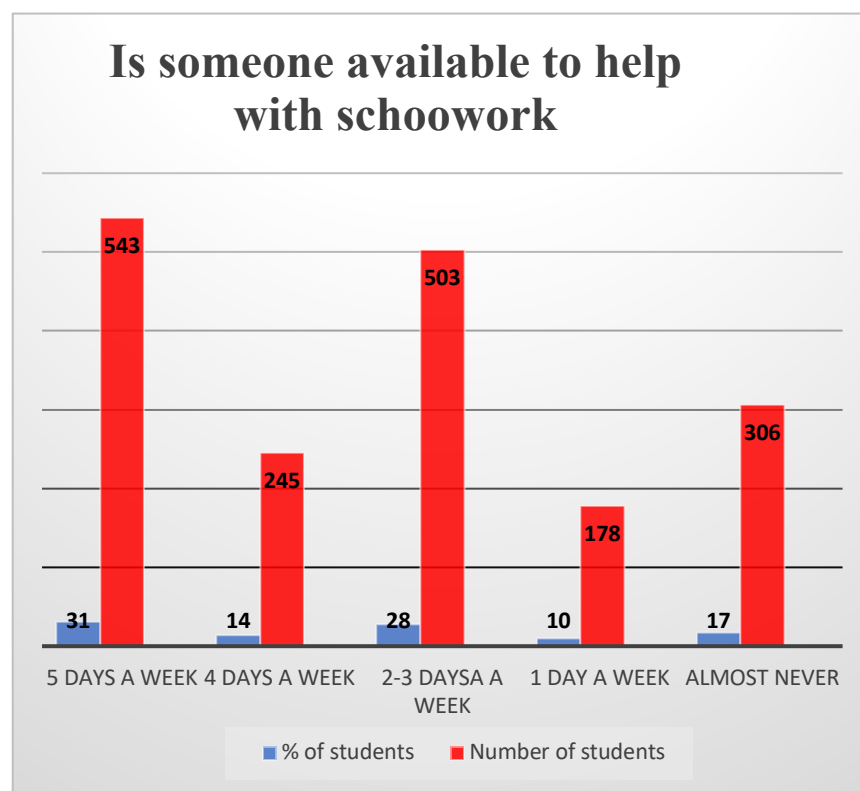


Figure 4. 6*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Students were asked, how often do you join online learning lessons with your teacher? A portion of the urban student's responses favored stating that 359, (21%) of them join online lessons five days a week, while one hundred and forty-eight, (9%) four days a week, 257, (15%) two to three days per week, 86, (5%) one day per week, 885, (51%) almost never. Refer to Figure 4.7 to see findings. 44% were in favor to join online learning lessons with their teacher. 51% Students who almost never had access to join online lessons have a detrimental outcome and have the tendency to miss out on online lessons.

Figure 4. 7*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Students were asked, how often do you have someone available to help you with your schoolwork, if needed? 543, (31%) selected five days a week, 245, (14%) selected four days a week, 503, (28%) selected two to three days a week, 178, (10%) selected one day a week, 306, (17%) selected almost never. Refer to Figure 4.8 for results. Overall, 21% were favorable stating that someone was available to help them with their work.

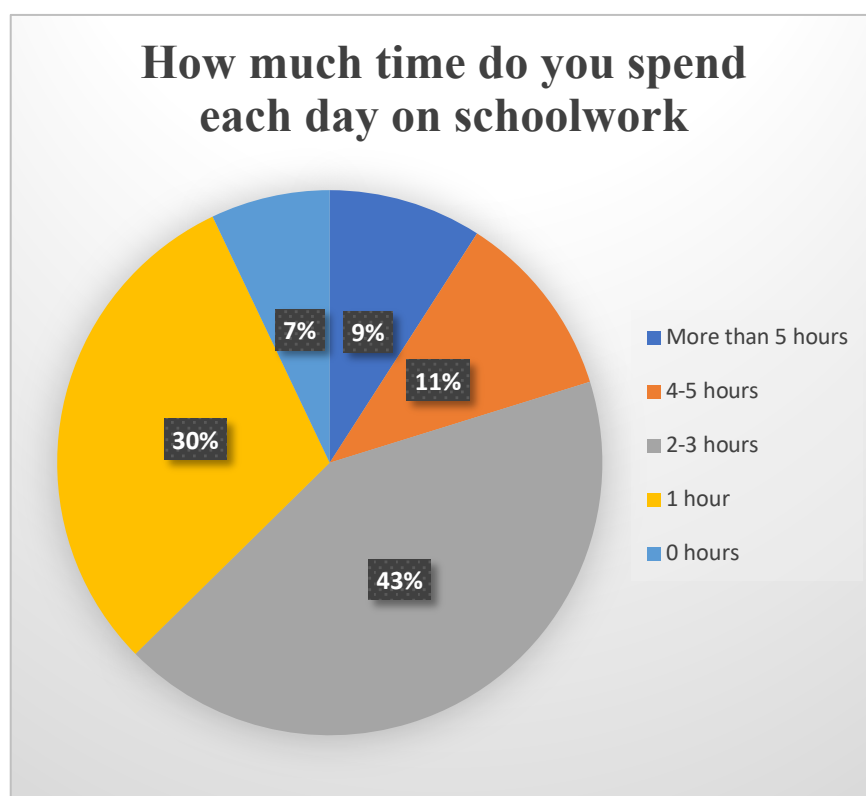
Figure 4. 8*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Students were asked, how much time do you spend each day on schoolwork? 166, (9%) selected more than five hours, 206, (11%) selected four to five hours, 750, (42%) two to three hours and 545, (30%) selected 1 hour per week. 131, (7%) spent zero hours on their schoolwork. When 62%, (1,122) students spend approximately two to five hours a day on schoolwork, this sets the standard for student success. Refer to Figure 4.9 to see results. There is a great significance in producing positive results when urban students take the time to study. 37%, (676) of the students who only study one hour or less, illustrates that these students may be faced with additional hardships that will not allow them to be able to put in the time commitment, which keeps them from excelling. Although, it is recommended for all students to study excessively,

there are many underserved urban students that could use guidance and support in how to study effectively. Inheriting approaches, strategies, and time management will help students to become successful.

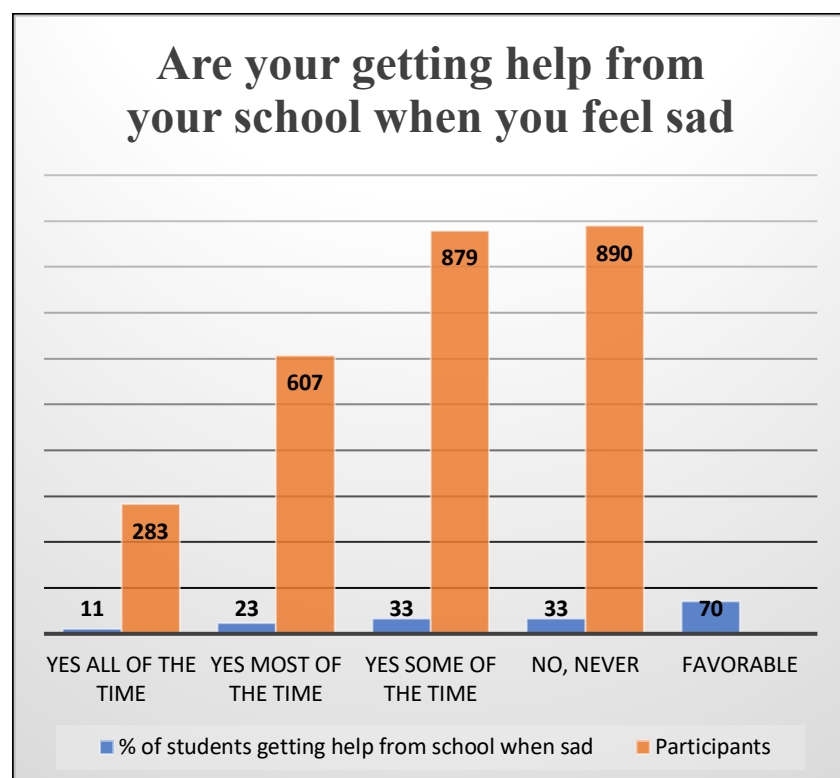
Figure 4. 9

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022



Mental Health:

Students were asked, are your getting help from school when you feel sad? Two hundred and eighty-three, (11%) selected yes, all of the time, 607, (23%) yes, most of the time, 879, (33%) yes, some of the time, 890, (33%) No never. Overall, approximate 70% were in favor of getting help from their school when they were feeling sad. Refer to Figure 4.10 to see results.

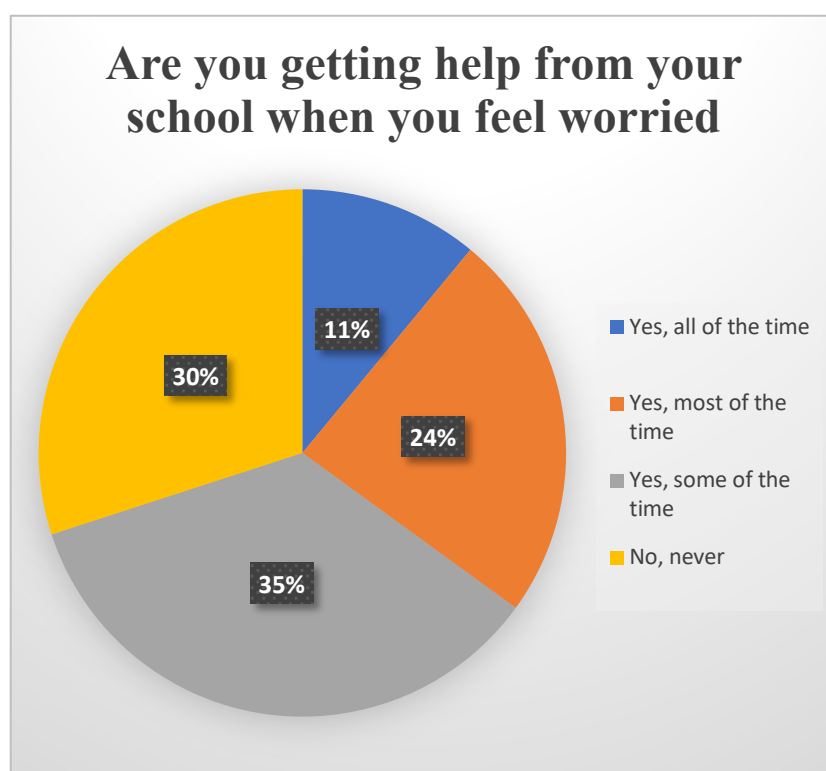
Figure 4. 10*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Students were asked, are you getting help from your school when you feel worried? Two hundred and ninety-four, (11%) selected yes, all of the time, 646, (24%) selected yes, most of the time, 934, (35%) selected yes, some of the time, 790, (30%) selected No, never. Students who experience social emotional challenges have the tendency to rely upon their threshold where they become accustomed to their own mental state of being and revert to a survival mode mentality not being able to focus on their schoolwork efficiently. Approximately 70%, 1,874 of the students were getting help when they felt worried. 30%, 790 students felt that they had never received help when they were worried. The 790 students who may be worrisome, may not know how to have a clear state of mind. When urban students become accustomed to having a fixed mindset, that may be all that they are aware of. It would be advantageous for urban students to

learn how to develop a growth mindset by advocating and attempt the help and support that they may need instead of feeling worried which can distract them from making substantial progress.

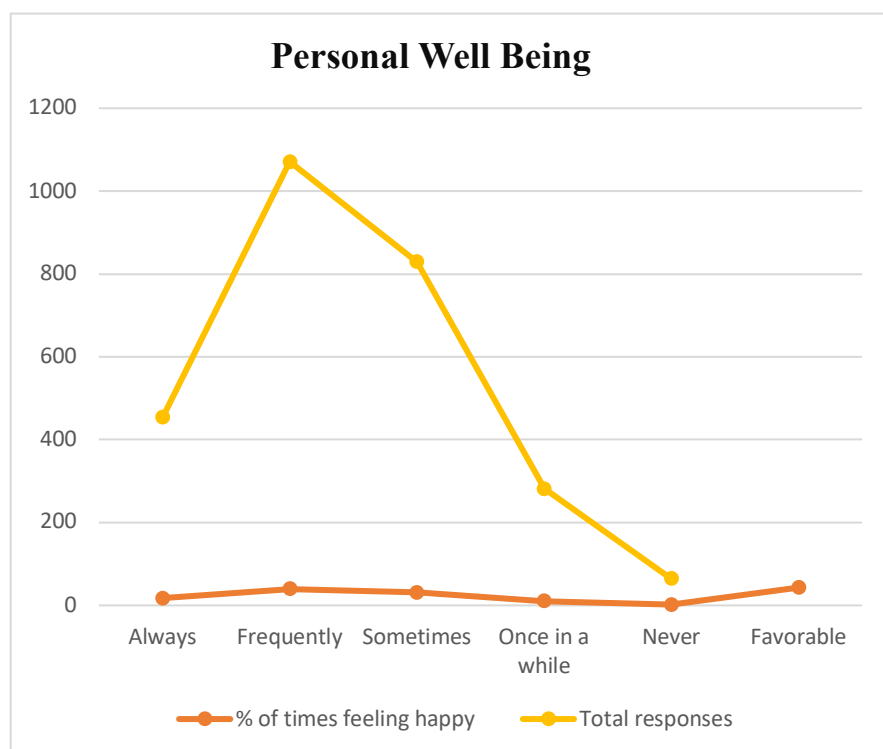
Figure 4. 11

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022



Personal Well Being:

When referring to personal well-being, students were asked, during the past week, how often did you feel happy? Four hundred and seventy-four, (17%) selected always, 1071, (40%) selected frequently, 829, (31%) selected sometimes, 281, (10%), selected once in a while, 64, (2%) selected never. Overall, 43% were favorable where they felt happy. Eighty Eight percent, 2354 of the students often felt happy during the week. Refer to Figure 4.12 for results.

Figure 4. 12*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Q.1: During the past week, how often did you feel happy?

