Program Evaluation Plan for the Academic Coaching Program of Study School

Paper submitted in partial fulfillments of the requirements for EDRS 820:

Evaluation Methods for Educational Programs and Curricula

Silvia Moore & Erin Ramirez

George Mason University

*Note. Everywhere you see “extended evaluation” it means things we did not get to in this evaluation that we would utilize if we had more time, or conducted an extended evaluation. Also, everything in italics represents data we were unable to collect due to time constraints.*

Program Evaluation Plan for the Academic Coaching Program of Study School

Justification for the Evaluation

**Introduction**

**Request from Program Officer**

The evaluation is undertaken at the request of the Director of the Learning Center of ‘Study’ School, SB. The Director would like an assessment of how the academic coaching is perceived by students and parents. In addition, SB would like information about how the Academic Coaching Program raises academic achievement and what mechanisms/processes are most effective.

**Background Information**

‘Study School’s’ Learning Center Department implemented the Academic Coaching program in Fall 2013 to focus on developing the self-regulation and self-determination of students with learning difficulties. This shift occurred because the Learning Center Staff felt that students who were using the learning center were not receiving the appropriate services, as determined by students’ psycho-educational evaluations, because students were arriving at their scheduled sessions with Learning Specialist (LS) in ‘crisis mode’; i.e. overdue assignments and/or lacking preparation for same-day test.  Hence, the LSs were often forced to abandon academic skill training to focus on helping students prepare for a test or learning concepts behind a problem, or the process of solving it for specific content classes.

**Information about the Program**

  The Academic Coaching Program (ACP) involves only the upper school of ‘Study’ School. The staff consists of 6 Academic coaches who are responsible for students with documented learning difficulties in grades 9 to 12 (116 students).  The Academic Coaches (ACs) received formal training on how to lead students to acquire a goal-directed persistence for school (Dawson, P. & Guare, R., 2012).  Each coach is responsible for 18-27 students, a mix of freshman and sophomores or juniors and seniors.  Students participating in the ACP meet with their coach 1 to 3 times (30 minutes) in a six-day cycle.  The AC remains with a student for two years, i.e., Coach1 coaches freshman and sophomore students, the following year the sophomores move on to Coach2 who coaches Juniors and Seniors.

           At the onset of the coaching year, each student is guided to identify long-term and short-term goals and the action steps necessary to reach the goals.  The goals and action steps form the basis of the coaching sessions.  In coaching sessions the AC helps student evaluate outcomes, revise goals/strategies as needed, anticipate work flow increases, and to adopt an effective plan for successfully completing tasks, while considering every facet of the student’s life (extra-curricular activities, jobs, family, etc.).

           While the ACP, was created to address the self-regulation and self-determination of students with learning difficulties, the Learning Center staff acknowledged, and planned for, the importance of helping students who fall behind in homework and/or projects (‘crisis mode’) by adding a Study Session (SS) component to the ACP.  One content area teacher and one AC staff the SSs to help students who are in ‘crisis mode.’  Together the content teacher and academic coach monitor and offer assistance to students with reviewing for tests, completing homework, developing strategies for learning specific content information.  Students are placed into study sessions by the AC or a Student Study Team (an interdisciplinary team that evaluates all ‘Study’ school students who earn a C- or below at mid-quarter and or quarter reporting periods).

**Program Clients, Stakeholders, and Audience for the Report**

***School.*  ‘**Study School’ was founded in 1956 with a non-profit status, and is accredited with the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS).  The upper school west campus consists of 610 students in grades 9 through 12.  The school is designated an “Apple Site Visit School,” meaning it is a model school for 1:1 computer initiatives. The school commitment is to develop individuals who seek excellence in a caring community.  The academic program in the upper school is a dynamic exposure to a broad range of disciplines with the freedom to pursue particular areas of interest and talent and course offering supply the rigor and scope necessary for college readiness.

           ‘Study School’ is committed to being responsive to the individual needs of students.  The average class size is 14 students and a daily schedule includes a period at the end of the day for extra help from the faculty who are available in their respective classrooms or offices for student support.  In addition, there is an established Learning Center Support Team responsible for students with documented learning difficulties, who make up to 28% of the school student population.

***Coaches.*** The Learning Center is an important part of ‘Study School,’ evidenced by the staffing of five (5) Learning Center Specialist, each with a master’ degree in Special Education or in the process of obtaining this credential. Until this year, the specialists worked within grade levels implementing a blend of academic supports that included helping students to learn how to organize, plan, study, and self-advocate; as well as offering specific content support.  This year the Learning Specialists are Academic Coaches, responsible for a mix of grade level students.  The responsibilities of the Learning Center staff has shifted to a academic coaching model, whereby the Learning Specialist teacher (Academic Coach) leads students to identify academic areas of improvement and brainstorm action plans and monitoring strategies for academic success.  For the school, it is important that the ‘new’ way of working with students succeeds as 1/3 of the population is affected, and likewise, the success of these students affects the reputation of ‘Study School’ as a college preparatory school with an individualized approach to education and an emphasis on Universal Design.

***Students.* Academic coaching s**ervices are individualized aimed at supporting independent learning.  This is a shift from the group approach of previous years where students received help in a group setting.  This year, students meet with a coach to discuss their approach to learning, create an action plan for completing work, and identify areas of need.  Content assistance takes place in an assigned study session the student is responsible for attending or with the student’s content teacher during the ‘extra help’ block at the end of the day.

***Parents.***Parents expect a rigorous college preparatory school experience with an individualized approach to education and an emphasis on maintaining a high GPA using the principles of  ‘Study School’s’ Universal Design approach: flexible methods of presentation, expression, and options for engagement.   Moreover, parents whose students receive services from the Learning Center expect their students to receive individualized, specific, and immediate assistance for any academic failures: forgetting to turn homework in, test preparation plans, time management issues, effective study plans.

**Preliminary Review of the Literature about the Program Type and/or Program**

Academic coaching emerged from the literature on managing Attention Deficit Disorder/with Hyperactivity (ADD, AD/HD) of Adults. In the book *Driven to Distraction (*Hallowell and Ratey, 1994) the authors refer to working with Adults with ADHD as coaching. According to Hallowell and Ratey, the role of the coach was to encourage and to remind the ‘Coachee’ to focus on the task at hand. The theoretical foundations for coaching are grounded in the behavioral literature (all behavior can be learned) and the social-cognitive literature (behavior is learned with factors present: motivation, cue, responses, rewards).  According to the social-cognitive literature one effective framework for coaching is Zimmerman’s (2002) widely accepted three phase self-regulatory (SR) model. The three phases (Forethought, Performance, Reflection) of the self-regulation model contain key strategies for developing executive function skills that include self-motivation, self-control, self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction.

           According to Andrew Martin (2009), this multi-dimensional approach yields positive results for students underperforming due to lack of engagement with factors related to executive functions as the causal agents. In his investigation, grounded in the behaviorist tradition, Martin measured the effect of an intervention on the motivation and engagement of 53 male high school students from a large independent boys school in Sidney, Australia. The investigation targeted students identified by teachers as under performers. Martin used the survey for Motivation and Engagement Scales for High School Students (MES-HS) to identify cognitive and behavioral dimensions from which to measure student motivation and engagement.  The intervention was composed of 11 modules providing students with training for revising beliefs about self-efficacy, task value, goal orientation, planning, monitoring, persistence, anxiety, control, avoidance, self-handicapping behaviors, and disengagement.  A comparison of the intervention group and non-intervention group’s pre- and post-test scores revealed significant differences in motivation and engagement between the two groups. The largest effect was in the feeling of control (agency), while value of task, monitoring, affect, and avoidance showed a medium effect. This study supports the assumption that Academic Coaching is an interventions program that targets maladaptive behaviors of students through a practice of encouraging student awareness of maladaptive behaviors and the use of strategies for improving their academic performance.

