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Encouraging School Planner Use to Improve the Academic Performance of Secondary Students

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Abstract

- Previous research has suggested that planner use can improve homework completion for students who fail to turn in their assignments.
- The study’s first phase examined the effects of planner use and materials organization on the grades of 7th and 8th grade students in student advisory classes.
- The second phase investigated the effects of planner use and a peer-mediated self-management procedure on the grades of low-achieving students enrolled in a 9th grade algebra class.
- Current results suggest that students who are capable but low-achieving may simply lack the organizational skills to turn assignments in on time.

Research Aim

To improve students’ time management, homework completion, and academic grades as a result of using the planner and applying organizational skills.

Results & Discussion

Phase One

- The Classwide Intervention didn’t appear to help students over the long term, but may have prevented a decline in performance.

Phase Two

- Low-achieving students who received the Individualized Intervention experienced improved outcomes.

Participants & Setting

- Phase One: Classwide Intervention - Forty-two 7th or 8th grade students in 3 advisory classrooms; approximately 20 students participating from each class.
- Individualized Intervention - Two students in each advisory classroom received intensive intervention including 1:1 adult support and behavior contracting at least two times per week.
- Three Caucasian males in 8th or 9th grade, capable of doing the work but receiving D’s and F’s in math class.
- Selected for participation by their teacher.

School

- Located in rural community of approximately 12,000 residents.
- Low SES < 40%
- ELL - 5%
- Caucasian - 85%
- Hispanic - 11%
- Other - 4%

Independent Variable

- Phase One - Planner Intervention
  - Four 15-20 minutes across three time periods
  - Lessons delivered classwide
  - Four follow-up “booster” lessons
  - Positive reinforcement in student advisory classes
  - Individual contracting with individual students
  - Staggered intervention over time
- Phase Two - Peer Mediated Self-Management
  - One hour of initial training with low-achieving student and high-achieving peer
  - Students fill out self-management cards daily
  - Daily points recorded and tallied
  - Token reinforcement

Data Sources

- Phase One
  - Periodic Access to Academic Grades
  - Written Narratives
- Phase Two
  - Self-Management Card
  - Daily Access to Teacher’s Grade Book Retrieved Online
  - Student Assignments
  - School Planner
  - Teacher’s Behavior Ratings

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