Always 17% 454

Frequently 40% 1071

Sometimes 31% 829

Once in a while 10% 281

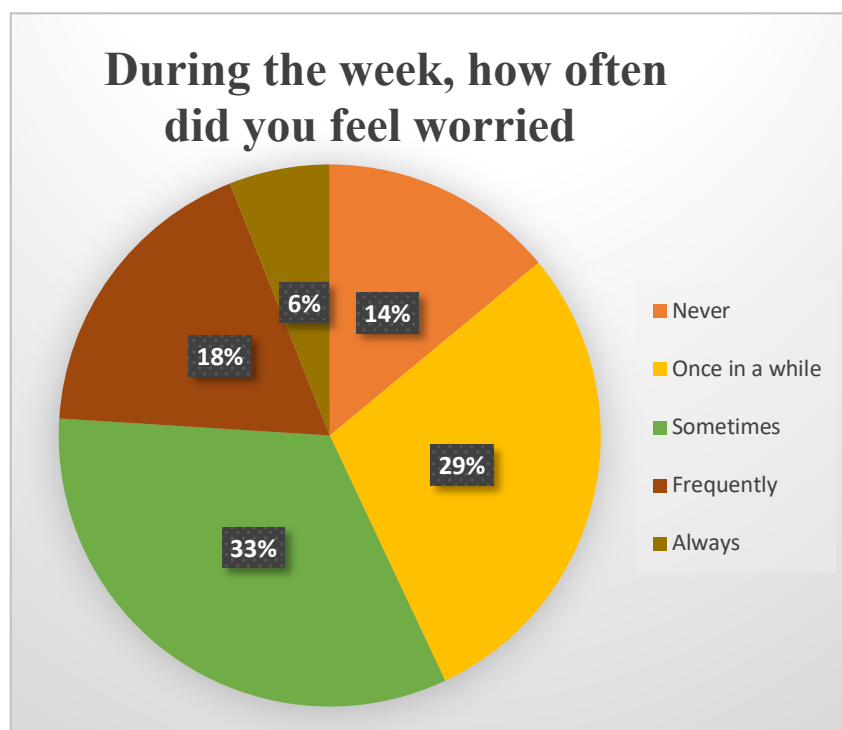
Never 2% 64

Favorable: 43%

The question was asked, during the past week, how often did you feel worried? Of the participants 377, (14%) selected never, 781, (29%) selected once in a while, 891, (33%) selected sometimes, 481, (18%) selected frequently, 158, (6%) selected always. Overall, 61% were favorable where they felt worried. Refer to Figure 4.13 to see results. Students who have the tendency to feel worried while trying to focus on school, often get distracted because they are not able to sustain a clear mindset to stay focused on their studies and why they are there in school. Students who always felt worried, can really be detrimental for these students to really lose complete focus.

Figure 4. 13

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022

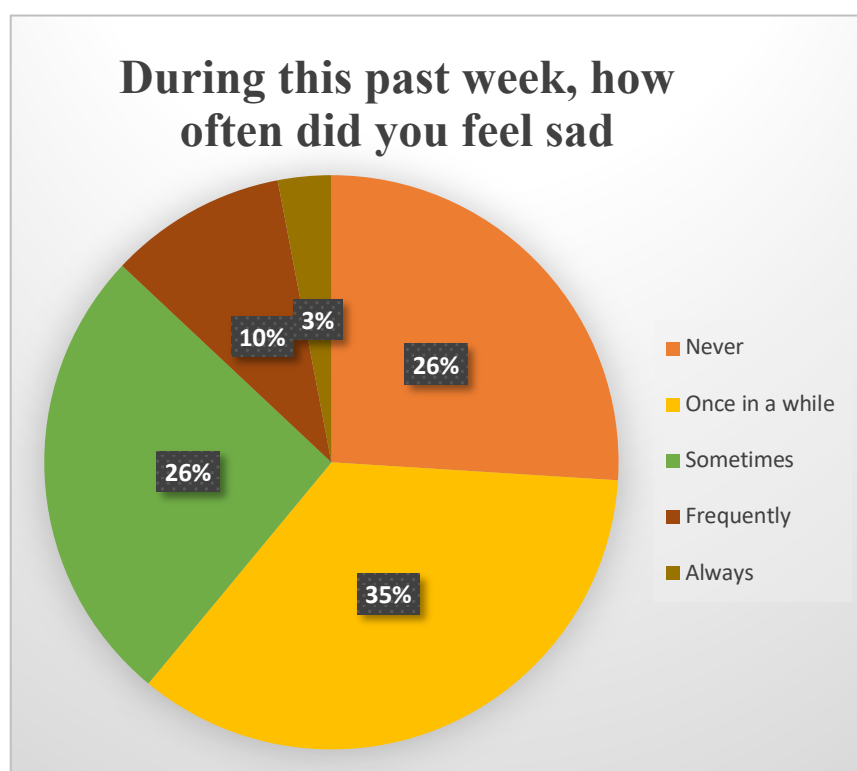


Students were asked, how often did you feel sad. Seven hundred and ten, (26%) of the students never felt sad. 937, (35%) selected once in a while, 710, (26%) selected sometimes, 255, (10%) frequently, 82, (3%) always. Refer to Figure 4.14 to see results. 38% of the students

were in favor of feeling sad within the past week. were often challenged where they felt occasionally. 82, (3%) of the students felt that they were always sad. When students are consistently challenged to feel sad, it is imperative for students to seek assistance from their teachers, counselors, or mentors to help get them support so that they can focus on receiving a quality education.

Figure 4. 14

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022

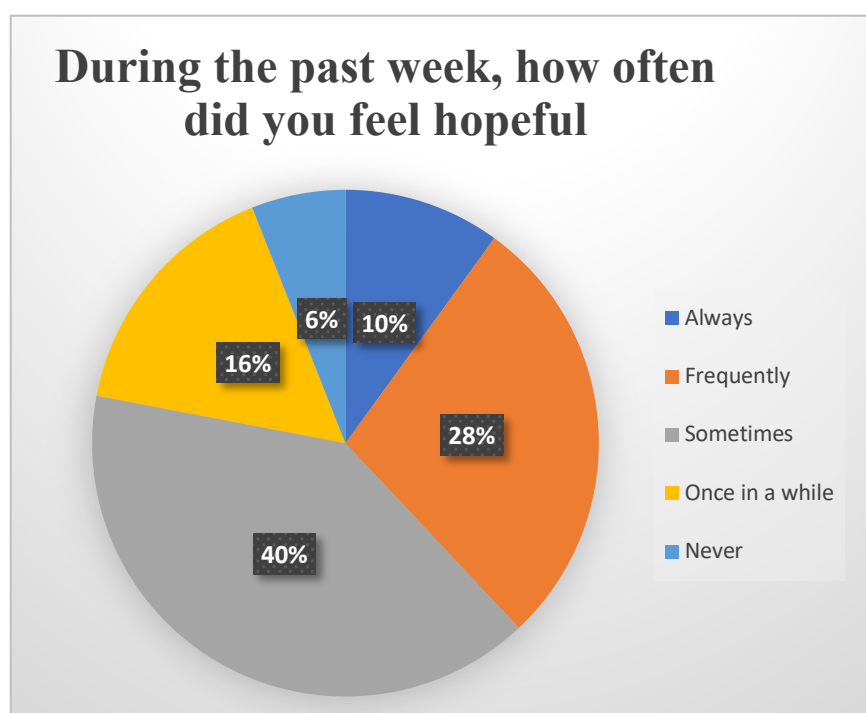


Students were asked, how often do they feel hopeful? Two hundred and sixty-six, (10%) of the students said that they always felt hopeful, while 739, (28%) felt that they frequently felt hopeful, 1056, (40%), selected sometimes, 440, (16%) selected once in a while, 17, (6%) selected never. Refer to Figure 4.15 to see results. Approximately 33% of the students results stated that they did not feel hopeful often. This is an example of what areas of need this school

site may need to work on. It is vital to provide hope in all students so that they are provided with a fair chance to experience success.

Figure 4. 15

Core Survey Results, 2021-2022



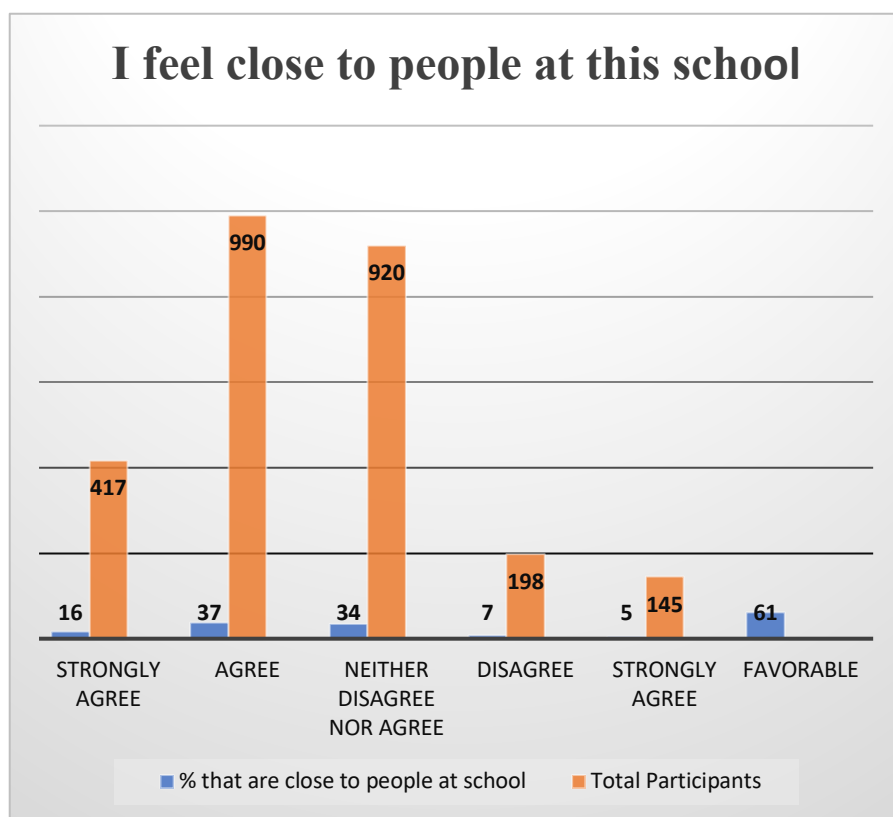
School Climate

Students were asked, do you feel close to people at school? Four hundred and seventeen, (16%) strongly agree that they were close to other people at this school site. Nine hundred and ninety, (37%) students agreed that they were close to others as well, 920, (34%) neither disagreed nor agreed, 98, (7%) disagree, 145, (5%) strongly disagree. Refer to Figure 4.16 to see results. When combining the two 1402, (53%) total students strongly agreed or agreed that they were close to someone at school which signifies that there are positive results when students can connect with others. The outcomes are favorable when schools can provide a positive school

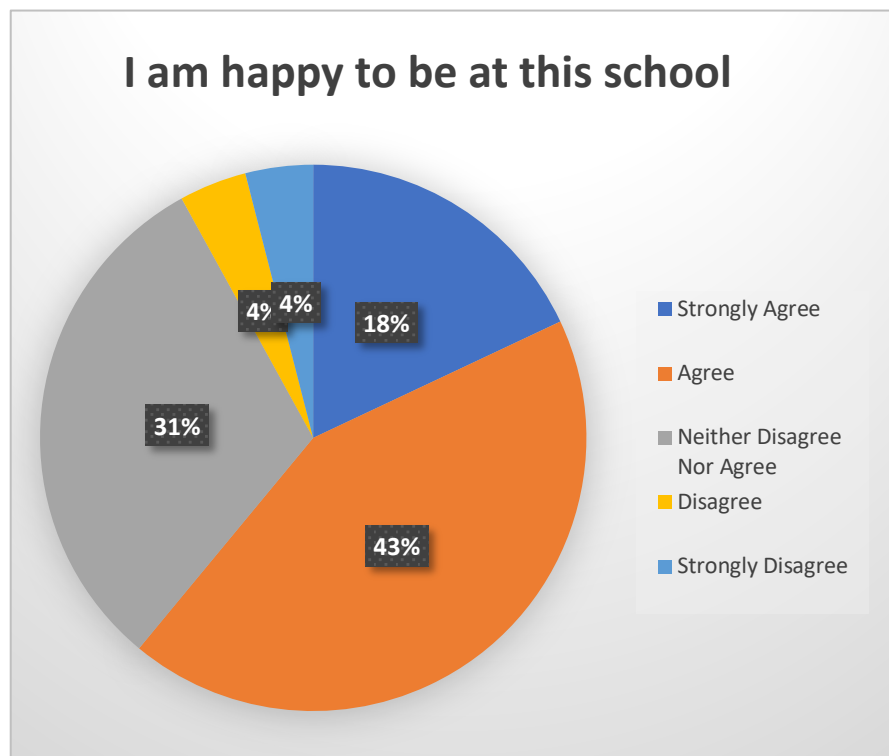
climate due to inclusivity, collaboration and keeping the student engaged in their learning process.