Coaching in the context of education has historically taken two forms (1) coaching to tests like the SAT, ACT or aptitude tests in order to gain entrance to higher education or selective schools; or (2) coaching to improve deficits in academic skills.  Several studies have found that coaching to tests like the SAT or ACT are not as effective as the companies who touted these services would like us to believe (Lloyd, B, 2008). Contrariwise, coaching students toward improvement of skills has been found to improve performance across domains. In a study conducted by Kenny and Faunce (2004) of 1,723 elementary and secondary students in a metropolitan school in Sydney, Australia, they compared the academic performance of students who were enrolled in a coaching program to students who were not enrolled in a coaching program. While controlling for I.Q., Kenny and Faunce found a significant difference between the coached and non-coached student.  The coached student performed worse on end of year test than did their non-coached peers. Interestingly, however, were the findings within the coached student group. Kenny and Faunce found that a subgroup of coached students who reported enjoying their coaching performed better on some tests than their peers who reported not enjoying coaching. The authors posit that enjoyment may be an index of motivation interest, or volition that helped these students to perform better.

In another study by Prevatt, Lampropoulos, Bowles, and Garrett (2009), 13 college student of a large public university in the Southeast enrolled in an 8-week coaching program focused on improving motivation, self-regulation, time-management, and specific study skills. This study examined the framework of a coaching program focused on student created goals. Each coaching session was based on a four step approach for attaining the goal:  (R) reviewing the long-term goal, (E) evaluating the completion of short term goals, (A) anticipating workload for the week, and (P) planning tasks for effective completion. These evaluators reported that when students complied with the monitoring process agreed to by the coach and student, the student was more likely to make gains regardless of who took the initiative to write down the plan. A significant outcome that will surely work in favor of the Academic Coaching Program of ‘Study’ School is the finding by Prevatt et al. that the students who made the most gains did so because they were significantly motivated by a desire to please their parents.

In summary, the literature reviewed indicates that Academic Coaching is a positive intervention for students with mild learning disabilities including Attention Deficit Disorder with and without Hyperactivity. What this present evaluation proposes is to examine the processes of ‘Study’ School’s program in order to document the effectiveness of the program to student achievement and the perceived satisfaction by all stakeholders.

**Information about the Evaluation**

**Findings from Previous Evaluations and Revision of Reflective Analysis**

The ACP program has been in place for two months. There are no formal or informal evaluations of the AC program, which is the primary basis for the current evaluation program.

**Need for the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the coaching model approach for the needs of students with mild learning differences, i.e., Attention Deficit Disorder with and without hyperactivity (ADHD/ADD), Executive functioning disorders, Processing disorders, etc.). There are three main goals:

1. To describe the attitudes, beliefs, and sense of efficacy of academic coaches in the Academic Coaching Program.
2. To compare the changes in student academic achievement (GPA) as a result of enrollment the Academic Coaching Program
3. To examine if the Academic Coaching Program implementation affects student outcomes beyond achievement.

**Issues, Concerns, Challenges, and/or Problems**

One of the main concerns with the current program evaluation is that the AC program has no previous evaluation data, nor any evaluation mechanism. Since the stakeholders have never been internally or externally evaluated the evaluators cannot determine how the stakeholders will react negative findings related to the program. Therefore, the evaluators must develop a systematic and comprehensive plan for providing the stakeholders with findings that will lead them to implement program improvements rather than focus on the any deficiencies uncovered. Consequently, the evaluators will maintain constant communication with the stakeholders to ensure new information is shared regularly throughout the evaluation process. This communication will aid the evaluators in maintaining stakeholder support and open-mindedness throughout the data collection, analysis, and dissemination of program evaluation findings.

**Causal Factors Related to Issues, Concerns, Challenges, and/or Problems**

Concerns related to the AC program evaluation center around the issue that the program is new and an evaluation program plan is nonexistent and thus, stakeholder support and buy-in is essential to the evaluations success.

**Data Related to Issues, Concerns, Challenges, and/or Problems**

The newly implemented AC program has never been evaluated; therefore, data concerns revolve around gaining accurate information from all secondary stakeholders to ensure evaluation validity. The goal for the evaluators throughout the evaluation process will be to ensure that all coaches, parents, and students data reflects authentic beliefs about the AC program in order to successfully produce a credible evaluation. The accuracy concerns will be addressed by assuring secondary stakeholders of survey response anonymity in an effort to elicit honest opinions about the program.

**Evaluation Approach**

The current evaluation was designed to answer ‘Study’ school questions using a mixed method expansionist approach, extends the scope of the study, with a dialectic stance that paradigms, context and theories guide practical decisions (Greene, 2007). The main aim of this study is to employ differing methods to inform the examination of the ACP. The grounded cross-sectional approach will survey both teachers who will use and those who are using the ACP to assess: (1) the efficacy beliefs of the coaches and the ‘would-be’ coaches, and (2) the perceived value of the AC program.  The development approach of mixed methods will be employed to construct instruments to assess how parents and student perceive the ACP. Together the questionnaires for teachers, parents, and students will be used to create structured interviews for the focus group.

The mixed methods triangulation approach will be essential in ensuring corroboration of findings and inferences through the focus group interviews. Conversely, the focus group data may initiate new findings not addressed in the study, but nevertheless, may prove relevant to the ACP of “Study’ school to engage in prospective planning.

**Evaluation Questions**

  Following an email communication with the director of the Learning Center, SB, for ‘Study School,’ the following program evaluation questions are required:

1. What are the benefits for the student, GPA and self-regulatory processes?
2. What are the beliefs and attitudes of the AC regarding their position, the school environment, and their ability to be successful?
3. Does the LC staff feel efficacious in the AC model?
4. How is the effectiveness of the AC assessed?

**Relationship of Question to Program Issues, Concerns, Challenges, and/or Problems**

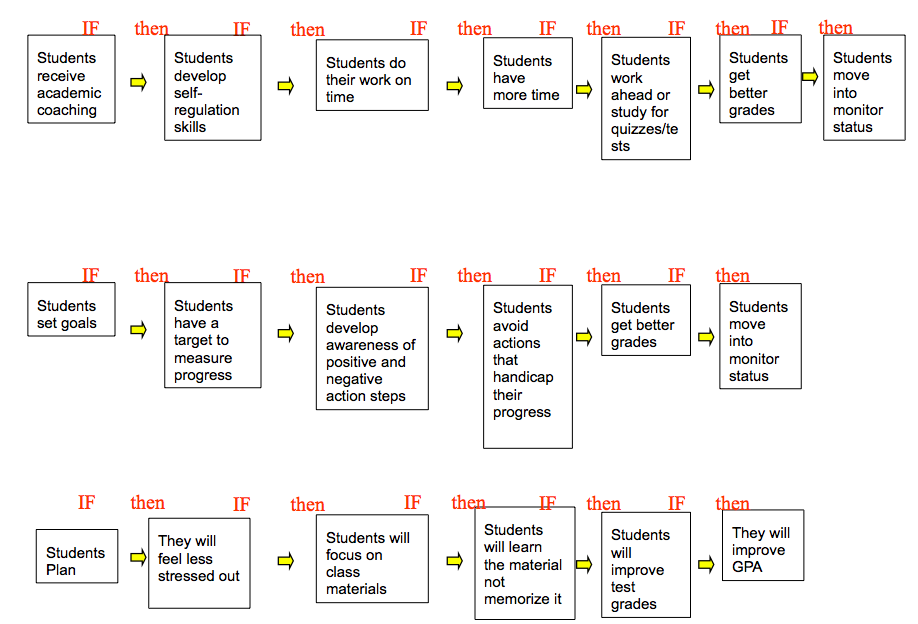
The Academic Coaching program is a new initiative for ‘Study’ School. According to the literature review and a review of schools in the area, no other school within fifty (50) miles of ‘Study’ school has established an academic coaching program of the model used ‘Study’ School. Therefore, information about how the Academic Coaching program raises academic achievement is desired by the program director. In addition, the director would like information about how the program is perceived by the stakeholders. Finally, because the program has no formalized evaluation processes for measuring its efficacy, the director would like this evaluation to identify the processes that add value to the program.