Figure 4. 16

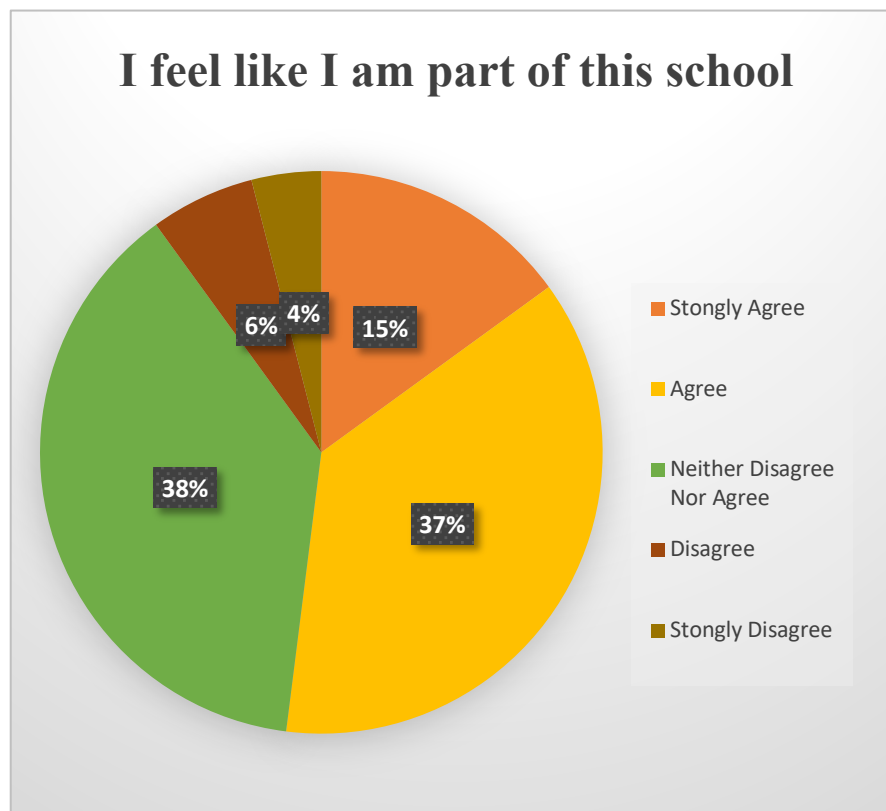
Core Survey Results, 2021-2022



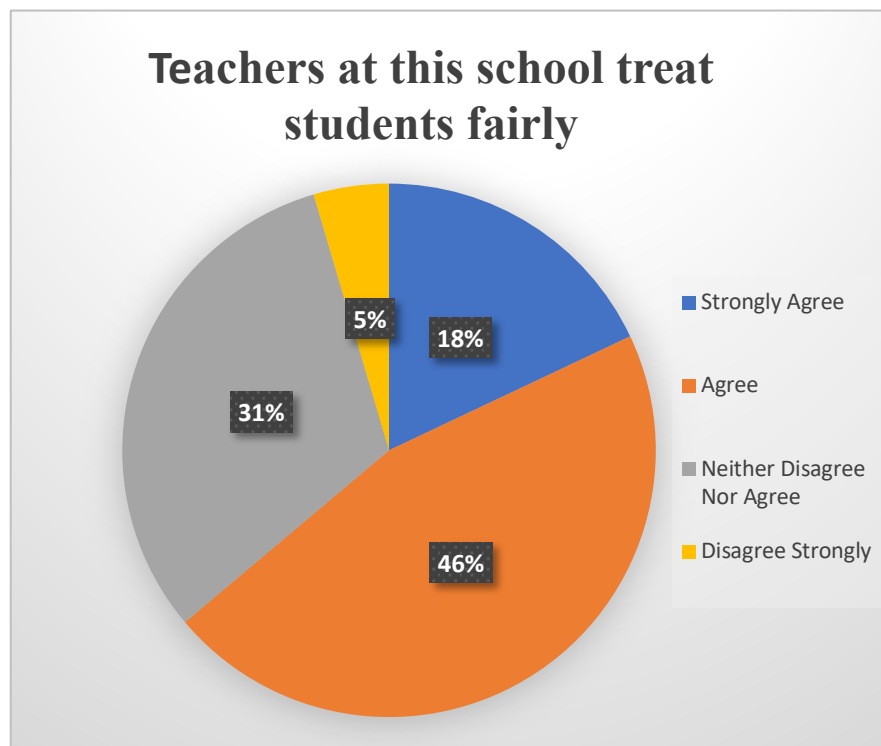
Students were asked, I am happy to be at this school. Four hundred and thirty-eight, (18%) of students selected strongly agree, 1144, (43%) of students selected agree, 830, (31%) of students selected neither disagree nor agree, 115, (4%) of students disagree, 96, (4%), of students selected strongly disagree. Results displayed that 61% of the students stated that they were happy to be at this school. Refer to Figure 4.17 to see results.

Figure 4. 17*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

When asked the question, I feel that I am part of the school? Three hundred and ninety, (15%) of the students strongly agree, 987, (37%) agree, 1024, (38%) neither disagreed nor agreed in feeling part of the school site. 152, (6%) disagree and 112, (4%) strongly disagree. Refer to Figure 4.18 to see results. Approximately 10% of the students either disagreed or strong disagreed that they were part of the school site. A key element for underserved urban school students is to be an integral part of the learning process where they can feel part of the school site. Full inclusion of students is a key element in building a school culture of student success.

Figure 4. 18*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022*

Students were asked if teachers treat students fairly. Four hundred and sixty-nine, (18%) strongly agree, 1197, (46%) agree, 824, (31%) neither disagree nor agree, 119, (5%) and 64% of the urban students felt that teachers treat students fairly which allows them to demonstrate positive results. Creating an environment that allows students to focus on their academics helps to establish a positive working culture. 119, (5%) of the students disagree that they were treated fairly which has the tendency to create another barrier. If students are trying to make progressive steps, having the proper support can lead to a positive outcome.

Figure 4. 19*Core Survey Results, 2021-2022***Responses**

The first urban high school had a total of 2,710 total responses, while the second urban high school had 1,110 students respond. The first high school demonstrated that 526 urban students who came from an impoverished area had little or no interest in school. Many of the students expressed some interest or minimal interest. It is evident that most of these urban students may not understand the true significance of why school is important and why they should excel while in school.

The findings stated that 13% of the urban students established positive relationships with adult's while others gave minimal effort or waited to be approached from an adult. 186 urban students from the School B, felt that they did not have a friend call upon in a time of need. On the contrary 34% of the urban students felt that they could call upon a friend for help on work or

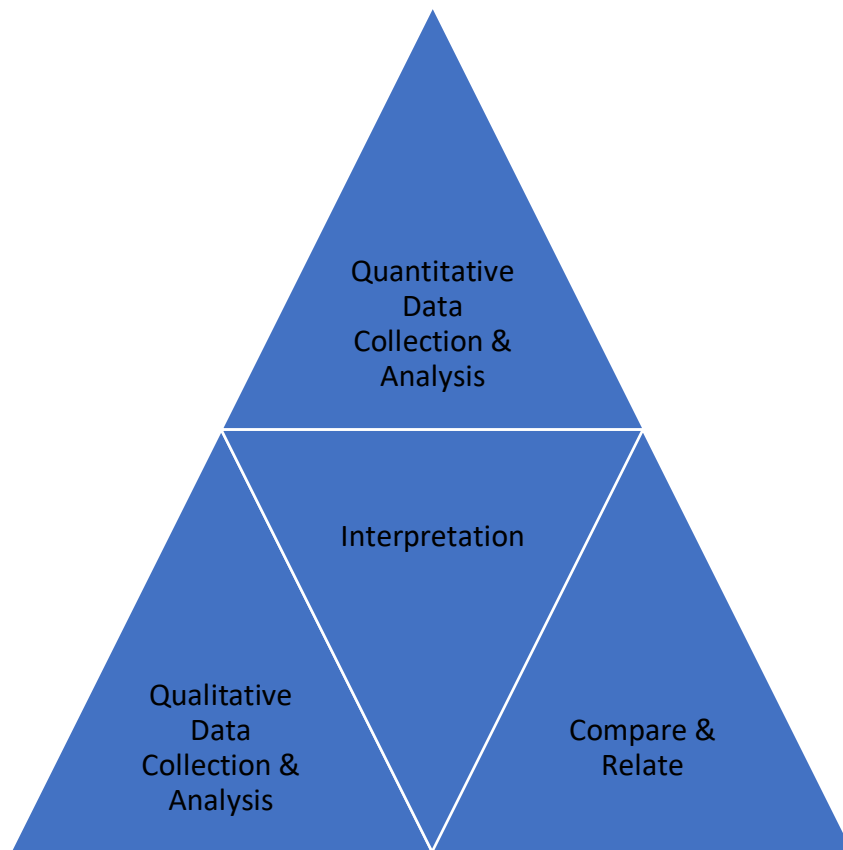
classroom assignments. Within both secondary school sites, the question was asked, which type of adults helped the most? The results stated that teachers were considered the primary person of contact where students could get help and assistance. When both school sites were compared, the findings were similar averaging about 54% within one school site in comparison to 59% from the other. Students from both schools stated that their teachers were their primary contacts to get help from. The second person of contact that those urban students could get help from was their Counselor.

21 Question Survey Results

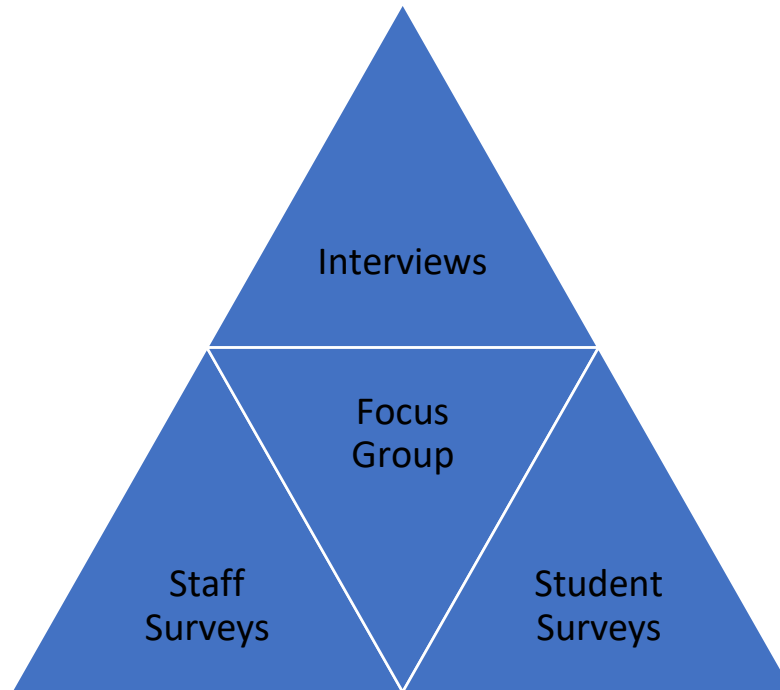
During the qualitative research survey results, there were a variety of staff members within the two secondary high schools that stated that they struggled within sustaining stability. The first question asked, can they explain their educational experiences within their childhood? The results stated that approximately half of the participants either moved, transferred to a variety of elementary schools, or were not engaged in the learning process at a young age. Secondly, it seemed that there was a correlation of participants who came from impoverished upbringings and how they did not fare well growing up as a student. Many staff members faced a variety of obstacles and were not able to meet a certain standard, while others had a difficult time finding that person to believe in them and to try to motivate them to learn and overcome ridicule. Others struggled with dyslexia, having a speech impediment and being challenged just to fit in with others. As parents were succumbed to working two jobs to help support their children, several felt that they were left to support themselves and to do well on their own. The proper parental support was missing for participants, and they had to go the extra mile of understanding educational terminology on their own. It was not a smooth process for them to be able to establish themselves of learning the proper skills necessary for success.

There were a variety of coping mechanisms that those participants had to utilize such as trying to establish passion, curiosity, and learning to become resourceful. The power of prayer, working out and taking law enforcement classes to help deviate from all the negative experiences. It was vital for a particular staff member who was used to negative occurrences to learn a new pathway that could get him on track to think positive and establish stability. Taking criminal justice classes allowed him to see things in a different light and to establish a growth mindset.

Refer to Figures 4.20 and 4.21 to see a visual display of a convergent parallel design that will help understand the process.

Figure 4. 20*Convergent Parallel Design*

Refer to Figure 4.21 to visually see and understand the multiple methods that were used in this research study.

Figure 4. 21*Multiple Methods*

Within this convergent parallel research design, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis are collected. The goal is to interpret all the data by utilizing teacher's surveys, student surveys, individual interviews and focus groups to create validity and reliability within this research designs findings. Once all the data is all collected, it will be interpreted and then compared to see how both approaches are related based on the information provided.

During the interviews, the participants were asked, do you think students need to be motivated to overcome obstacles and achieve their educational dreams? See Table 4.1 for details to receive a better understanding of specific responses. Several responses were shared, and one participant discussed the fact that with proper motivation students can be driven to do things. When students hear positive affirmations from others who they hang around, this will allow them

to just to do things on their own and not have to tell them to get the job done. Another participant focused on his own rationale and provided his own stance and reasoning based on his own experience. Motivation comes from striving and pursuing goals and learning how to accomplish each one on them on their own.

Among the individual interviews that were conducted, each participant was asked a variety of questions that pertained to how underserved urban students can become motivated. Each participant was asked to share their personal insight and expertise within each question. When the participants were asked, do you think students need to be motivated to overcome obstacles and achieve their dreams? One of the respondents mentioned that with the proper motivation, kids can be driven to complete assignments. Having positive feedback and being around others who think positively will help students do their jobs that they have been asked to complete. A second respondent stated that motivation is the key element to academic success. Motivation is the driving force to guide students to the next level. A third respondent stated that motivation is required, and it can be enhanced by multiple factors such as having open communication and by reasoning with them personally. Students who follow Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and focus on self-actualization where they can learn to learn can be a key component to staying motivated. There are levels that students need to follow and the faster they learn how to function within each level, they will be able to make progress within their projected goals that they want to accomplish.

Table 2. 1*Interview Questions and Data Collection*

Research Question	Participant Comments
Q4: Do you think students need to be motivated to overcome obstacles and achieve their educational dreams?	<p>Participant 1: So, I think with the proper motivation, these kids are driven to do things. I think they enjoy just being around certain people or when they hear things, maybe, like positive affirmations or just any positivity. I think we will just get them to do their jobs without even asking them to do it.</p> <p>Participant 2: Yes, I think it's a key element to academic success.</p> <p>Participant 3: I do believe there is a sense of motivation that is required. So, my reasoning behind that comes from multiple things. I would say from my own personal experience and working with students through education. You know the nonprofit industry and through personal encounters as well. I think that there is a sense of motivation, when communicating with them. It is important to reason with them. Something that they may be going towards or working for that does allow them to be motivated. So, I think my overall rationale behind that comes from those things. So, for example, this kind of reminds me of like the Hierarchical Needs of Maslow. You know when there's different levels of things and when those things are met. Self-actualization, I think it is being at the top. You know that's something that I truly believe in, and I think that it is worth it, if not in all of us. Most people are aligned with that and so that alone is 1 reasoning behind that. Just that whole idea and concept within itself and from my personal experience, you know, just going through it. Learn to learn why there's motivation when it comes to achieving those things. That's a part of the whole process, and so through that I was able to meet others and kind of get that understanding from other people's experiences. So that's why I believe motivation is a big part of that when it comes</p>

to striving and pursuing those goals and accomplishing those things.

During the individual interviews, participants were asked to provide their professional insight and expertise within each question. See Table 3.1 for details to gain a better understanding of specific responses. When the participants were asked, what does it mean to be resilient and to stay in school? Several responses were shared, and one participant discussed that to be resilient meant being able to overcome tough obstacles and some hardships. Another participant stated that it depends on the outlook you have on things. Putting in the effort and showing up to school daily tends to show a sense of resiliency. A third participant stated that if you're going through things your able to face them and possibly overcome them. Students need to keep moving forward and must continue to make good attempts in life so that they can pursue their goals and dreams.

Table 3. 1

Interview Questions and Data Collection

Research Question	Data
Q5: What does it mean to be resilient and to stay in school?	<p>Participant 1: So, my interpretation of being resilient is being able to overcome tough obstacles. Maybe some hardships. So yeah, just being able to overcome some, maybe a tough situation or just anything that has just stumped you along the way and just kind of the outlook that you have on it. I think., kids go through things every day, whether it's emotional or physical.</p> <p>Participant 2: I think there's a lot of excuses not to be in school, so yeah, it takes effort to come to school every day. Sure, that's a sense of resiliency.</p>

Participant 3: So, I think that means what that means. It kind of comes down to the adversities that people are experiencing personally and while they're going to school, to be resilient. It means you're going through adversity and you're able to face on those adversities and possibly overcome them or may not overcome them. But you're still moving forward. You're still making attempts to do good things in your life and pursue your goals and dreams. Whether you accomplished them or not, that's what it means to be resilient in this sense.

During the individual interviews, participants were asked to share their personal insight and expertise. See Table 4.3 for specific details and to gain a better understanding of specific responses. When the participants were asked, can you think of someone who helped you along your educational journey? Several responses were shared, and one participant discussed that the people around him were a major influence and motivated him to become a better person. Treating kids with kindness and being true to them will help them connect with you. A second participant stated that teachers, community coaches, parents all assisted, as it takes a village to raise a child and to provide motivation. A third participant stated that her parents were great supporters and played a huge role in her specific journey. Other people who played an integral part were siblings, family members friends, colleagues, instructors, and counselors. They all played a huge role in support that helped with my education overall.

Table 4. 1*Interview Questions and Data Collection*

Research Question	Data
Q6: Can you think of someone who helped you along your educational journey?	<p>Participant 1: Just the people that were around me. They motivated me to want to be a better person. I think just treating kids with kindness and just being your true self, it helps kids connect with you. So, I think that's kind of what I got? I guess you could say it is just kind of what I experienced.</p> <p>Participant 2: You know all my teachers played a factor for sure. Our community, coaches, parents, and family. You know what? What are they? They say it takes a village, right? I had a lot of people in my life help me and guide me along the way.</p> <p>Participant 3: I can think of many people who've helped me along my educational journeys, siblings, friends, family members, colleagues and instructors, counselors. You know, many, in general, I would specify like my family. They've been huge supporters of mine and my brothers. You know my parents. They alone, have really been great supporters and</p>

then just some former teachers and counselors and coaches.

They've also played a huge role in supporting me overall. Education and just you know, being a good mentor, you can say.

During the individual interviews, each participant was asked to provide their personal insight and expertise. See Table 4. 2 to gain a better understanding and to see specific responses. When the participants were asked, what does it mean to receive a quality education? As several responses were shared, one participant discussed that the quality education is beyond the core subjects and it's being able to sit down with someone and taking the time to help them individually. Sitting down students and just taking the time to help them.

A second participant stated that being able to think for yourself critically is a key element to receive a quality education. Looking beyond grades, testing, and learning how to read and write is the foundation for a good education. A third participant stated to be able to receive an equitable education and you need to know who you are and have a better understanding of yourself. Being able to identify yourself within a variety of categories and levels is what is considered a quality education.

Table 4. 2*Research Questions and Data Collection*

Research Question	Data
Q7: What does it mean to receive a quality education?	<p>Participant 1: Honestly, I think quality education to me is beyond just what you're teaching. Just like beyond math and beyond science. Like I was just helping a student write an essay and I'm sure he's gone through so much, he's a senior, so he's gone through so many English teachers, and I think it's just being able to sit down with someone and just really take the time to help them. I think quality education is just really understanding kind of meeting every student where they are and going from there. I think really getting to know your students.</p> <p>Participant 2: A quality education and being able to think for yourself. Being able to think critically. Being able to know beyond just grades and test results. You know, being able to read and write, I think are foundational to a good education.</p> <p>Participant 3: Quality education, I would consider is when it's an equitable education where you know your background and the person you are. You know who you are and what you identify as across many different levels and categories right? When all those things are understood, and all those needs are met. If not met, they're working towards being met. So, I think a quality education is meeting an equitable education, essentially.</p>

During the individual interviews participants were asked to provide their personal insight and expertise. See Table 4. 3 for details and to gain a better understanding of the results. When the participants were asked, how can students become resilient? Several responses were shared, and one participant discussed that it's about establishing a mindset and having a good outlook on

things. Just thinking you can do it, can help. A second participant stated that teachers along with others should be sending out the same message where students can continue to feel that they can accomplish any task. If students are hearing it from everyone then it becomes easier to believe. There is an army of counselors, teachers and support staff that may be sharing the same thing. A third participant stated that students need to keep moving forward and always try their best, whether they succeed or fail. Not giving up on themselves is a key element for them. This is what will help them develop resiliency.

Table 4. 3*Research Questions and Data Collection*

Research Question	Data
Q8: How can students become resilient?	<p>Participant 1: I don't think it's like a certain time, or like a certain situation. I think it's just your mindset and your outlook on things and how you can; just thinking you can do it... It's funny because it's something that these kids are very capable of doing, but they don't have enough confidence in themselves. So instead of just as simple as like applying to certain colleges, these kids would rather not apply to these universities because they right away disqualify themselves, they think that they're not good enough for it. I'm constantly having to tell these kids like, well, if you don't try it, you're not going to know that, so don't disqualify yourself. Let them disqualify you! There's been two situations with two students that they were in that boat, and they ended up getting accepted to 4-year universities and I was walking across campus and this girl during lunchtime ran to catch me up and the first thing she said, "I got into college and it's just an awesome dream come true".</p> <p>Participant 2: As a teacher, I am one of many teachers they've had. I think we continue to know. Share with them our thoughts on the importance of school and we might be saying the same things others are, but sometimes you know it's that you reached that one kid, and you know I mentioned it takes a village. There's an army of teachers and counselors and support staff and we might be saying the same things, but we should continue to send that message out.</p> <p>Participant 3: Students can become resilient by not giving up on themselves and following the pathway to success regardless of what happens. They must keep moving forward and always try their</p>

best, whether they succeed or fail. This is what will help them become resilient.

During the focus group interviews, participants were asked to provide their personal insight and expertise on growth mindset. See Table 4. 4 for details and to gain a better understanding. When the participants were asked, what is the difference between a fixed mindset and growth mindset? Several responses were shared, and one participant discussed that it's about wanting to grow and take it to the next level. It is important to not fear getting knocked down and picking yourself up. A second participant mentioned to put students in the right environment, and they will grow academically, athletically in music and within the arts. This is how students can learn to establish a growth mindset. A third participant stated that if students are questioning themselves and they can reflect on those thoughts and the way that they think can be beneficial. If they are thinking negatively, they can change the way they think.

Table 4. 4*Positive Impact on Growth Mindset*

Participant Code	Shared Belief
P1	Yeah, so again, that's something that I see here at the school that I work at. I do see a lot of students that just kind of stay in their comfort zone because they're scared of failing, and I think that a lot more students need to have a growth mindset. Just wanting to grow and wanting to take it to the next level and not be so scared of getting knocked down and just knowing how to pick yourself back up.
P2	I believe in a growth mindset. Yeah, I think no kid is stuck in whatever capacity they currently have. Kids can grow academically, and they are sponges. You know, you put them in the right environment, and they will grow academically, athletically, musically and in the arts. Yeah, I believe in a growth mindset.
P3	Someone who you know may have thoughts initially that are limiting or may be questioning themselves. If they can reflect on those thoughts and change the way they think, it can be beneficial. So, for example, if they're thinking in a negative way, they can reflect on that and change that thought into more of like a thought that allows them to grow right or progress. For example, if you know I'm not telling myself I'm not good at something. I'm able to think about that, and think about what's missing, right? Like? What am I missing? Or what do I need so that I would be like an example of having a growth mindset? Were you able to make that connection or as more of a fixed mindset? You're more just kind of stuck on one thought or one belief and you truly believe that's kind of the truth behind it.

Summary

The data that was collected, came from two Southern California secondary high schools that represent an impoverished area where a variety of schools are funded by Title 1 programs. This inner city, urban school district houses approximately 41,456 students and is experiencing declining enrollment annually. The significance of this convergent parallel research design is to understand the variation and significance of motivation techniques, educational theories, and leadership approaches in underserved urban school settings. The purpose is to understand the significance in whether at promise students can develop a growth mindset while sustaining educational resiliency. Often, at promise students who come from underserved urban school districts are overlooked and not provided with the essential approaches to prepare them effectively for a better future or for graduation. Within this research study, there were a variety of approaches taken into consideration to compile a qualitative and quantitative approach to gather significant findings.

Qualitative

Within the qualitative data phase, convenient sampling was conducted based on the educational characteristics of each participant who participated in the research study. One on one interviews were conducted with 12 staff members from two urban secondary school sites. Each participant was asked a series of 16 open ended questions. Each of the selected group members consisted of certificated and classified staff members. Each representative was interviewed and asked a variety of questions, to gain a deeper understanding within their individual perspectives on education. The goal was to understand their beliefs, approaches, and personal experiences. Gaining insight on their personal upbringing and what their current approach is now while

working in education can be advantageous. It was necessary to learn about their point of views and perspectives on what type of exposure they have had personally.

The second approach to compile additional data was to develop two focus groups from the two designated secondary school sites. Each staff member who participated in the portion of the study varied from certificated and classified staff members as well. Both focus groups were represented by certificated classroom teachers, counselors, administrators, and classified staff members. The goal was to hear and gather their insight on a variety of perspectives where open ended questions were asked so that findings would adhere to different perspectives within each provided question. It was imperative to hear their personal point of views on educational topics, and reasoning on techniques, theories, and approaches to gather findings.

Quantitative

The third approach consisted of providing a survey that could compile additional perspectives within written format. Within the quantitative portion of this research study, Likert scale questions were provided to a variety of staff members, which consisted of teachers, counselor's, administrators, and classified staff members. Each participant was provided with a 21-question survey that provided 10 open ended questions along with 11 Likert scale questions. Each Likert scale question provided several options that were titled, strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Each participant was free to answer each question within an open-ended survey that was not time sensitive. The hope was to see the significance of each response and to see if there was any correlation within their stance. Most of the participants clearly expressed themselves on the open-ended questions because the survey was untimed, and they had more time to think about their own perspectives while completing it. The findings elaborated in depth knowledge and provided additional insight.

Lastly, the Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys were distributed to the students from the same secondary school sites so that the student perspectives could be read, heard, and compiled. The findings provided additional insight to see and understand the differences within their approaches, perspectives, and students' beliefs. Both secondary school sites were well represented and displayed a tremendous amount of student participation. Each site was provided with a collection of information about their perspective high school background that displayed the titles, about me, interpersonal well-being, personal well-being learning environment at school, learning environment at home, mental health, and school climate.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Based on the researcher's findings, the researcher learned that there are a variety of educational stakeholders that have the authority to make the decisions that can benefit all underserved urban students in receiving a quality education. The Local Control Accountability Plan provides services for student subgroups, such as racial ethnic subgroups, low-income students, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless youth. According to the Local Control Accountability Plan stakeholder (2021), there are a lot of factors that the plan must address which falls within the priorities of the State. Basic services, Implementation of Standards, Parental Engagement, Student Achievement, Student Engagement, School Climate, Access to Courses, and other Student Outcomes. Allotted funding is usually provided for 3 school years and then will have to be revisited. Often stakeholders choose to opt out of specialized programs because the Local Control Accountability Plan's goals and objectives are based on the current needs of the district. Although, there are a lot of great ideas that circulate, not all goals can be met. Short term planning for programs and positions are created to meet the temporary needs and standards within the projected timeline. Each school districts Local Control Accountability Plan needs to include goals, actions, measures, and related expenditures. When projected goals are met, this does not necessarily mean that stakeholders will continue to keep the same programs in place. Although crucial decisions are consistently thought out, stakeholders know that they cannot meet the desire of every student's needs within a three-year cycle.

Often teachers feel frustrated because as they start to see progress and academic growth the harsh reality settles in where the program that they are supporting, gets cut. Stakeholders have learned to be creative and find alternative solutions to meet the needs of their students.

Often teams that consist of family and community engagement liaison's, students, teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators gather to look at the specific needs and assessment results that benefit the school district along with the site needs. Community, site, and student feedback is taken under consideration and plays a crucial role when decisions are being made. Once sites vote, all the information is gathered and sent to the district for cabinet revision. The cabinet will propose the plan to the board of education and final decisions will be made. Substantial changes for new positions, programs and projected goals will affect the livelihood of the current students. Educational stakeholders know that these decisions are only going to fix a portion of the achievement and opportunity gaps. Although everyone's input is welcomed, sometimes it ends up being more of a challenge because what might benefit some children, other programs will be eliminated and will affect others. Educational stakeholders are led to believe that newly adopted programs will provide best practices to their subgroups needs.

When at promise students can see that a true reality may be near and that there is light at the end of their quest, they start to gain motivation in themselves. At promise students must realize that their purpose may be fulfilled in their own belief system that they have created for themselves. It is the individuals who ultimately have the beliefs and goals that engender action (Cohen & Levesque, 1991). It is good for at promise students to seek assistance and guidance from others such as mentors or leaders that can provide advice and wisdom. If students can readjust and make what is best within their current situation, they will be able to move forward with their confidence which would allow them to try harder and experience success.

Many at promise students have the desire to prove doubters wrong and many have earned confidence that does not allow them to fail. Failure is not an option for them, and they will do whatever it takes for them to become successful (Blankstein, 2004). Every hardship or obstacle

that they experience is a way for them to create an alternative solution even if it takes them multiple attempts to prove the result that they are looking for. Sometimes failing awakens students and enlightens them to raise their own expectations. They learn how to display the competitive edge that drives them to become successful inside the classroom. Students are resilient and learn how to adjust no matter what their circumstances are or what they are up against. It is a constant battle for them to try to fit in but once they are accepted it makes it easier for urban students to try to prove themselves by displaying their talent. Once students get motivated, it is up to them to keep that inspiration alive that will help them to sustain the motivation to succeed.

Many students allow their day-to-day experiences to deter their beliefs and skew their vision. They have the tendency to allow barriers to take over and establish a false perception that keeps them from excelling in school. It is vital for urban students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds to realize what it takes to go from being at-risk, at-will to sustaining an at-promise journey to become successful in school. One of the key factors for urban school students to experience educational success is to learn how to deal with each problem that they may be facing and learn to become resilient. Their self-efficacy needs to have a desired result that will help one to fulfill their self-fulfilling promise to do well in school and learn to their utmost potential. They must learn how to develop an attitude that will teach them to never give up on themselves, regardless of the outcome. This should be one of their primary goals that they are trying to attain within all aspects of education. Most urban school students are faced with challenges that students who come from affluent areas may not face.

During a crisis, education is the number one system that is faced with cutbacks. Imagine students who are already lacking a sufficient system that is stable and then they are being forced

to have overcrowded classrooms making it hard for them to learn in a calm environment.

Students who have difficulty focusing on their academics have an even harder time just trying to focus on the basic elements of learning.

Gap Analysis

The holes in the research consisted of not being able to find much research that provided a roadmap for underserved urban students to overcome hardships. Although, Childhood Adverse Effect's consisted of providing insight on what student's experience, having a roadmap for the steps to take can make all the difference for students that have been overlooked and may need guidance to overcome hardships. In this research study examples were shared from the students and the educators' perspectives which create insight and factual knowledge of what they have experienced. The findings were a way to see the differences and similarities that both students and educators have provided to gain a deeper understanding in how to be able to relate.