**Justification for each Question based on Review of the Literature and/or Data Related to Issues, Concerns, Challenges and/or Problems**

According to the limited research literature found, academic coaching has been found to be effective. However, the literature on academic coaching is limited to discussions of the coaching relationship and to a less extent the mechanism used to monitor self-regulation toward schoolwork completion.

Consequently, the questions posed for this evaluation aim to answer the more pragmatic questions the literature review lacked. These questions frame the overarching question of “Does the Academic Coaching program raise Academic Achievement?” And if it does, “How does it do it?” What are the components used and how are these employed by the staff. In addition, the questions in this evaluation aim to uncover instructional frameworks that the stakeholders (students, parents, and teachers) perceive efficacious. As noted previously, these questions direct relate to the evaluation goals and will be assessed through the various measures, which are comprised of items drawn from the evaluation questions.

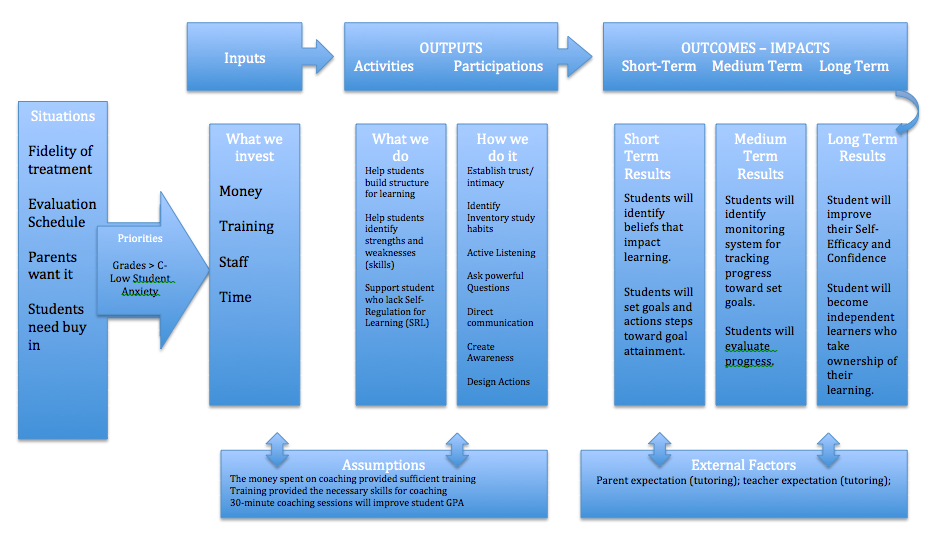
**Theory of Change**



Since there has not been a formal or informal evaluation of the ACP the necessity for accountability arises. The goal of this evaluation is to enact change around attitudes, knowledge, awareness, and overall skills. By evaluating the program and providing the relevant stakeholders with the evaluation report and executive summary, changes in attitudes, knowledge, awareness, and skills will emerge and hopefully propel the stakeholders towards program sustainment and improvement.

**Theory of Action**

By providing more information about the ACP we can affect change by increasing knowledge of the processes within and about the program.



**Methods**

This study follows Rank’s (2004) methodological approach of an embedded mixed methods design in which qualitative and quantitative methods are utilized in a manner that lends itself to having each method inform the next method.  Using this approach both methods will blend together and as such a cyclic model will emerge where, the qualitative data will inform the quantitative data and the quantitative data will inform the qualitative data. In the context of this study, we will be using the AC questionnaire to help us create the student/parent questionnaire. Additionally, we will use the student’s quantitative data (GPA) and their answers on the SELF-survey to develop qualitative questions to further explain/enhance the quantitative data. The purpose of this mixed method design is to integrate a convergence and divergence of data to enhance validity and inferences (triangulation) and for developing a sequential construction of instruments informed with results of previously administered instruments (development). Evaluators anticipate data from focus group and questionnaires will support findings. However, evaluators are aware that some data may uncover new or expected findings and are prepared to initiate further exploration if necessary.

**Data Collection/Capture Plan**

A preliminary collection of data included collecting books, pamphlets, and training manuals from the program coordinator at ‘Study’ School that were read by the Academic Coaches of ‘Study’ School during the training sessions, but prior to implementing the program. Subsequently, a list of research articles was compiled from the indices of the program books. In addition, web searches in Google scholar, psycnet, ERIC, and the Social Sciences Citation index with the terms ‘coach’, ‘academic coach,’ ‘motivation coaching,’ ‘self-efficacy of academic coaches’ and ‘intervention for executive functions’ from the years of 2004-present were conducted. These web searches generated 100 articles. Most of the studies that focus on coaching were conducted in the context of sport. Many more focused on teacher coaching or peer coaching. Ten (10) articles were selected for review that focused on coaching students in the elementary, secondary, and college level. From the ten selected articles, three were included in the literature review as they were deemed to offer the most relevant information for the evaluation program in progress.

The coaching manual, coaching books and literature review informed the development of the initial questionnaires for ‘Study’ school’s four (6) academic coaches (ACs). From the results of AC questionnaires, student questionnaires were developed. Student goals/outcomes which academic coaches reported the program developed were used to formulate questionnaires for students in the ACP.

The results from questionnaires will be used to construct semi-structured interview questions used in the AC focus group interview.

**Data Sources for Background Information**

1. Proposal for Learning Center shift to Academic Coaching (Maximizing Individual Learning Environments (MILE)).
2. Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) 5 year Plan
3. Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) Plan for the Fall
4. Academic Coaches Training Manuals.
5. Academic Books included in training:
6. Empowering Youths with ADHD, Sleeper-Triplett, J.
7. Group Coaching: A comprehensive Blueprint, Cockerham, G
8. Coaching Students with Executive Skills Deficits, Dawson, P, & Guare, R.
9. Change your questions change your life: 10 powerful tools for life and work, Adams, M.
10. School Website

**Data Collection & Procedures**

Data will be collected in various stages with all data collection occurring from October 1-15, 2013.  Questionnaires for parents and teachers will be sent out electronically via email and all responses will be anonymous to protect anonymity. Using Google surveys evaluators will be able to collect responses to the questionnaires without identifying information, as no respondent will be required to submit their email or name; therefore, AC and administrators will have their anonymity protected.  Student questionnaires will be sent out electronically following the AC questionnaire responses, as the results of the AC questionnaires are used to drive the construction of student questionnaires. All questionnaires will be password secured digitally, only the evaluators will control the password.  The external evaluator will conduct focus group interviews of the AC centered on a set of semi-structured protocol questions informed by the results of the questionnaires.  All data will be transported to GMU and stored in a locked cabinet, in a locked office, inside a locked office suite in the West Building on the Fairfax campus.  Evaluators will enter and analyze all data, qualitative (questionnaires and focus group interviews) and quantitative(GRA, SELF, and questionnaire results), and use the data analysis to answer the evaluation questions.  Once all data has been collected, the relevant stakeholders will be notified of the progression of the ensuing evaluation to ensure that communication channels remain open and the evaluation proceeds as it was described originally.

Document analysis was conducted on the coaching manual that all AC received during a three-day intensive training program. Additionally, a group of documents were combined and analyzed that included the initial proposal for Learning center shift to Academic Coaching (Maximizing Individual Learning Environments (MILE)), the Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) 5 year Plan (9/7/2013), and the Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) Plan for the Fall of 2013.

**Participants**

**Academic Coaches.** The director of the program will use email to encourage the six ACs to complete the survey.  The Academic Coaches will be recruited in person through direct appeal.