A second hole in this research was finding a definition that was widely accepted of what a quality education really consists of and how at promise students can capitalize from this opportunity. Gaining insight from students' perspectives from the Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys provided a lot of depth on what students were experiencing and what their true feelings were. Being able to compare an educator's perspective of what they thought was a true definition of a quality education overlapped with what students thought it consisted of. A quality education consists of providing all students with equal access to curriculum creating equitable measures and where all students can learn and prepare themselves to critically think independently and be ready for real world experiences. By gathering the appropriate information from students and staff, this is a collective definition that made most sense when coming up with the findings.

A third hole in research was the being able to distinguish resiliency behaviors, but really understanding how underserved urban students can become resilient was a general approach. Based on the information provided, several participants thought that resiliency consisted of having a mindset and being able to establish an outlook on things and how you can do what you put your mind to regardless of what you are up against. Students can become resilient by not giving up on themselves and they must learn to keep moving forward regardless of what the outcome is, and as long as they learn from the experience.

Steps

There are steps that researchers must look at when implementing motivating strategies, leadership approaches and educational theory-based approaches that can benefit underserved urban students. The recommended motivational strategies are to set clear goals, prioritize work by staying organized, build a routine that will help students create healthy habits. Leadership approaches consist of setting high expectations, perfecting social skills, utilizing critical thinking skills, research skills and self-management skills. Several theory-based approaches that are beneficial that underserved urban students can benefit from are growth mindset theory, grit theory, path goal theory and situational approach theory. Each theory-based approach has benefits to keep students focused, engaged, and eager to learn.

A second step that researcher's need to take a closer look at are the benefits of a quality education that can benefit at promise students. Each at promise student who is facing adversity should have the same opportunities as any other student regardless of where they come from or what they are up against. There are many benefits that can lead to a pathway of success for each student who has the chance of receiving a quality education.

A third step that researchers need to pay attention to is the growth mindset of each at promise student. Students who are straying away from having a fixed mindset need to be provided with the appropriate solutions that will benefit them and make at promise students want to change their mental state of being to a growth mindset. It is important to provide all at promise students with the essentials to be engaged, stay engaged and grow while learning.

A fourth step that researchers need to pay attention to is the relationship of high school students who can benefit from receiving a quality education and their educational aspirations. Most underserved urban students are seeking a way out of living in an impoverished lifestyle and want to fulfill themselves with educational aspirations. When urban students aspire to be successful, they are hoping to have each component in place and to experience the best transition possible, while not experiencing additional barriers. It is a primary element for them to feel guided and be given the opportunity to soar to greater heights. Researchers need to understand the mindset of students who are consistently facing hardships and how distorted their mind can be occupied with distractions. Researchers need to understand all the facets involved in high school urban students seeking to aspire greatness and the importance of being able to sustain a balanced lifestyle. It is imperative for underserved urban students to maintain their social emotional well-being, academic excellence and college career awareness and readiness. The use of mixed method triangulation study sought to answer the following question along with three sub questions.

- 1) How can urban students who experience obstacles learn motivation strategies to sustain educational resiliency?
- 2) How does receiving a quality education provide at promise students (formerly known as at-risk students) with a pathway to success or graduation?

- 3) How do underserved urban school students succeed in developing a growth mindset even when they are not being provided with the necessary tools to learn at school?
- 4) What is the relationship between a high school quality education and students' educational aspirations?

Based on the research study, many of the certificated staff members felt that students overcome obstacles on their own and they learn to be resilient because of their upbringing. Their families teach them to keep going and they learn to become accustomed to difficult lifestyles. Many underserved urban students learn to build their own threshold and know how to block out distractions or additional barriers. A variety of classified staff members felt that underserved urban students learn to cope with what is given to them and what they are up against. They know how to adjust on their own but also felt that when a teacher presents motivational approaches, the benefits are rewarding for them to become successful.

The administrators who participated in the research study felt that these urban students were the hardest workers to help support their families. They are taught to work hard in school and to keep up their family name, which stems from their innate motivation. Some of the administrators felt that their students were working after school to help pay rent, while being challenged to do well in school academically.

Participant 1 Response

During the administrative interview, the question was asked how resilient do you think these underserved urban students are? The Participant stated that some of these students are the most resilient students you will ever meet in your lifetime. Some of these students will never stop working towards achieving their goals.

Participant 2 Response

The question was asked how resilient do you think these underserved urban students are? Some of these students come to school full time and then go to work until the early morning hours. It is the ultimate sacrifice for them to do both.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Many teachers felt that most underserved urban students liked school because they would attend regularly. If they showed up to school, then that means there is some type of connection with teachers and their peers. Table 4.1 reflects that a population of 2,484 students only 323, (12%) enjoyed school very much.

Findings for Research Question 1:

1) How can urban students who experience obstacles learn motivation strategies to sustain educational resiliency?

Many underserved urban students who experience obstacles are inclined to self-doubt and have the tendency to give up on themselves within academic settings. These students can learn motivational strategies from great leaders such as teachers, counselors, administrator's mentors, and parents who can provide them with the proper essentials that they may be seeking to sustain educational resiliency. According to Figure 4. 3, 1191, (44%) of the students stated that sometimes they begin to initiate forming a positive relationship with teachers, because there are many benefits that come out of establishing a relationship. When schools provide equitable curriculum approaches, while promoting academic success, it is essential for students to capitalize on the opportunity. Students who are challenged need to feel confident in themselves, therefore many seek out a leader who cares for them and is willing to support them fully.

Fostering a healthy relationship has the tendency to have positive impact and influence on students who want to build upon having an effective learning environment and who want to adopt learning styles. According to Halif et al. (2020), visual learning style was found to influence all three learning styles such as behavioral, cognitive, and emotional elements of student engagement. It is recommended that underserved urban schools provide educational theories that can be applicable to student engagement. Implementing a variety of theories such as growth mindset theory, grit theory, path goal theory and situational approach theory can help students to establish a belief system in their approaches. It is imperative for students to follow a theory of their choice that can help motivate them. Underserved urban students need to also innately, look within themselves where they can consistently find the motivating factors that will help them to keep pushing forward regardless of what they may be up against and learn to adopt the mindset of establishing resilient behaviors. Urban students need to learn how to establish desire (ganas) to and apply it to their lives where they will learn to follow through and accomplish each task. When students have the desire, they will do what it takes to ask questions from their leaders and seek out solutions to become successful. Turning a negative setback into a positive outcome is the mentality that they need to adopt to become motivated to succeed.

Hypothesis 2

Many educators felt that most at promise students were being provided with a quality education for a pathway to success or graduation because of the learning environment that they were in. Many felt that the support they were receiving from their academics and programs was enough to become successful.

Findings for Research Question 2

2) How does receiving a quality education provide at promise students (formerly known as at-risk students) with a pathway to success or graduation?

It is imperative for all educators to attempt to get at promise students involved in the learning process and implement motivational strategies so that they can establish hope and be provided with a pathway to success or have the chance to graduate. When at promise students receive a quality education, equitable measures are provided to them, such as being treated fairly, being provided with a rigorous curriculum, having college-oriented programs, having academic support at home, mentorship, being guided with a four-year plan, and being exposed to A-G requirements. The biggest significance is for all at promise students to understand the importance of A-G requirements and its impact towards their future. When at promise students are given this opportunity and treated fairly, their chances of accomplishing a pathway to success or graduation becomes a reality. According to Figure 4.19, 64% of the students agreed that they were provided with the right support from their teachers at school. Another advantage for at promise students is to have a clear understanding of career technical educational pathways that can help them master a particular trade. At promise students can become qualified in a variety of professions that will help them to become masters of their trade of choice.

Additionally, when at promise students learn the importance of mastering their daily essentials of reading effectively, writing essentially, speaking intellectually, listening selectively, and thinking critically, they will learn to make great strides in developing a successful pathway, which can lead to graduation. According to Bransford et al. (2001), the goal of education is better conceived as helping at promise students develop the intellectual tools and learning strategies to acquire the knowledge that allows students to think productively.

Hypothesis 3

Certificated staff felt that it is the responsibility of students to take advantage of each opportunity on their own and focus on programs that schools offer. Students must try to develop a growth mindset while being provided with learning essentials. Most underserved urban students are already challenged to overcome barriers and they must want to be successful to make it in life. Table 4 .4, reflects that a teacher states that if you put students in the right environment they will excel academically, athletically in music and in art.

Findings for Research Question 3

3) How do underserved urban school students succeed in developing a growth mindset even when they are not being provided with the necessary tools to learn at school?

Often, school districts have crucial decisions to make when it comes to developing programs and its impact. Another concern is having to get rid of programs when they are needed most to meet the student's needs. One way to eliminate educational barriers and to have effective change can be to implement Universal Design Learning programs that offer several steps to teach all the same criteria. There are three steps that are used so students can learn to excel. The first step is recognition, which focuses on the what of learning. The key element is to enrich knowledge and enthusiasm. The second step is to enrich skills and strategies, which focuses on the how of learning and the third step is caring and prioritizing, which focuses on the why of learning. Universal Design Learning will help all students learn.

The goal of specialized programs is to demonstrate substantial growth and develop effective change. These decisions effect the learning environment for students where many are left with not being provided with the necessary tools to learn effectively at school. It is imperative for the Local Control Accountability Plan to be thoroughly looked at so that the

correct model is in place that can benefit all students in need. Getting essential input from key stakeholders such as community representatives can assist with projected goals that really meeting the student's needs. Setting the proper guidelines and objectives that enhance student engagement and learning is essential to learning and productivity. When students are given the proper chance to change their fixed mindset and establish a growth mindset there are many advantages for them to excel, prosper and succeed. According to Ng (2018), an autonomy supportive environment facilitates autonomous learning, and fosters self-determined motivation in students. Students rise to intellectual levels of thinking where they become adaptive, self-regulated and self-determined. Students who establish a growth mindset are always willing to do what it takes to think outside of the box to learn new criteria and beliefs that will help them learn more. A way for students to establish a growth mindset is by keeping a healthy intellectual mind frame where they are willing to accept, grow and learn from others. Constantly receiving knowledge and wisdom from higher achievers and intellects is a key ingredient for underserved urban students to constantly learn from others. If underserved urban students do not have the necessary tools provided to them, then it is important to enhance and establish a frame of reference where they can learn to become creative, think outside of the box, break barriers, and establish their own tools that can work for them.

Hypothesis 4

Teachers felt that because students are academically inclined to succeed, they are prepared to become creative and have educational aspirations to sustain educational attainment.

Findings for Research Question Number 4

4) What is the relationship between a high school quality education and students' educational aspirations?

There is relativeness to students who receive a high school quality education and their educational aspirations. Underserved urban students who are engaged in the learning process, establish norms, beliefs and a regiment that will help them gain a desire to achieve educational attainment and success. These students will learn to inherit a good system that works for them personally and they will start to establish a vision to see the significance and relativeness of what education has to offer. According to Chen and Hesketh (2021), educational aspirations are individuals' beliefs regarding their future goals. Students learn to focus and reflect on educational goals that will help them desire a better lifestyle. This allows them to have great experiences of achieving good grades, mastering rigorous curriculum standards, adopting expected schoolwide learning results. Most of these underserved urban students aspire to be someone special in life and desire to establish a plan so that they can become someone special. A lot of these students aspire greatness because they want to prove to themselves and their family members that they have what it takes to be successful. This is a way for them to earn respect among their loved ones. Once students know that they are receiving a quality education, and they see positive results, they can also learn to establish resiliency that will guide them to continue to have educational aspirations.

Recommendations

There are a variety of recommendations that need to be presented when it comes down to providing adequate services for underserved urban students. All students deserve to be treated equally regardless of their background or geographic area that they are coming from. It is recommended that all stakeholders take under consideration the high transient area that urban school districts have and how many students are facing adversity. When it comes down to making decisions, stakeholders need to allow all factors to play into effect such as, success rates,

specialized programs, implementation of motivational strategies, leadership approaches and educational theories that can enhance the growth mindset of students. When community members such as parents, nonprofit organizations, program directors, students, staff members all decide to vote on the Local Control Accountability Plans goals, it is imperative to try to pull up data configurations that will provide clarity on the needs of what students really need to be successful. Students must realize that their purpose may be fulfilled when they start to see positive results and are encouraged by other support systems that can motivate them to keep moving forward. It is good for underserved urban students to seek assistance and guidance from others, but the reality is that students need to develop a work ethic and try to learn as much information as they can that is presented to them. Although some strategies may be taught and stressed over others, the harsh reality is that many at-promise students may be overlooked. If students can readjust and capitalize on what is best within their current situation, they will be able to move forward with their confidence which would allow them to try harder and experience success.

Many at-promise students are raised with incompatible circumstances where they are not given the same opportunity because of the environment that they are raised in. Many minority students are disproportionately affected by obstacles that lie in their paths that they have access to and do not have any control of, such as exposure to poverty, single-parent households, lack of college exposure and not having the proper resources. There are many at-promise students that are experiencing additional hardships such as the lack of educational attainment sustained by their parents.

Students who have a desire to succeed and have demonstrated great results must continue to be successful. It is important to introduce them to theory-based approaches that can help them

understand the significance of why they are successful. Each of the following theories can provide great opportunities to establish a successful foundation for themselves. The path goal theory, grit theory, growth mindset theory and the situational approach theory all have benefits for students who desire to learn. Each theory specializes in incentives where underserved urban students can adopt and stimulate motivation that will help them to make progressive steps within their learning regiment. There are positive elements or approaches within each theory that can help students who may be educationally challenged and are trying to get back on track to attain success.

There are many approaches that can benefit at promise students who come from urban school districts. When at promise students have a clear indication that the curriculum that is presented to them sets the foundation for them to be successful, it is necessary for them to learn to establish a pathway that they can grasp and learn to transition. This is one way to assist them to get back on track to graduate. Although the pathway to success may become a time-consuming quest for them to accept, there are many strategies that will help along the way to key in on what works best for their own learning environment. Students need to apply themselves to their desired outcomes and demonstrate resilient approaches where they can carry out their goals and establish a mindset that will help them to succeed.

It is recommended for all students to astray from a fixed mindset that helps them to become complacent and strive to have a growth mindset where they can keep striving to gain in depth knowledge, wisdom, and experience where they can learn to move forward. The more teachers that are willing to provide students with the appropriate strategies, approaches, and quality information, the better prepared at promise students will become and want to experience success. Taking advantage of what teachers can offer them will help underserved urban students

prepare for a better future. Teachers can provide students with all the right tools for them to equip themselves to learn and become successful. If teachers can engage students with motivational strategies this will keep students intact, the results will be favorable for students to do better in school and in life.

It is also recommended that at promise high school students coming from urban areas learn to understand the importance of A-G requirements earlier in their high school career. This will allow them to prepare themselves to become college and career ready. Establishing a four-year plan and keeping at promise students on track will help them to understand to follow a sequence of successful pathways. It is recommended that at promise students become familiar with strengths quests, exploratory exams and needs assessments to gain a deeper understanding of what they are strong at or what they need to work on. This will provide insight that will allow them to see what their needs are and to see what they still may be lacking.

When at promise students are exposed to wall-to-wall academies and become familiar with specialized programs, such as Career Technical Educational classes they will be able to understand all the benefits that dual enrollment classes can provide. It is very important for them to explore classes that will prepare them for the workforce, such as automotive, culinary arts, hospitality, and criminal justice classes that can prepare them for a better future. At promise high school students have plenty of opportunities to get involved in these programs that will enrich their growth mindset to continue to explore their options.

Summary

Within this mixed methods triangulation research study, it was imperative to receive different points of view to gain a better understanding of students versus staff members approaches. Validity and reliability were created by collectively gathering information from

individual interviews, Panorama and California Office to Reform Education surveys, or from focus groups. Each of the certificated or classified staff members shared their personal approaches and in-depth knowledge of how students can receive a quality education and overcome personal obstacles by demonstrating resilient behaviors. Based on survey findings, students felt when they had the right support in class and at home, they could focus on what mattered most which was their education and they felt comfortable enough to ask for help. It was imperative for underserved urban students who are classified as at promise students to build confidence in themselves and establish a growth mindset where they can continue to aspire to explore college and career readiness opportunities. The more at promise students were given equitable opportunities, the more they felt included and their desire to become successful would guide them to take them to greater heights.

When at promise students receive a quality education, their chances of excelling rise substantially and they will have a better chance of establishing positive results. Those who choose to seek out opportunities, will have a chance to aspire to become someone special. This will instill hope and desire to make them want to complete the task of graduating and moving onto a higher learning institution. At promise students need to take advantage of learning to inherit a laser like focus that will help them to do better for themselves and take advantage of specialized programs like Advancement Via Individual Determination, Puente, or Peer Assistance Leadership. There are many benefits for underserved urban students who join programs because they can be provided with incentives that will help them receive experience, exposure, expertise, and education that they may be seeking. As many at promise students are aspiring to become successful, it is important to remember that everyone is brought up differently and can bring something special to the gamut of education. A variety of strategies

such scaffolding, code switching, checking for understanding all matter when it comes to providing a positive working environment for students. All students deserve to receive a quality education by receiving the full spectrum of motivational strategies, educational theories, and leadership skills that will help them rise to the top.

Epilogue

Author's Perspective

My research study is relative to my own upbringing where I can relate to what most underserved urban students have experienced in school. During my childhood, I was raised in an impoverished area where I felt that I had limited opportunities because of the adopted expectation and area that I was coming from. My upbringing was very challenging due to living in a crime ridden area where people were being transported from all over the State to face the criminal justice system. It was mind boggling to know that I was being raised in one of the most challenging neighborhoods that was filled with deficit, adversity, post-traumatic stress syndrome, anxiety, and defeat. I grew up in an inner-city area in California where my playground consisted of a City Jail, a County Jail, City Hall, and the County Courthouse. Among my counterpart's beliefs, the adopted criterion was to accept everything, deal with life the way it was, get incarcerated, or join a gang and accept anything that came with that lifestyle.

First thing I had to do was equip myself while living on a survival mode mentality just to function properly with my peers in school and around my neighborhood. I had to expediently learn how to function and grow up fast and become intrinsically motivated about school, while facing setbacks and trying to find a way to beat all odds. With the help of my immediate family members, coaches, mentors, and teachers, I had to learn how to become resilient and overcome many harsh obstacles while being labeled and classified as an at-risk student. My goal was to just

to graduate high school even though I knew that I was growing up with a limited chance of making it in life or becoming anyone special because of the expectations and hardships that I was up against.

One of the biggest challenges was to try to stay focused in school, make progress and to find a successful leader to look up to that could share his or her pathway of success with me. While seeking an outlet or opportunity, wisdom came from my teachers who were from out of the city and shared life stories of people that they knew who had become successful. Although I respected their stories, I was still looking to get advice from someone who was homegrown and raised in the same area who could really understand what I was going through and could relate to my upbringing. There were few successful people around my community, but most would end up moving away and you would never hear from them again.

During the late 1980's and early 1990's, my neighborhood was notoriously dangerous and there were many obstacles that kept underserved urban students from becoming successful like myself. Life's temptations and being exposed to a lot of setbacks as a young man was mentally challenging, but you learn to accept them and move on. Although, I really became accustomed to my neighborhood, it just would have been nice to live a peaceful life with tranquility and an environment where I could focus and excel.

Personally, I felt that there wasn't enough exposure and opportunity that I was introduced to, and school should have prepared me for a bigger and better opportunity. In the eyes of the decision makers, I was considered a poor student because of the neighborhood that I was being raised in and not enough of us demonstrated successful results. It was such a challenge to go against the adopted belief and attempt to make a name for myself where I could become a true success. There was already a preconceived notion that I was expected to fail because every time I

would mention to others that I wanted to become someone special, many would start to laugh at me.

As time went on, my mental capacity was developing into a strong threshold, but at times I realized that I could only handle so much. I realized that my journey was going to have to be unique, therefore I started to take sequential steps on my own to create a way to come up with my own solution. I was anxious to become the first in my whole neighborhood to become successful among my peers, but I never wanted to turn my back on them. I realized that I wanted to be a difference maker and establish myself as being a different kind of leader. My desire was to stand up for myself to be different and follow the path that I started to desire.

At first, I felt like I was being molded into developing a fixed mindset that was stemming from what I was used to by accepting the status quo. I was surrounded by people that were bypassing the significance of going to school, excelling in school, and often choosing the easy way out of dropping out of school. Getting incarcerated repeatedly was the popular choice for many of my close friends along with others relying on the state system to provide for them was also a popular choice. I was transfixed on trying to understand the broken-down cycle that kept circulating within multiple generations.

Although, the way I was being brought up was quite different and stressful, many of my peers at school came from an affluent area of the city and were treated differently because they were given a better opportunity to succeed. I felt that I was overlooked in a lot of ways and not taken seriously to be provided with the same specialized programs, academic rigor, in comparison to them. They were the students that kept getting all the awards, being recognized, and were preparing themselves to go to prestigious colleges and getting ready for a professional lifestyle. There was a foundation laid out for them to become successful and it made it easier for

them to make their dream a reality, while students like myself were trying to break the broken-down cycle.

From my perspective, I felt that my educational experience may have been a lot different, if someone would have sat with me, mentored me a lot more and worked one on one with me so that I could have made great strides to improving myself as a person and as a student. Although, I may have been a late bloomer, I know that I always aspired to have big dreams and if someone would have helped me to adopt a growth mindset, that would have kept me engaged in the learning process the whole way.

Understanding the significance of receiving a quality education and working hard to prepare myself for a better future should have been the necessary steps for me to take. Although, I had tremendous teachers, coaches, mentors, counselors, and amazing parents that I respected and who cared for me a lot, perhaps I was not mature enough and did not see and understand the significance. Looking back, it would have been a great opportunity to take advantage of all the wisdom and knowledge that everyone was sharing with me. Perhaps the potential was there, but I did not see it. Remembering back there were several leaders who cared enough to express their compliments about my future in sports, but it would have been amazing if someone would have guided me with my academics. I feel that if I would have made better choices in school, my path would have been a lot easier along my journey.

My experience should have been regimented to get back on track with provided interventions that would have allowed me to experience a pathway of success. I heard about college, knew about college, but I really did not know the importance of going to college. It would have benefited me to be understand how to better prepare myself in reading, writing,

speaking, listening, and critically thinking. It would have saved a lot of time to learn the curriculum the first time around instead of having to reteach myself a second time.

My educational experience may have been different, if I was challenged a lot more and not placed in basic classes. My high school coursework was structured around taking basic classes that prepared me for an average opportunity. I may have been part of an educational system where structure and accountability should have been stressed. I should have been tailored to a full experience of wraparound services that could have prepared me to receive social emotional support, college and career readiness and could have taught me the proper essentials of how to function and become academically proficient.

I felt that an alternative way to make progressive steps would have been to get my parents more involved in school and to make a connection with my teachers so that a community could have been established for me to succeed. Even though the opportunity may have been available, my parents relied heavily on my teachers to provide a pathway of success for my future. On the contrary, I am thankful for those teachers that saw potential in me, but it may have benefited me more if they reached out to my parents so that we all could have established a connection. My parents were always asking me questions about my educational performance and showed that they were interested, but perhaps assumed that I was equipped because they didn't hear anything bad about my academic concerns from any of my teachers. I feel that I may have fell between the cracks and perhaps right on the cusp of just knowing enough to get by.

At the time of my 12th grade year in high school, I felt that it was my biggest challenge because I did not know if I was going to make it and graduate. There were a lot more factors that were taking a toll on my educational performance. I was being affected by the uptick of crime that had been going on. The homicide rate was on the rise, teen pregnancy was becoming popular

and many of my friends were choosing to leave school and go to work giving up their social life. At the same time, many families were migrating to California and had the mentality that students needed to also work to help provide for their families. This created a culture that was extremely challenging, and it made it easier for students like me to be distracted and it was easy to lose focus on the things that really mattered.

At the end of my 12th grade year in high school, I was not prepared to move on emotionally because I was going to face a world of the unknown. As I was contemplating what to do, reality was settling in where I realized that I had missed out on such a great opportunity. I just left a haven that was full of unity, spirit, friendships and perhaps a missed opportunity. After graduation, I was contemplating what to do, as I started to reflect on my life. I kept asking myself how come I didn't take school serious enough to become academically proficient.

Community College:

Several months later I decided to enroll myself into the local community college. As I was sitting in the quad, I started to get emotional because I felt as if I was in despair. I was feeling some regret and realized that if I would have been academically disciplined, I could have set myself up for an opportunity to attend a 4-year University straight out of high school with a chance to live on campus. It was the first time that I had experienced the true reality of what a commuter school was like. It was what some consider a ghost town, where hardly anyone was around campus. As I was approached by a young lady, she could see that I was in deep thought and she asked me, "Are you alright?" I explained to her that I was not feeling good, because I could not find my place in life. All I could think of was that I still had a slim chance of becoming someone special in life and I started to think of all my friends who moved away, got incarcerated or were lucky enough to go to a 4-year university.

A few days later as I was contemplating whether I should continue to attend school or not as something clicked in my mind to write down all the good things that were happening in my life. Eventually, I wrote down some meaningful things that made me realize how lucky I was and how far I had come along in comparison to a lot of friends I grew up with. I just kept telling myself, don't give up on yourself and you must have the will to fight and take little steps at a time. Some of the biggest benefits were having a high school diploma, not having a record with the law, being enrolled in college, and having a part time job working at a school. Although, it was a busy lifestyle, I started to come to the realization that my life wasn't that bad after all. I felt okay because I was learning to count my blessings and give back to the community that I grew up in. That moment in time was crucial for me and became a turning point because I was on the brink of giving up on school and my future. I called upon my family for direction and help and I tried to establish relationships with my professors at the community college just so that I can feel like I was in the right place and feel empowered.

Turn of Events

I learned to establish a sixth sense and turn a negative experience into a positive outcome. I had realized that one of my best friends was put in jail and was facing a long-term sentence, while another friend was living in fear because of a couple of near-death experiences. This was a true reality check for me to stay focused on the road ahead. I had to adopt a laser focus, tunnel vision, and keep striving for a path to victory, even though my reality seemed bleak. My neighborhood experience was becoming worrisome due to living in a warzone like area. I could see that my friends in my neighborhood were poised to developing a reputation for the wrong reason and setting their own standard where outsiders were becoming fearful to cross within their paths.

I did my best to stay busy and focused on my unknown path to victory as my neighborhood was heating up in defeat. I kept enrolling myself into college classes every semester because that forced me to occupy my time even though I knew destruction was happening around me. Every weekend I would walk to the local library and study for about 4 hours in the morning. I really wanted to get educated and try to better myself as I was developing an eagerness to learn. As I was looking through the local newspaper, I focused on the sports page along with the editorials to stay current on events. It was a good way to learn and strengthen my mindset about what was occurring around society. I realized that I was becoming a better reader and making great strides to become an intellectual student. I started to recognize that my mindset was shifting because of all the content knowledge that I thought I was retaining.

At the end of my first few semesters at the community college, I was in a place where I could not foresee. I realized that I was nowhere near where I needed to be academically and I was placed on academic probation and given a warning letter that if I did not improve, I would have to drop out of community college. I was struggling with my grades, time management, sustaining content knowledge while taking 4 college classes and a vision, all at the same time. I realized that I had a severe problem of being distracted but didn't really understand why I could not make consistent progress.

As time went on, I realized that I had to redirect my life again and adopt a different lifestyle where I could develop grit, perseverance, and resiliency. I had to reteach myself a third time and learn how to read effectively, write with passion, and enhance my metacognition skills effectively. I now knew that if I could dedicate my life to the academia world and think like a professional and act like a professional. I started to organize my life by following a schedule to study, scaffold my work, and attend the tutoring center. I applied myself to what I had previously

learned when I played football. I figured if I could practice three times a day in football, why couldn't I teach myself to study three times as well. My results in football were amazing, therefore I figured that if I applied myself the same way anything is possible. The next semester, I went from academic probation to honor roll. I improved my grades so much and received a 3.5 grade point average for the semester and even made the Dean's list. This was the first time that I experienced any recognition for my academics.

As I was invited to a celebration dinner, one of the guys that I went to high school with was at the same event and was getting an award for being accepted into one of the UC schools. That was a real eye opener for me because we grew up in the same type of environment and here, he was going to transfer to a prestigious University, while I was experiencing academic success for the first time. I was never that student who received any accolades for my academics and here I was in college doing so for the first time. I could see my life changing even though I had to live two lifestyles, where one was on edge of destruction and the other finally focusing on achieving a solid education. Several years later, as I continued my educational journey, I found myself graduating community college with a 3.2 grade point average. I was slowly excelling while having the opportunity to transfer to a California State University.

Upon arrival to my next destination, I really felt a culture shock, because it seemed like I was one of the few Hispanics who was attending school and achieving this great opportunity. As I sat in class, I could not believe that I was learning from well-respected professors around the region and who had made tremendous impact within society. I did my best to take advantage of the opportunity that I was minority on campus. I started to set up meetings with my professors just to try to understand their content knowledge, scholarly language, and mindsets. I started to hang out in the university library so that I could feel like a scholar, and I joined the academic

advising committee to help other students who needed guidance in school. I asked a ton of questions around campus so that I could familiarize myself with what school had to offer.