**Students.** A significant amount of the student data has been collected, i.e. GPA and SELF-results. The SELF-survey was administered to all students in the AC program (70) by the AC staff. However for the student surveys about the AC program, ten students will be chosen randomly between the six AC. These students will be given a letter to read and sign if they wish to participate. No students will be forced to participate, nor will they receive any benefits for choosing to participate. Additionally, all students will be notified that they are under no pressure to participate in the survey, and in no way will their choice to participate or not affect their relationship with the AC or their place in the AC program. (Extended evaluation)

**Parents.** Parents will be identified by the AC in the same manner that students are identified. The AC will provide the evaluators with ten parents’ email addresses and the parents will complete the parent’s questionnaire; however this process will occur electronically via email. Parents will be given the option to participate or not and will not be punished for not participating, nor will they receive any benefits for completing the questionnaire. Finally, parents will be notified that regardless of their decision to participate or not their students will not be penalized or rewarded in any way in regards to the AC program. (Extended evaluation)

**Timeline**

* Recruit Teachers:                          September 12, 2013

Teacher recruitment was made through direct appeal with the verbal approval of the program director.

* Create Survey Questions:             September 30, 2013
* Recruit Students:                          September 16, 2013

Students for survey were identified by the coaching staff. A survey to assess their level of satisfaction with the current Academic Coaching Model.

* Clean and Analyze data:               October 20, 2013
* Submit Final Evaluation:              November 27, 2013

**Data Sources for Analysis**

1. **Personal data questionnaire.**To be developed for a) coaches, b) students, and c) parents. (b and c, extended evaluation)
2. **Semi-structured Focus Groups.**A mixed method process of sequential development will inform the construction of interviews. The interview question will be constructed from results of the questionnaires to better understand the efficacy and value perceptions of academic coaches, ‘would-be’ academic coaches and students. Therefore, the evaluators will read through the questionnaire responses and then create the interview questions around these responses. By engaging in such a process the evaluators can ensure that they are asking questions that will better describe the AC beliefs, attitudes, and sense of efficacy based on their questionnaire responses. Since questionnaires can only address so many issues at one time, and oftentimes participants are much more responsive during open dialogues, the evaluators are using the semi-structured focus groups to expand on AC participants questionnaire responses. These focus groups also allow the evaluators to ask follow-up questions and expand on some of the quantitative and qualitative responses participants articulated during the questionnaire. (extended evaluation)
3. **Self-efficacy for self-regulated learning.**Self-efficacy surveys SELF, adapted from Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2007). (Extended evaluation)
4. **Academic Coaches Questionnaire.** See Appendix A
5. **Parent Questionnaire.** To be developed by evaluators in an extended evaluation.
6. **Student Questionnaire.** To be developed by evaluators in an extended evaluation.
7. **Student GPA.** T-tests and data analysis conducted by evaluators.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1 Data Analysis** | | | | | |
| **Research Question** | **Data Collection** | **Participants** | **Instruments** | **Method of Analysis** | **How information presented** |
| ***1. What are the benefits for the student in the self-regulatory process?*** | *Questionnaire*  *Survey* | *Students*  *Grade 9-12* | *Created by Authors*  *Sequential development*  *SELF (Zimmerman/ Kitsantas) Existing data* | *ANOVA* | *Graphs* |
| **2. and 3. Does the LC staff feel efficacious in the AC model?** | Questionnaire | Academic Coaches  9-12 | Created by Authors | Qualitative-Open Coding for themes  Quantitative- frequencies | Tables (qualitative) and graphs (quantitative) |
| **4. How is the effectiveness of AC assessed?** | Q1 GPA 2011  Q1 GPA 2012  Q1 GPA 2013 | Students  Grade 9-12 | ‘Study’ School Existing data | t-test | Graphs |

*Note. Everything in italics we did not have time to examine in this evaluation.*

**Findings**

**Academic Coach Questionnaire.**

Findings from the Academic Coach Questionnaire were entered into SPSS and frequencies were run to find the mean responses from the AC (n=6) on each question. The following charts depict the information gathered for each question and answer evaluation questions four and five.

Of the six AC, 83.3% held a master’s degree and the other 16.7% hold a doctorate.

Additionally, 83.3% of the respondents were female and 16.7% were male.

66.7% of the respondents coach grades 9/10 and 33.3% coach grades 11/12.

When asked how academic coaching best help students, 16.7% of the AC responded that it teaches progress monitoring and accountability, 50% said it directs actions towards results, and 33.3% said it creates awareness of learning.

Coaches agreed across the board, 33.3%, that the overall goal for the students they coach is to develop student efficacy, facilitate learning, and develop self-direction.

Of the six academic coaches, 83.3% said that helping students to learn is the method that best describes how they coach and 16.7% said it’s to develop ability to plan.

Overall, 66.7%, of academic coaches responded that establishing purpose was the most important reason for asking powerful questions during a coaching session. Followed by an even split, 16.7%, saying that providing feedback and eliciting coaching objectives was the most important reason.

Half of the respondents, 50%, reported that the most important aspect of active listening during coaching sessions was to reinforce expression of feelings, while 16.7% said it was to either gain information to direct or to summarize back to students.

66.7% of the coaches said that self-awareness was the most important skill a student can develop from coaching. Responsibility and planning both received 16.7% of the responses from the academic coaches.

Coaches responded evenly across the board, 33.3%, that planning and goal setting, awareness of learning style, and responsibility is an important outcome of academic coaching when prompted to choose only one.

When asked about how many questions they asked in their last coaching session 33.3% of coaches answered 2-5, 16.7% said 5-7, and 50% said 7 or more.

66.7% of the coaches said the most effective way to conduct a coaching session is to encourage use of strategies, while 33.3% said probing for awareness was the most effective way to conduct a session.

When asked what best describes academic coaching, 66.7% of coaches said listening and 33.3% said questioning.

Academic coaches responded overwhelming, 83.3% , that communication was the most important skill of an academic coach with 16.7% saying concern was the most important skill.

When asked about the most important aspect of coaching 66.7% of coaches said responsibility, followed by an even split of 16.7% each for trust and communication as the most important aspect of coaching.

The following responses were collected using a likert-type scale with the values: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neutral (N), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

50% of academic coaches strongly agreed that they could be a better coach with more training, 16.7% agreed they would be a better coach with more training, and 16.7% disagreed with the statement.

The majority of coaches, 50%, said they disagree that they become easily overwhelmed as an academic coach.

There was an even split, 33.3%, between coaches who agreed and disagreed that at times they find their job unmanageable.

Academic coaches responded favorably, 50%, say that they agree they can ask the right questions.

50% of respondents responded that they disagreed that if student’s communicated better, they could be a better AC.

Half of respondents, 50% were neutral that even the best plan does not work and that it’s the student’s fault.

66.7% of academic coaches agreed that they believed others value the job they do as an academic coach.

Academic coaches responded that they agreed 50%, that they can effectively create awareness about the importance of academic coaching.

Academic coaches were split 33.3% that they agree or are neutral that they cannot reach all students.

The vast majority, 83.3%, agreed that they can build strong relationships with all their students.

Coaches were split 33.3% as to whether they agree or disagree that they do not feel like their position in their school is as valued as it should be.

50% of academic coach agreed that they can help student’s set manageable learning goals.

Academic coaches were overall neutral, 50% that communication with students will always break down and that’s a part of life.

All of the academic coaches, 100%, agreed that they can only do so much for students.

The respondents were evenly split, 33.3%, that they were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that they are unable to build trusting relationships with their students.

66.7% of academic coaches agreed that they felt like a valued member of their school community.

Academic coaches were majorly, 66.7%, neutral that they can effectively manage their students’ outcomes.

83.3% of academic coaches agreed that they can create action plants that aid student learning.