As I started to make progress and feel comfortable with my education, I received the worst news of my life that my father had passed away. His passing was a numbing experience, and I did not think that I could overcome him passing away. I could hear his voice in my head and started to think about what I could do to make him even more proud. My father was, “My Rock” and what resonated with me is remembering the time when he said to me, “don’t be stupid!” You must keep going to school and make a name for yourself, represent your family, and make your mom and I proud because I did not have that opportunity.

Upon returning to school, I took a different perspective and I started to seek other avenues on campus. I took the initiative to walk into the Financial Aid office to find out how I could qualify for Financial Aid. I explained my background to the financial aid representative, and he said, “I was a good candidate”, so he helped me fill out the application. A few days later, I qualified for a grant that could assist me with my tuition and education. He asked me, “if I could log into my account?” He said it will take a few days, but make sure that I check my account regularly. After a few attempts, I realized that I had been awarded \$1,200 and felt that it was a blessing from my dad. That financial award allowed me to pay for my Senior year in college. It was a sign for me to keep striving for success, keep going forward and to not give up on myself. At the end of the year, I registered to graduate and became the 1st College graduate in my whole neighborhood. I received my bachelor’s degree in Speech Communication and felt very proud that I had made it. Immediately, I realized I was not satisfied, and I decided to apply to a Private University so that I could attempt to receive a master’s degree in education. I realized that my journey was not complete and that I was going to continue to overcome all

obstacles and do my best to continue to make my parents proud. 2 years later, I really felt like a scholar because I was graduating with my master's degree where I achieved straight A's. I now was starting to feel connected with school and really enjoyed the feeling of graduating so much that I reenrolled into another graduate program where I received a 2nd master's degree in education.

As I attempted to continue to prosper with my educational journey, I kept contemplating what to do next. Many years later, I decided to enroll into a Doctoral Program with hope to receive a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. My new adopted belief was that with my education, experience, exposure, and expertise I could really become a difference maker within my peers and my community. I wanted to prove to peer that anything is possible. Currently, I am on pace to completing my educational dream, where I have learned from some of the best professors in the educational spectrum. I am prospering within the ranks of the elitist who are well respected within the profession and who have made such a strong impact on many aspiring educators.

During my personal journey, I have gained internal prestige, a growth mindset that strengthened my intellect and realized that education has been my gateway to an endless opportunity. I also have recognized that I am the only person who had to overcome a variety of severe obstacles within my neighborhood just so that I could be accepted, feel safe and be bound by honor.

Analogy

I have always compared my life to a soldier who carried his shield for protection. A soldier goes to bootcamp to get trained; a soldier learns a trade so that he can hope to one day use it to help his or her team, a soldier carries his weapon just to be ready for the opposition. My

shield of protection was school so that I could keep myself busy and develop a growth mindset and so that I can apply my knowledge when I needed it. Getting educated was my bootcamp so that I could learn as much skills as possible to perfect my journey and carrying a book was my weapon of knowledge, content, and wisdom gained so that I could be more educated than anyone I came across that was competitive. I already had gained street knowledge and if I could get educated at the same time, I could capitalize going from one side of the spectrum to the one that really mattered. I became eager to learn whatever education had to offer. I wanted to teach myself how to become an intellectual person within the world of academia and relate to all people, at all levels.

I was once this young man who was underserved and felt shut down by most because of the way I presented myself. I started to reach out to decision makers that I felt could help me or someone who would hear my story. I started to set up meetings with stakeholders on my own time so that they can understand where I came from and perhaps, they could do something about it. I set up meetings with perhaps the most important people in K-12 education which was the Department of Education Superintendent, District Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and a few Principals just so that they could understand what it takes to overcome the anguish, challenges and defeat that underserved students must face daily and just to feel accepted within the ranks of education.

As I complete my last stance in education and while I fulfill my personal dream of receiving a Doctorate in Educational Leadership, I feel that my life has gone full circle. There I was this brown barrio boy who was living life within unprecedented times, by being at risk, at will, and at promise. I made my own choices to become at will to greatness, at will to overcome leaps and bounds and hope to become a promise keeper. I knew that if I felt destined to do great

things and put my heart and mind into my journey that one day, I could make my dream become a reality. I am here to set the example and lay the foundation for anyone who has a dream and who is eager to learn how to instill motivation in themselves and keep moving forward regardless of how many obstacles they are up against. Anyone can do what they want to do if they have desire (ganas), hope and belief. It is important to learn how to turn a negative experience into a positive outcome that will forever create change for future generations to come. Finally, it is important to believe in yourself and to learn to establish motivation grit, resiliency, and integrity especially when you are up against all odds.

There are many students who fall within the same spectrum of deficiency because they were not provided with the proper essentials to succeed in school. Many at-promise students ended up failing and dropping out of school because they did not know how to adapt to a successful lifestyle. Many underserved at-promise students lacked the proper fundamentals necessary to push through which deters their way of thinking. How many at-promise students who share the same aspiration of success fall short and never learned to materialize to reach their full potential? I feel that it is up to aspiring leaders to set precedence for themselves and to help others who are willing to walk along side of them to experience greatness.

REFERENCES

- Abu Zaineh, S. & Karge, B. D. (2019). Learning about mentoring from professions outside of education. *The Chronicle of Mentoring & Coaching*, 2(1), 123-126. <https://mentor.unm.edu>
- Achinstein, B., & Barrett, A. (2004). (Re)framing classroom contexts: How new teachers and mentors view diverse learners and challenges of practice. *Teachers' College Record*, 106(4), 716-746. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2004.00356.x>
- Adams, J. M., (2015, August 17). *New snapshots of school district achievement, dropouts and discipline*. Edsource. <https://edsource.org>
- Ainscow, M., (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international experiences, *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6(1), 7-16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587>
- Aisch, G., Buchanan, L., Cox, A., & Quealy, K. (2017, January 18). *Some colleges have more students from the top 1 percent than the bottom 60. Find yours*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com>
- Amen, D., Amen, C., & Castellanos, A. (2019). *Change your brain, change your grades: Science-based strategies to boost memory, strengthen focus, and study faster*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, Inc.
- American Psychological Association (2020, February 1). *Building your resilience. We all face trauma, adversity, and other stresses. Here's a roadmap for adapting to life-changing situations and emerging even stronger than before*. <https://www.apa.org>

- Anguiano, B. (2021). Ethnic studies as a vehicle of empowerment: Students of color and their educational journey. *McNair Research Journal SJSU*, 17(5).
<https://doi.org/10.31979/mrj.2021.1705>
- Ansell, S. A., (2011, July 7). Achievement Gap. Edweek. <https://www.edweek.org>
- Auerbach, S. (2007). From moral supporters to struggling advocates: Reconceptualizing parent roles in education through the experience of working-class families of color. *Urban Education*, 42(3), 250-283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085907300433>
- Bakhshi, P., Babulal, G. M., & Trani, J. F. (2017, September 6). *Education of children with disabilities in New Delhi: When does exclusion occur?* Plos One.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0183885>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Bauer, L., Liu, P., Schanzenbach, D. W., & Shambaugh, J. (2018, April 25). *Reducing chronic absenteeism under the Every Student Succeeds Act* [Report]. Brookings Institution.
<https://www.brookings.edu>
- Bentley University (2022, December 20). 12 reasons why you should join a student organization while you get your graduate degree [Press release].
<https://www.bentley.edu><https://www.bentley.edu/news/12-reasons-why-you-should-join-student-organization>
- Bingham, T., & Ray, J. (2013, October 22-24). *Technology and curriculum standards: How well do internet-based learning games support Common Core standards for mathematics* [Paper presentation]? International Association for Development of the Information Society (IADIS) International Conference on Cognition and Exploratory Learning in the

- Digital Age (CELDA), Fort Worth TX.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?q=Bingham+%26+Ray&id=ED562201>
- Blankstein, A. M. (2004). *Failure is not an option: Six principles that guide student achievement in high-performing schools*. Corwin Press. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED495520>
- Blustein, D. (2006). *The psychology of working: A new perspective for career development, counseling, and public policy* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203935477>
- Bonezzi, A., Brendl, C. M., & De Angelis, M. (2011). Stuck in the middle: The psychophysics of goal pursuit. *Psychological Science*, 22(5), 607-612.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611404899>
- Bonnett, A. (2011). Empowering parents to win the race to the top. *McGeorge Law Review*, 42(3, Article 9). <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu>
- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., Cocking, R. R. (Eds.) (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind experience, and school*. National Academy Press.
- Brooms, D.R. (2015). “We didn’t let the neighborhood win”: Black male students’ experiences in negotiating and navigating an urban neighborhood. *Journal of Negro Education*, 84(3), 269-281. <https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.84.3.0269>
- Brown, H. M., Stahmer, A. C., Dwyer, P., & Rivera, S. (2021). Changing the story: How diagnosticians can support a neurodiversity perspective from the start. *Autism*, 25(5), 1171-1174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13623613211001012>
- Burns J.M., (1978). *Leadership*. Harper and Row.
- Calderon, E. (2022). Mixed method study: Exploring relationships between technology funding through the LCAP and sixth-grade student performance (Unpublished doctoral

dissertation) Azusa Pacific University.

California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (2020). *California education*.

<https://www.ctc.ca.gov>

California Department of Education (2018). *Every Student Succeeds Act per pupil expenditure reporting requirement*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/co/essappeltr.asp>

California Department of Education (2021). *Local Control Accountability Plan, LCAP*.

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lc/>

California Office of Education (2015). *Local educational agency Accountability Report Card*

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/le/>

California Office To Reform Survey (2019). *Secondary High School. Orange County California*

https://data.calschls.org/resources/Orange_County_1719_Sec_CHKS.pdf

California School Dashboard (2022). *School district houses a total of 55 schools: Average daily attendance*. <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>

California Department of Education (2015). *Local education agencies*.

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/le/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020, October 6). *United States COVID 19 cases*

and deaths by states. Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). <https://www.covid.cdc.gov>

Chalupa, C., & ter Haseborg, H. (2014, September). Improving student motivation through autonomous learning choices. *NECTFL Review*, 74, 53-85.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1256529>

- Chen, X. & Hesketh, T. (2020). Educational aspirations and expectations of adolescents in rural China: Determinants, mental health, and academic outcomes. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2021, 18(21), 11524.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182111524>
- Cherry, K. (2022). *Positive reinforcement and operant conditioning. Definitions examples and how it works.* verywellmind. <https://www.verywellmind.com>
- Chick, N. (2014). *Metacognition*. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching.
<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/metacognition/>.
- Chong, T.S., Jaafar, J.R., Rahin, S. A., Kadir, N.B.A., Subhi, N., Koh, D., ... & Nen, S. (2012). Self-integrity as the protective shield for peer group loitering among at-risk youth. *Asian Social Science*, 8(9), 98-102. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v8n9p98>
- Clay, J.D. & Lewis, J.C. (2022). *An examination of summer melt for TRIO Talent Search and Upward Bound alumni* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Missouri-Saint Louis.
- Cohen, P.R. & Levesque, H. J., (1991). Teamwork. *Noûs*, 25(4), 487-512. Wiley.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2216075>
- Collins, C., Landivar, L. C., Ruppanner, L., & Scarborough, W. J. (2021). COVID-19 and the gender gap in work hours. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(S1), 101-112.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12506>
- Coutu, D. L. (2002, May). How resilience works. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(5), 46-56.
<https://hbr.org>
- Creswell, J.W. and Poth, C.N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks.

DataHub (2021). *Student management system. Data tracker for average daily attendance.*

<https://datahub.io>

Delgado-Gaitan, C. (2019). Spanish-speaking families' involvement in schools. In C.L. Fagnano and B. Z. Weber (Eds.) *School, family and community interaction* (pp. 85-96). Routledge.

Deussen, T., Autio, E., Roccograndi, A., & Hanita, M. (2014, March 6-8). *The impact of Project GLAD on students' literacy and science learning: Year 1 results from a cluster-randomized trial of sheltered instruction* [Paper presentation]. Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness. SREE Spring 2014 Conference, Improving Education Science and Practice: The Role of Replication. Washington, D.C.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED562842>

Dixon, A. (2019, January 22). *The education crisis: Being in school is not the same as learning.*

The World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org>

Donnelly, M. (1987). At-risk students. *Service Learning, General*. 305.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slceslgen/305>

Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. Scribner.

Duckworth, A. L., Milkman, K. L., & Laibson, D. (2018). Beyond willpower: Strategies for reducing failures of self-control. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 19(3), 102-129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100618821893>

Duke, D. L. (1998). Challenges of designing the next generation of America's schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 79(9), 688-693.

Dweck, C. (2015, September 22). Carol Dweck revisits the growth mindset.

EducationWeek, 35(5), 20-24. <https://www.edweek.org>

- Dweck, C. (2016, January 13). What having a “growth mindset” actually means. *Harvard Business Review*, 13(2), 2-5. <https://www.hbr.org>
- Dynarski, M., & Kainz, K. (2015, November 20). Why federal spending on disadvantaged students (Title I) doesn’t work. *Evidence Speaks Reports*, 1(7), 1-5. <https://www.brookings.edu>.
- Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. §6301 (2015). <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>
- Engzell, P., Frey, A., & Verhagen, M. D. (2021). *Learning loss due to school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic*. PNAS Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 118(17), e2022376118. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2022376118>
- Erbstein, N. & Fabionar, J. (2019). Supporting Latinx youth participation in and out of school time programs: A research synthesis. *Afterschool Matters*, 29, 17-27. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1208384>
- Fenzel, L. M., & Richardson, K. D. (2019). Supporting continued academic success, resilience, and agency of boys in urban Catholic alternative middle schools. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 22(1), 1-25. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15365/joce.2201012019>
- Fine, M. (1986). Why urban adolescents drop into and out of public high school. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, 87(3), 393–409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016146818608700309>
- Foland, J. (2017, January 24). *SMART goals for the new semester*. University of North Carolina. Career Corner, <https://careercorner.unc.edu>
- Foxen, P., & Unidos US. (2019). *The state of public education for Latino students: A qualitative research project*. UnidosUS. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED598096>

- Fuentes, A. V., Jacobs, R. J., Ip, E., Owens, R. E., & Caballero, J. (2021). Coping, resilience, and emotional well-being in pharmacy students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Mental Health Clinician, 11*(5), 274-278. <https://doi.org/10.9740%2Fmhc.2021.09.274>
- Fullan, M., & Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence: The right drivers in action for schools, districts, and systems*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press
- Gardner, D. P., & Others (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. An open letter to the American people. A report to the nation and the Secretary of Education* [Report]. National Commission on Excellence in Education. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED226006>
- Gauna, R. (2017). *The Peer Leaders Uniting Students (PLUS) program: The impact on school climate, student engagement, and student mentoring* [Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University Irvine]. ProQuest No. 10604062. <https://www.proquest.com>
- Ginsburg, K. (2020). *Building resilience in children and teens: Giving kids roots and wings*. American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Goodall, J. (2018). A toolkit for parental engagement: From project to process. *School Leadership & Management, 38*(2), 222-238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1430689>
- Green, M., Emery, A., Sanders, M., & Anderman, L. H. (2016). Another path to belonging: A case study of middle school students' perspectives. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist, 33*(1), 85-96. <https://doi.org/10.1017/edp.2016.4>
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1970). *The power of servant-leadership: Essays* (L.C. Spears, Ed.). Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Grunburg, M. (2021). Growth mindset vs. Fixed mindset pyramid.

<https://www.thehabitfactor.com>

Halif, M. M., Hassan, N., Sumardi, N. A., Omar, A. S., Ali, S., Aziz, R. A., ... & Salleh, N. F.

(2020). Moderating effects of student motivation on the relationship between learning styles and student engagement. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 16(2), 93-103.

<https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v16i2.10301>

Hall, T., & Yarhi-Milo, K. (2012). The personal touch: Leaders' impressions, costly signaling, and assessments of sincerity in international affairs. *International Studies*

Quarterly, 56(3), 560-573. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2012.00731.x>

Hande, M. & Karge, B. D. (2021). *Developing self-regulation behavioral strategies for elementary students through the use of mindfulness* [Workshop]. The Clute International Academic Conferences, Las Vegas, Nevada, October 10-12., 175-1.

<https://www.cluteinstitute.com>

Hannon, V., & Mackay, A. (2021, August 27). *The future of educational leadership: Five signposts*. Centre on Strategic Education, 04 CSE Leading Education Series.

<https://www.ncee.org/>

Harris, Z. (2021). *The impact of Common Core state standards on K-12 dropout rates in California* [Unpublished master's thesis]. California State University, Northridge.

Hatch, T. (2017). *Multi-tiered, multi-domain system of support* [Blog]. Hatching Results Blog.

<https://www.hatchingresults.com>

Hays, J. (2017). Administrator reflective practice to support Latino youth in Orange County Public Schools (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California).

- Hernandez, A.T., & Berla, N. (Eds.) (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement* [Report]. National Committee for Citizens in Education USA.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED375968>
- Hernandez, P. (2021). *The pedagogy of real talk: Engaging, teaching, and connecting with students at-promise*. Corwin Press.
- Hershey, P., & Blanchard, K. (1996). *The manager of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.
- Hess, F. M., & Noguera, P. A. (2022, May 4). *A debate over civics education*. American Enterprise Institute. <https://www.aei.org>
- Hochanadel, A., & Finamore, D. (2015). Fixed and growth mindset in education and how grit helps students persist in the face of adversity. *Journal of International Education Research (JIER)*, 11(1), 47–50. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jier.v11i1.9099>
- Hoffman, J. N. (2004). Building resilient leaders. *Leadership*, 34(1), 35–38.
- Hornstra, L., Kamsteeg, A., Pot, S., & Verheij, L (2017). A dual pathway of student motivation: Combining an implicit and explicit measure of student motivation. *Frontline Learning Research*, 6(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.14786/flr.v6i1.305>
- Hooper, M.A., & Bernhardt, V.L. (2016). *Creating capacity for learning and equity in schools: Instructional, adaptive, and transformational leadership*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- House, R. J. (1971). A path goal theory of leader effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 16, 321-339. Sage Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2391905>
- House, R. J., & Mitchell, T. R. (1975, April). *Path-goal theory of leadership* [Technical report 75-67]. Washington Univ Seattle Dept of Psychology.

- Huerta, A. H. (2022). Exploring undergraduate students' emotional vulnerability in men of color programs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 63(1), 51-68.
<http://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2022.0006>
- Jackson, S. L. (2015). *Research methods and statistics: A critical thinking approach*. Cengage Learning.
- Jennings, P. A., Doyle, S., Oh, Y., Rasheed, D., Frank, J. L., & Brown, J. L. (2019). Long-term impacts of the CARE program on teachers' self-reported social and emotional competence and well-being. *Journal of School Psychology*, 76, 186-202.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2019.07.009>
- Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with poverty in mind: What being poor does to kids' brains and what schools can do about it*. ASCD.
- Johnson, S. M., Kardos, S. M., Kauffman, D., Liu, E., & Donaldson, M. L. (2004). The support gap: New teachers' early experiences in high-income and low-income schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 12(61), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v12n61.2004>
- Karge, B. D., & Moore, R. K. (2015). Common Core: Teaching optimum topic exploration (TOTE). *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER)*, 8(1), 45-48.
<https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v8i1.9089>
- Keller, M. D. (2021). *Student chronic absenteeism and perceptions of school climate* [Doctoral dissertation, East Tennessee State University]. ProQuest 28804762.
<https://www.proquest.com>.
- Kenton, W. (2021). *What is strategic management?*
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/strategic-management.asp>

- Khalifa, M. A., Gooden, M. A., & Davis, J. E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: A synthesis of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4), 1272–1311. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316630383>
- Kim, E., & Hargrove, D.T. (2013). Deficient or resilient: A critical review of Black male academic success & persistence in higher education. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 82(3), 300-311. <https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.3.0300>
- Kramer, R. M. (1999). Trust and distrust in organizations: Emerging perspectives, enduring questions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 50, 569-598. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.psych.50.1.569>
- Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature* [Report]. <https://nces.ed.gov>
- Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2005). Transformational leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.) *The essentials of school leadership*, (pp. 31-43). Sage Publications.
- Lewis, T. J., & Sugai, G. (1999, February). Effective behavior support: Systems approach to proactive schoolwide management. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 31(6), 1-24. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ604910>
- Rosales, B. (202, April 13). *Los Angeles Unified reopens for in-person learning*. <https://www.edsource.org>.
- LBUSD Newsroom (2008, April 2). *LBUSD again up for national broad prize* [Press release]. Long Beach Unified School District. <https://www.lbschools.net>
- Lumsden, L. S. (1994). Student motivation. *Research Roundup*, 10(3). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED369142>

- Lyonsa, M.D., & Chan, W.Y., (2021). *Mentoring for enhancing school attendance, academic performance, and educational attainment* [Report, NCJ 303857]. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U. S. Department of Justice. <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov>
- Maehr, M. L., & Midgley, C. (1991). Enhancing student motivation: A schoolwide approach. *Educational Psychologist*, 26(3-4), 399-427.
https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1207/s15326985ep2603&4_9
- Mapp, K. L. (2012). *Title I and parent involvement: Lessons from the past, recommendations for the future*. Center for American Progress, 1-36. EdSource. <https://www.edsource.org>
- Markel, A. (2021). *Reinvention, intuition and resilience. Themes for 2021*. LinkedIn.
<https://www.linkedin.com>
- Marsh, H. W. (1994). Using the National Longitudinal Study of 1988 to evaluate theoretical models of self-concept: The Self-Description Questionnaire. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86(3), 439–456. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.86.3.439>
- Marzo, R. J., Pickering, D. J., & Pollack, J. E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works. Research based strategies for increasing student achievement*. ASCD.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED450096>
- Maxwell, J. C. (2013). *The 17 indisputable laws of teamwork: Embrace them and empower your team*. Harper Collins Leadership.
- McKenzie, L., (2019, November 19). *No more at-risk students in California*. Inside Higher Ed.
<https://www.insidehighered.com>
- McNally, P., & Martin, S. (1998). Support and challenge in learning to teach: The role of the mentor. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 26(1), 39-50.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866980260104>

- McMullen, C. L. (2017). *WICOR walkthroughs and teacher practice* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. National Louis University.
- Monje, D. R. (2021). *Chronic absenteeism: A challenge to make education equitable* [Unpublished master's thesis]. California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (1986). *IPEDS: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: Four-and two-year institutions*. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). *Status Dropout Rates. Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved from May 22, 2022, <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/coj>.
- Newmann, F. M., Wehlage, G. G. & Lamborn, S. D. (1992). Student engagement. In F. M. Newmann (Ed.), *The significance and sources of student engagement* (pp. 11-39). Teachers College Press. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED371047.pdf>
- Ng, B. (2018). The neuroscience of growth mindset and intrinsic motivation. *Brain Science*, 8(2), 20. <https://doi.org/10.3390%2Fbrainsci8020020>
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C §6319 (2001). <https://www2.ed.gov>
- Noble, T., & McGrath, H. (2015). *The PROSPER school pathways for student wellbeing: Policy and practices*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21795-6>
- Noguera, P. A. (2003). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education*, 38(4), 431-459. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085903038004005>
- Northouse, P.G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (7th edition). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications Inc.



- Ortagus, J. C., & Kramer, D. A. (2022). The impact of no-loan program participation on the likelihood of graduate school enrollment among low-income, first-generation students. *Education Finance and Policy*, 17(1), 81-104. MIT Press.
https://doi.org/10.1162/edfp_a_00328
- Ostrander, R. R., (2015). School funding: Inequality in district funding and the disparate impact on urban migrant school children. *Brigham Young University Education and Law Journal*, 2015, 271-295. <https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/elj/vol2015/iss1/9>
- Panorama Education (2019). *Validity brief: Panorama Student Survey*.
<https://www.panoramaed.com/>
- Phifer, L.W., & Hull, R. (2016). Helping students heal: Observations of trauma-informed practices in the schools. *School Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary research and Practice Journal*, 8(1), 201–205. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/s12310-016-9183-2>
- Center on PBIS (2021). *Supporting schools during and after crisis*. <https://www.pbis.org>
- Public School Review (2021). <https://www.publicschoolreview.com>
- Ramirez, P. C., & De La Cruz, Y. (2016). The journey of two Latino educators: Our collective resilience. *Journal of Latinos & Education*, 15(1), 58–65.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2015.1045142>
- Rios, A. (2022, October 9-11). *Supporting urban students who face obstacles: Educational roadmap* [Paper presentation]. Conference proceedings from the 2022 Clute International Academic Conferences, Las Vegas, NV. <https://www.cluteinstitute.com>
- Romero, M. (2017). *Introducing intersectionality*. Polity.
- Rosales, B. (202, April 13). *Los Angeles Unified reopens for in-person learning*.
<https://www.edsource.org>.

- Ryan, K., & Grotrian-Ryan, S. (2016). Fostering grit and the growth mindset through high-impact practices. *Educational Research: Theory and Practice*, 28(2), 50-51.
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1252579>
- Ruben, B. D., Russ, T., Smulowitz, S. M., & Connaughton, S. L. (2007). Evaluating the impact of organizational self-assessment in higher education: The Malcolm Baldrige/Excellence in Higher Education framework. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 28(3), 230-250. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730710739657>
- Sanderse, W. (2013). The meaning of role modelling in moral and character education, *Journal of Moral Education*, 42:1, 28-42, DOI: 10.1080/03057240.2012.690727
- Schemo, D. (2006). It takes more than schools to close the achievement gap. *New York Times*.
- Schiller, H. I. (2019). *Communication and cultural domination*. Routledge -ebook.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315179162>
- Senge, P. (2012). *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline field book for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. New York: Crown Business
- Sergnese, M., (2016). *Inspiring student success through classroom design*. <https://www.wgu.edu>
- Stearns, B. (2021). *A comprehensive computational model of PRIMs Theory for task-independent procedural learning* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.7302/2815>
- Souers, K., & Hall, P. (2016). *Fostering resilient learners: Strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom*. ASCD.
- Tiberi, A. A. (2021). The impact of school climate on student achievement in mid-Atlantic elementary schools (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Wilmington University

- Tugade, M. M., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2004). Resilient individuals use positive emotions to bounce back from negative emotional experiences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 86(2), 320-333. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0022-3514.86.2.320>
- United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021). *Education pays, 2021. Data on display*. <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook>
- Vinovskis, M. (2009). *From A Nation at Risk to No Child Left Behind: National education goals and the creation of federal education policy*. Teachers College Press. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED522812>
- Weng, S. J., Wiggins, J. L., Peltier, S. J., Carrasco, M., Risi, S., Lord, C., & Monk, C. S. (2010). Alterations of resting state functional connectivity in the default network in adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. *Brain Research*, 1313, 202-214. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brainres.2009.11.057>
- Wong, H. K., & Wong, R. T. (1998). *The first days of school*. Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong publications.
- Yatchisin, G. (2007). *California high school dropouts cost state \$46.5 billion annually*. The Current. <https://www.news.ucsb.edu>
- Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302-314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805>
- Zierer, K. (2021). Effects of pandemic-related school closures on pupils' performance and learning in selected countries: A rapid review. *Education Sciences*, 11(6), 252. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060252>

APPENDICES

Appendix A: CITI Certificate

		Completion Date 27-Nov-2020 Expiration Date 27-Nov-2023 Record ID 39272312
This is to certify that:		
Adrian Rios		
Has completed the following CITI Program course:		Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.
Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Curriculum Group)		
Social & Behavioral Research (Course Learner Group)		
1 - Basic Course (Stage)		
Under requirements set by:		
Concordia University Irvine		
 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative		
Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wfaf461c3-30a8-4ba8-ab9a-bf3cb680be80-39272312		

Appendix B: Questions for Focus Group

Questions for Focus Group

- 1) Do you need to be motivated to achieve your personal goals?
- 2) Does success drive your motivation?
- 3) Does the fear of failure motivate you to be successful?
- 4) Does intrinsic motivation help you to want to become successful?
- 5) Is it important to be motivated to overcome obstacles?
- 6) Parental support is important to do well in school?
- 7) Do you think that underserved urban students have resilient behaviors to overcome failure?
- 8) Have you ever used coping skills to help you overcome a hardship?
- 9) Does having parental support help students to become successful?
- 10) How do students understand which social emotional skills are needed to help them overcome a hardship?
- 11) Who are the most influential people in your life?
- 12) What is your age?
- 13) What is your gender?
- 14) Highest education level completed?

Questions for 1 on 1 interviews

- 1) What is your age?
- 2) What is your gender?
- 3) Highest education level completed?
- 4) Did you come from an affluent area or were you raised in a low socioeconomical area? Explain?
- 5) Have you ever had to experience any obstacles when you were in school?
- 6) What does it mean to be resilient and stay in school?
- 7) What are coping mechanisms and how have you had to use them in your educational journey?
- 8) Were you a 1st generation college bound student, if so explain?
- 9) Were both of your parent's college students?
- 10) What advice would you have for someone who comes from an area where education is secondary?
- 11) Which social emotional learning approaches did you have to utilize?

Additional Questions

- 1) When you were up against an obstacle, how did you cope with it? Which strategies did you use to overcome?
- 2) What were your favorite motivational strategies to use in school?
- 3) What were your favorite leadership skills that you used in school?
- 4) Which educational theories have you heard of and circle which one you have used before?
Ex. Grit Theory, Path Goal Theory, Growth Mindset Theory, Situational Approach Theory