Academic coaches were split 33.3% that they strongly agreed or agreed that they need more resources to be an effective academic coach.

All the academic coaches responded that they either disagreed, 50%, or strongly disagreed, 50%, that some students simply do not want to do well in school and academic coaching cannot change that.

The majority, 50%, of coaches said they agreed that at times they felt underprepared for the challenges they face on a daily basis.

83.3% of the academic coaches agreed that they believe they are effective communicators.

Of the academic coaches surveyed, 50% agreed that at times they feel underprepared for the challenges they face on a daily basis.

All coaches responded that they either agree, 50%, or strongly agree, 50%, that their position as an academic coach is an important one.

Academic coaches disagreed, 50%, that no matter what they try nothing seems to help some of their students.

When asked if they feel well prepared to deal with the daily issues involved in academic coaching, 50% of coaches agreed.

All coaches agreed, 83.3%, or strongly agreed 16.7%, that they can actively listen to students’ problems and concerns.

Of the academic coaches surveyed, 66.7% of coaches agreed that they are an effective coach with 33.3% of coaches responding neutrally.

All 100% of coaches agreed that they can establish trusting relationships with their students.

50% of academic coaches agreed that they believed they can make a difference in a student’s academic career.

Of the academic coaches surveys, 50% agreed that they have all the resources they need to be a successful coach.

When asked if they can help even the most struggling student, 50% of academic coaches agreed that they can.

For the extended evaluation we would utilize this information to craft a focus group interview protocol in which we would get more expletive answers to some of the questions that arise from the questionnaire responses. For example, 83% of respondents said communication was the most important aspect of coaching, however 13% said they were neutral on whether they were effective communicators. As such, we would use these responses to formulate a semi-structured interview protocol to delve farther into the AC beliefs, sense of efficacy, and overall feelings about themselves as AC and the AC program.

**Pre-Existing Data, Student GPA.**

Students 1st quarter GPA data for years 2012 and 2013 were collected and analyzed using SPSS and t-test statistics were run to find the mean differences between groups across grade levels (n=76) and within group differences across years. The following charts depict the findings.

The control group comparison chart shows that students who received academic coaching had statistically significant differences in GPA scores than students in their same grade level that did not receive academic coaching. Ninth grade students who were not enrolled in an academic coaching program had slightly lower GPA scores than 9th graders who participated in the academic program; while 10th and 11th graders who were not in the academic coaching program had much lower GPA scores than their peers who received academic coaching. (See table 1)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1 Control Group Comparison: Difference Between Groups Across Grade Years** | | | | | | | |  |
| Grade |  | | 2012 No Academic Coaching | | | 2013 Academic Coaching | | |
|  | | Mean | | t-test | Mean | | t-test | N |
| Freshman (9) | | 342 | | 38.54\* | 342.5 | | 30.68\* | 31 |
| Sophomores (10) | | 322.83 | | 35.85\* | 337.33 | | 37.21\* | 38 |
| Juniors (11) | | 328.83 | | 48.77\* | 336.00 | | 48.78\* | 29 |
| \*Statistically significant p < .001 | | | | | | | |  |

When the 2013 GPA scores for students in the academic coaching program were compared with their GPA score for 2012 (when not enrolled in the academic coaching program), 11th and 12th grade students showed improved GPA scores than the previous year. However, 10th grade students had a lower GPA score for 2013 than they did when they were in the 9th grade in 2012. (See table 2)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2 No Academic Coaching VS. Academic Coaching: Difference Across Grade Years** | | | | | | | | | | |  |
| Student cohorts | 9th grade | | 10th grade | | | | 11th grade | | 12th grade | |  |
|  | Means | t-test | | Mean | | t-test | Mean | t-test | Mean | t-test | N |
| Freshman🡪Sophomores | 342.00 | 38.54\* | | 337.33+ | | 34.21\* |  | |  | | 38 |
| Sophomores 🡪Juniors |  | | 322.83 | | 35.85\* | | 336.00+ | 48.77\* |  | | 29 |
| Juniors🡪Seniors |  | |  | | | | 328.83+ | 56.43\* | 345.17+ | 43.62\* | 19 |
| \*Statistically significant p < .001 | | | | | | | | | | |  |

Overall when compared to their same-grade level peers at the 1st quarter grading period, students receiving academic coaching have higher GPA scores. Moreover, when the 1st quarter grades for students in the academic coaching program are compared across two years, the 11th and 12th grade group show marked improvement in their GPA scores. Further exploration is warranted to find an explanation for the current 10th grade students whose GPA scores are lower than they were in the 1st quarter of their 9th grade year.

.

**Document Analysis, Coaching Manual**

The 3-day portion of the manual is 62 pages and covers the various components important for development of academic coaching skills. The manual offers educators key components to becoming an ADHD academic coach, from describing ADHD to emphasizing the successes that can occur with coaching. Additionally, the manual describes the self-regulation model without specifically calling it the self-regulation model; i.e. it describes “planning and goal setting, organization, time management and prioritization, developing and maintaining focus and concentration, social skills, and evaluation.” While the document does not specifically articulate this model as self-regulation, the key components are extremely similar to the self-regulatory processes.

The document informed the logic model included in this evaluation as it delineates the goals of coaching, the difficulties in coaching, and the purpose of coaching.

**Document Analysis, Presentation of 5-Year Plan, Academic Coaching Program, Request for Training.**

A group analysis of a compilation of documents for the transition plan to the academic coaching model included documents from the previous three years (2011) to present. The documents examined include presentation to the school board, parents, and teachers to define how the academic coaching model differed from the (then) current model. Major changes included shifting from offering content specific assistance to students to helping students discover what would help them learn. The emphasis of the new model is to teach students ‘learn to learn.’

An examination of these documents informed the creation of teacher questionnaires that reported whether or not the model goals are achievable. In addition, Documents informed the inputs and expected outputs of the program included in the logic model of this evaluation. Finally this documents were critical to the development of the process model used to evaluate the academic coaching strategic plan for student development.

**Extended Evaluation Data Use Plan/Findings**

Data analysis will occur after each interview is conducted and audio recorded. Directly after each interview the external evaluator will create researcher memos (Maxwell, 2005) to capture any information/emotion that needed to be included when analyzing the data. Then, each interview’s audio file will be transcribed into a word document and will be listened to several times to ensure that the transcription captured all the words and emotions of each interview and then the evaluators will engage in a three stage coding process: open coding, focused coding, and axial coding (Creswell, 2011).  In the initial open coding phase transcripts will be coded by looking for repeated words or phrases.  During focused coding the initial codes will be reviewed and condensed in a more focused manner.  Finally, during axial coding the focused codes will be collapsed even further and themes will emerge from the transcripts.  Once all transcripts have been coded the researcher will look across cases and determine common themes that arose within all eight transcripts and from these themes determine the answers to the evaluations questions. Using all of the memos, transcriptions and the running notes used during the interview process open coding will begin.

 Additionally, an ANOVA will be run on the SELF-data to determine what the benefits for the students are and an independent samples t-test to determine if the AC model is more effective than previous models of academic support.  All data acquired through the personal data questionnaire will be kept anonymous and will be used solely to help aggregate data and draw conclusions based upon the information acquired (see table 1).

**Communication Procedures**

Throughout the evaluation the evaluators will maintain open and fluid lines of communication with the relevant stakeholders through weekly meetings.  During these meetings the stakeholders will address any concerns regarding the progress of the program evaluation and any grievances will be addressed.  Also, the evaluators will present the stakeholders with any difficulties in data collection that arose during the week, these issues can be handled by the stakeholders.  Regularly scheduled meetings will maintain constant communication with both the evaluators and the stakeholders to ensure that all players involved are satisfied with the evaluation process progress.  Finally, there will be no sharing of specific survey data at these meetings in order to maintain the anonymity of all the stakeholders involved.

Once all data is collected and analyzed, using procedures outlined above, it will be included as tables and graphs to make accessibility easier for stakeholders.  All data analysis will be included in a final evaluation product in which the evaluation questions, outcomes, and suggestions are explained.  The evaluators will offer stakeholders systemic short and long-term goals and suggestions to continue to improve the current program.

**Conclusions.**

The current evaluation findings indicate that the coaching model approach for the needs of students with mild learning differences has merit. The effectiveness of the program was evaluated by answering four questions: “What are the benefits for the student (GPA and self-regulatory processes)?” “What are the beliefs and attitudes of the AC regarding their position, the school environment, and their ability to be successful?” “Does the LC staff feel efficacious in the AC model?” And, “How is the effectiveness of the AC assessed?”

**Benefits for the student: GPA and self-regulatory processes**

Data analyzed suggests that students with learning differences in the academic coaching program are more likely to have higher GPA scores then their same-grade level peers. In other words, a 9th grade student with learning differences in an academic coaching program will have a 1% higher GPA than a 9th grade peer not enrolled in an academic coaching program. Likewise, there is a 5% GPA increase for 10th graders and a 3% increase for 11th grade students with learning differences in an academic coaching program over and above the GPA of their same-grade level peers.

Additionally, according to the academic coaches (questionnaires) students in the academic coaching program will experience increases in self-efficacy, establishing a purpose for action, motivation toward set goals. When academic coaches were asked “How does academic coaching BEST help students?” 50% of the coaches expect that students will be able to direct actions towards result, while 33.3% said they expect students to have an increase awareness of their learning. Moreover, when coaches were asked “what is the overall goal for students you coach?” sixty-six percent of the coaches responded with develop self-efficacy or develop self-regulation. The questionnaire shows evidence that coaches confidently expect students to gain self-regulatory processes such as goal setting, progress monitoring, self-evaluation and self-efficacy as a result of the coaching efforts to ‘listen’ to students and ‘ask powerful questions’ of students.

**Beliefs and attitudes of the Academic Coaches: their position, the school environment, and their ability to be successful**

Academic Coaches at ‘Study’ school are satisfied with the job that they do with students, 50% agree that they “can help even the most struggling students,” “ can make a difference in a students’ academic career,” and “believe [their] position as an academic coach is an important one.” However, when asked about their work environment AC responses were mixed. When asked about what how others in the school view their position 50% said they “do not feel like my position…is valued as it should be.” However, responses differed for questions that directly asked how others in the community felt about their positions as coaches. For instance 50% agreed with statements like “others value the job I do a an academic coach” and “I feel like a valued member of the school community”

When asked about their ability to be successful, 68% of the coaches agreed with the statement “I am an effective coach,” while 50% agreed with statements like “ I sometimes find my job unmanageable,” “ sometimes I feel un-prepared with the challenges I face on a daily basis,” and “I need more resources to be an effective academic coach.”

While scores for feeling supported by the school and their non-coaching peers was at the fell to 50% or lower range, feelings of successful at coaching hovered above the 67% mark. 100% of the coaches disagree that “they can only do so much for students,” but agree that they “can establish positive relationships” with their students and that “all students can learn.” This perception by coaches that they make a difference is important for the success of the programs because teacher-student relatedness has been shown to be a strong predictor of academic success (Appleton, J., Christienson, S., & Furlong M., 2008).

**Learning Center Staff Efficacy**

‘Study’ school’s academic coaches report they feel efficacious, but need/want more training and resources. Forty-eight percent of the coaches agreed with the statement, “I need more resources to be an effective academic coach,” while 50% agreed with “I find my job unmanageable” or I can be a better academic coach with more training.” Clearly these responses indicate that while the staff believes that they “can create action plans that aid student learning,” “effectively manage my students’ outcomes,” “help students’ set manageable goals,” and “I can effectively create awareness about the importance of academic coaching,” they want more training to better meet the needs of their students.

**Effectiveness of the Academic Coaching**

Student GPA was used to measure whether or not the academic coaching program has been effective. According to the comparative analysis conducted between the GPA of the current years (2013) 10th through 12th grade students with academic coaches and the GPA of 2012 students in 10th through 12th grade without academic coaching an increase between 1%-5% was achieved. The largest increase was for the 11th grade group (5%), while the 10th grade student achieved the smallest gain (1%).

When comparing the GPA of only students receiving academic coaching was conducted across grade years, the finding showed that the current 11th and 12th grader students with academic coaches have benefited from academic coaching. Their GPAs have increased by 4% and 5% respectively. The current 10th graders, however, show a decline in GPA (1.5%)

**Recommendations**

According to the data collected and analyzed, as well as a thorough analysis of program documents, the overall recommendation is for the coaching model approach for the needs of students with mild learning differences to continue. Although the program is still in the early stages of inception, the data collected and analyzed seems to indicate that students are benefiting. This benefit is expected to increase as coaches and students work through the ‘newness’ of the program and begin to feel more efficacious. In the following sections the evaluators present recommendations linked to the observed strengths and weaknesses of the programs assessed with the goals established for this evaluation: (1) To describe the attitudes, beliefs, and sense of efficacy of academic coaches in the Academic Coaching Program; (2) To compare the changes in student academic achievement (GPA) as a result of enrollment the Academic Coaching Program; and, (3) To examine if the Academic Coaching Program implementation affects student outcomes beyond achievement.

**Strengths**

A major strength of the program is the attitudes and beliefs of the coaches that they can make a difference in students’ academic outcomes. The strength of the program lies in the motivation and expectations set by the academic coaches who work every day with the students. They are a valuable component of the academic coaching program success.

Another strength of the program is the academic gains as evidenced from the comparison of student academic achievement (GPA) as a result of enrollment the Academic Coaching Program. Although the gains were shown to be small, this should not be interpreted as failure, but as a success. The program is only four months old and already a statistically significant difference has emerged!

The goal of ‘Study’ school to affect student outcomes beyond achievement expectations is a striking strength. However, this has yet to be measured.

**Weakness**

The survey results indicate that 50% of the academic coaches do not yet have a ‘sense of efficacy’ in their role as academic coaches. According to program documents skills of academic coaches include asking powerful questions, communicating effectively with students, listening and monitoring. Academic coaches admitted to not having all the resources they need or the training to be effective coaches, “At times I feel unprepared, “I need more resources to be an effective academic coach.”

A comparison of the changes in student academic achievement (GPA) as a result of enrollment in the Academic Coaching Program necessitates a systematic and consistent system of monitoring. No such system was evident at the time of this evaluation.

Finally, according to program documents and survey results the Academic Coaching Program implementation is expected to affect student outcomes beyond achievement; however, this has not been measured. A system to quantify this outcome will need to be created and implemented in order for ‘Study’ school to be able to report on the progress of this goal.

**Assessment for the future**

The academic coaching program is affecting an immediate impact on student success as indicated by increase in GPA for students in the program. While there are numerous positive outcomes emerging from this ‘newly’ implemented program (time to develop student self-regulated learning, advocacy and helping them learn skills for advocacy) an assessment schedule to ensure these changes can be measured is advised. The assessment schedule created should include pretest/posttest of student and teacher beliefs, a comparison of GPA across years, and a tracking system for monitoring trajectories. This assessment schedule would allow ‘Study’ school’s Learning Center Director to present the positive outcomes generated by the new program to the school board, parents and staff with valid data to support the continuation of the academic coaching program.

**Evaluation Utilization Plan**

**Dissemination Procedures**

The final program evaluation report and an executive summary will outline the data procedures, analysis, and subsequent findings in varying degrees of detail. The summary will be streamlined and a more concise version of the report to offer an overview of the evaluation findings and suggestions for future work. In both the report and summary detailed tables and graphs will depict findings pictorially to aid stakeholders in visualizing results in a brief streamlined fashion. Finally, both documents will offer short and long term goals, procedures, suggestions, and assessment information for stakeholders to enable informed decisions about the progress of the program in future years.

Upon completion of the evaluation the evaluators will meet with the primary stakeholder(s) to disseminate the initial findings and explain the rationale and decision making behind the findings. Both the stakeholders and the evaluators will engage in a reciprocal discussion about 1) the evaluation findings, 2) what these findings mean for the program, 3) how these findings will be utilized, 4) short and long term goals for the program, and 5) how the various stakeholders can use the evaluation to make more meaningful and informed decisions within the program. The evaluators will create a comprehensive presentation to articulate what was discussed in the initial stakeholders meeting. The final meeting will be a forum for the evaluators to answer questions and explain information to the various stakeholders, as well as provide further direction as to the future of the program. All documents (report, summary, PowerPoint, etc.) will be released to the stakeholders at the conclusion of the meeting to ensure that all of the relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the evaluation.

Finally, the primary stakeholders will jointly present with the evaluators the plan of action that will occur based upon the program evaluation. This presentation will offer a systematic and comprehensive action plan that will offer all other relevant stakeholders into the process, timeline, goals, and outcomes for the program based upon the program evaluation. The evaluators’ immediate role will then dissolve and the primary stakeholders will be involved in disseminating, implementing and assessing how effective changes to the program were towards achieving short and long-term goals. Although the evaluators will not have any immediate interaction with the secondary stakeholders, the primary evaluator will stay in contact with the primary stakeholders to offer support, guidance, and an outlet for communication during the transitional period of program change. Utilizing this pronged approach the evaluators are able to support the primary stakeholders, but not become too entrenched into the actual changes taking place on a micro level. A final evaluation of the evaluators and the program evaluation will be completed by the primary stakeholders, which will delineate their opinions of the effectiveness of both the evaluators and the evaluation plan.

**Logistics**

**Narrative of Logistics**

The evaluators will collaborate throughout the evaluation process to create the action steps for initiating and completing the program evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted in phases. The Forethought Phase includes the evaluation plan, documents and literature research activities necessary to inform the Action Phase. The Action Phase includes data collection: (1) the four Academic Coaches of ‘Study’ School will electronically submit questionnaires. Questionnaire data will be cleaned and analyzed. (2) The questionnaires for 20% of the student population and parents served by the AC program (ensuring an even distribution across grade) will be more specific and focused as they will be constructed with the results from AC questionnaires. Both questionnaires will be submitted electronically. Questionnaire data will be cleaned and analyzed. (3) A focus group will be conducted with AC teachers. Data from focus group will be coded and analyzed. And, (4) a comparison of 1st quarter grades for students served by the learning center will be conducted. The comparison will include the current year with students in the Academic Coaching program and two years back with students served by the current coaching staff but not using the AC program model. The Final Phase includes the data analysis, the conclusion/recommendation, dissemination of information, and the final report/executive summary.

**Table about Logistics**

A table with a comprehensive list of logistics is located below which delineates each aspect of the evaluation: task, deliverable, evaluator responsible, time, and budget.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 2** | | | | | |
| **Task** | **Deliverable** | **Responsible Party** | **Due Date** | **Total Hours** | **Cost/Hour** |
| Analysis of the SELF survey | ANOVA and descriptive data | Erin | Mid Oct | 2 hours | 18/hr. |
| Creation of Student questionnaire | Questionnaire for analysis | Both | Early Oct | 1 hour | 18/hr. |
| Creation of Parent questionnaire | Questionnaire for analysis | Both | Early Oct | 1 hour | 18/hr. |
| Creation of LC staff questionnaire | Questionnaire for analysis | Both | Early Oct | 1 hour | 18/hr. |
| Creation of AC coach questionnaire | Questionnaire for analysis | Both | Early Oct | 1 hour | 18/hr. |
| Creation of AC coach interview protocol | Interview protocol for analysis | Both | Early Oct | 1 hour | 18/hr. |
| Administering and collecting questionnaires | Data to analyze; graphs | Both | Mid/Late Oct | 3 hours | 18/hr. |
| Conducting AC coach interview | Data to analyze; tables | Erin | Mid/Late Oct | 3 hours | 18/hr. |
| Analysis of Student GPA | T-tests and descriptive data | Erin | Mid/Late Oct | 2 hours | 18/hr. |
| Analysis of student questionnaire | Descriptive for graphs | Both | Mid Nov | 2 hours | 18/hr. |
| Analysis of parent questionnaire | Descriptive for graphs | Both | Mid Nov | 2 hours | 18/hr. |
| Analysis of LC staff questionnaire | Descriptive for graphs | Both | Mid Nov | 2 hours | 18/hr. |
| Analysis of AC interviews | Tables | Both | Mid Nov | 12 hours | 18/hr. |
| Total | Tables, graphs, and narratives | Both | End of Nov | 33 hours | $594 |

**Forms**

All questionnaires will be created, administered, collected, and analyzed by both program evaluators. All forms will be kept confidential and all identifying information will be aggregated within the data to protect anonymity. Additionally, all data will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked office to protect all pieces of raw data.

**List of deliverables**

The evaluation team will produce an evaluation report and an executive summary that will give a detailed narrative account on the findings of the program evaluation. The report will also offer the stakeholders the positive, negative, and suggested outcomes for the program evaluation. Finally, the report will give colored and detailed graphs and tables to help aid in the dissemination of the findings.

**Evaluation Team Qualifications**

The evaluation team consists of two doctoral students, Erin Ramirez and Silvia Moore, both of whom have completed qualitative and quantitative courses at George Mason University (GMU). In addition, both students are currently enrolled in advanced quantitative courses and have engaged in qualitative research projects. Silvia currently works at the school under evaluation and was consulted by the program coordinator to conduct the evaluation. Erin currently works on a funded research grant and as graduate research assistance under two GMU professors. Erin also worked on a program evaluation over the summer with four GMU professors.

**Qualifications for Evaluation Organization**

The Internal evaluator is working from an insider perspective. Her insider knowledge of the program and the issues surrounding its implementation has informed the initial framework of the evaluation plan and will be crucial in formulating appropriate questionnaires to flush out the important details to answer this program evaluation. Due to her employment at ‘Study’ School, the internal evaluator will not conduct the focus groups programmed. Instead, the internal evaluator will be responsible for communicating with the stakeholders regarding appointment, meetings, and deadlines. The Internal evaluator/researcher has two years of quantitative and qualitative research experience.

The external evaluator will examine the program from an outsider’s perspective. With no prior knowledge about the program and no connections to the school or any of the stakeholders, the external evaluator will be in charge of collecting all qualitative data. As such, the external evaluator to ensure that all participants feel their anonymity is protected will conduct the AC focal groups. Additionally, the external evaluator will ask for no identifying information from any of the coaches during the focal groups, and without knowing these coaches previously, all of the coaches anonymity will be completely protected. This becomes important because the purpose of the focal groups is not to get each individual coaches opinion and tie it to that coach, but rather get an overall sense of the program through individual coaches beliefs without tying a coach to his/her response. The external evaluator will also be responsible for aiding the internal evaluator in the creation of all questionnaires for parents and students. Finally, the external evaluator will conduct all quantitative data analysis on student GPA and responses to the SELF-survey. The external evaluator is in her seventh research methodologies course spanning qualitative, quantitative, advanced methodologies, and mixed methodologies and has three years of research experience.

**References**

Adams, M. (2009). Change your questions change your life: 10 powerful tools for life and work. California: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Appleton, J., Christienson, S., & Furlong, M. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools, 45-5.*

Cockerham, G. (2011). Group Coaching: A comprehensive Blueprint. Indiana: iUniverse.

Dawson, P., and Richard G. (2012).  *Coaching students with executive skills deficits*. New York: Guilford.

Kenny, D. & Faunce, G., (2004). Effects of academic coaching on elementary and secondary school students. *Journal of Educational Research, 98(2), 115-126.*

Lloyd, B., (2008). Martin, A., (2008). Teaching to the Test: Coaching or Corruption. *New Educator, 4(3) 216-223.*

Enhancing student motivation and engagement: The effects of a multidimensional intervention. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 33, 639-269.*

Martin, A., (2011). Courage in the Classroom: Exploring a new framework predicting academic performance and engagement. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 26, 145-160.

Martin, A., Ferla. J., & Schuyten, G., (2009). Student models of learning and their impact on study strategies. *Studies in Higher Education, 34(2), 185-202.*

Rank, M. R. (2004). Chapter 4: The blending of qualitative and quantitative methods in understanding childbearing among welfare recipients. In S.N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds), *Approaches to Qualitative Research* (81-96). New York, Oxford UP.

Witherspoon, Robert, and Randall P. White. "Executive Coaching: What's In It For You?" *Academic Premier*. EBSCO, n.d. Web. 22 Sept. 2013.

Sleeper-Triplett, J (2010). Empowering Youth with ADHD: Your Guide to Coaching Adolescents and Young Adults for Coaches, Parents, and Professionals. Plantation, FL: Specialty.

Zimmerman, B., & Kitsantas, A., (2007). Reliability and Validity of Self-Efficacy for Learning Form (SELF) Scores of College Students. *Journal of Psychology, 215(3), 157-163.*

Zimmerman, B., (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into practice*, 41, 64-70.

Appendix A

The coaching questionnaire is expected to elicit answers to two questions:

1) What are the attitudes, beliefs and sense of efficacy of academic coaches in the academic coaching program?

2) How the program implementation can affect students?

The Program questions were developed using the International Coaching Federation (ICF) coaching manual provided by ‘Study’ school. The questions were formatted to explore how the coaches address the Academic Coaching competencies, per the ICF manual:

1. Co-creating a relationship

· Establish trust and intimacy

· Coaching presence

2. Communicating Effectively

· Active listening

· Powerful questions

· Direct communication

3. Facilitating Learning Results

· Creating awareness

· Designing actions

· Planning and goal setting

· Managing progress and accountability

·

**I.** **To describe the attitudes, beliefs, and sense of efficacy of academic coaches in the Academic Coaching Program.**

1. Gender: M F

2. Years of classroom teaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Years of academic coaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Highest level of education completed: Bachelors Masters Doctorate Post-Doc

5. Years at current school: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. In your own words, define academic coaching:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. What do you believe are the characteristics of an effective academic coach?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. What do you feel is the most important aspect of academic coaching?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. What percentage of your **last** coaching session did you spend listening?

0-15% 15%-30%% 30-45% 45%-60% 50%-75% 75%-90%

10. Choose the **most** important aspect of coaching from the choices below:

a) Communication b) trust c) relationship d) honesty

11. Choose the **most** important skill of an academic coach from the choices below:

a) Honesty b) concern c) intuition d) communication

12. Choose one word below that **best** describes Academic Coaching:

a) Listening b) Questioning c) Presence d) Communication

13. Choose the most **(only one)** effective way to conduct a coaching session from the list below:

a) Probing for awareness b) Attend to academic needs

c) encourage use of strategies for success d) Direct exploration of learning style

14. How many questions did you ask in your last coaching session?

a) 0-2 b) 2-5 c) 5-7 d) 7 or more

For the following questions, choose the answer that most represents how you currently feel in your position as an academic coach.

15. I can help even the most struggling students (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

16. I am an effective academic coach (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

17. I have all the resources necessary to be the best academic coach I can be (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

18. I believe I can make a difference in a student’s academic career (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

19. I can establish trusting relationships with my students (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

20. I can actively listen to students’ problems and concerns (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

21. I feel well prepared to deal with the daily issues involved in academic coaching (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

22. I believe I am an effective communicator (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

23. No matter what I try nothing seems to help some students (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

24. At times I feel underprepared for the challenges I face on a daily basis (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

25. I believe my position as an academic coach is an important one (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

26. I feel like a valued member of my school community (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

27. Some students simply do not want to do well in school and academic coaching cannot change that (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

28. I need more resources to be an effective academic coach (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

29. I can create action plans that aid in student learning (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

30. I can effectively manage my students’ outcomes (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

31. I do not feel like my position in my school is valued as much as it should be (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

32. I am unable to build trusting relationships with all of my students (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

33. I can build strong relationships with all of my students (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

34. Communication with students will always break down and that’s a part of life (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

35. I can only do so much for students (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

36. Even the best plan does not always work and that’s on the student (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

37. If student’s communicated better, I could be a better academic coach (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

38. I can help student’s set manageable learning goals (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

39. I cannot reach all students (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

40. I can effectively create awareness about the importance of academic coaching (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

41. I believe others value the job I do as an academic coach (R)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

42. I can ask the right questions (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

43. At times I find my job unmanageable (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

44. I can become overwhelmed easily as an academic coach (LR)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

45. I could be a better academic coach with more training (C)

1) strongly disagree 2) disagree 3) neutral 4) agree 5) strongly agree

**II.** **To discuss how Academic Coaching Program implementation can affect student outcomes.**

46. Choose one answer below that **best** describes how Academic Coaching helps students

a) Creates awareness of learning b) Enables planning and goal setting

c) Teaches Progress Monitoring & Accountability d) Directs Actions toward results

47. Choose **one** important outcome of Academic Coaching from the choices below:

a) Improved GPA b) Responsibility c) Planning and Goal Setting d) Awareness of learning style

48. What is one of **most (choose only one)** importantskill students can develop through coaching?

a) Planning b) Self-awareness c) responsibility d) managing progress

49. What is the **most** important aspect of active listening during a coaching session?

a) summarize back to students b) Reinforce expression feelings c) gain information to direct communication d) Create agenda for session

50. What is the **most** important reason for asking powerful question during a coaching session?

a) Provide feedback b) Illicit coaching objective c) establish purpose d) Improve the coaching relationship

51. What coaching method best describes what you do.

a) Help students Learn to learn b) Establish student ‘good’ habits c) Direct students to explore learning styles d) Develop student ability to plan

52. What is your overall goal for students you coach?

a) facilitate learning b) Develop planning and goal setting skills c) Develop student efficacy d) Develop self-direction

APPENDIX B

**Document Analysis**

**Document Name:** JUST Coaching LLC: Coaching Teens & College Students with ADHD: 3-Day Intensive Training

**Document Author and Position:** JST Coaching, LLC out of Herndon, VA. The course instructors that led the course using the manual were Jodi Sleeper-Triplett, MCC, SCAC, BCC and Loretta Spindel, JD, PCC, BCC (I have no idea what these letters stand for, nor the position of any of the authors as none of this information was available within the manual anywhere).

**Date Written:** March 6, 2013

**Document Type**: The document is a coaching manual used during a three-day intensive training for academic coaches at ‘Study School.’

**Document Location**: The document is a hard-copy manual that academic coaches were given during a 3-day intensive training session led by 2 instructors.

**Unique Characteristics of the Document**: The manual states “All ICF Core Competencies will be covered throughout this course.” In addition, the document is unique in that it parallels an intensive training program and is written specifically for use during the training program. Also, it is the only manual/training that the academic coaches at ‘Study School’ received prior to becoming active coaches in the school.

**Audience for the Document:** Educators that were training to become academic coaches at ‘Study School.’

**Purpose for the Document:** The document is used to help train educators to become academic coaches for students with ADHD, and to be used during a 3-day intensive training session.

**Main Ideas from the Document:** The manual is divided into the 3-day sections and each day is focused around different main ideas. Day one focuses mainly on what ADHD is, how it affects students, the difficulties it presents to students in key areas such as goal setting, monitoring, etc., and a few strategies to use with students with ADHD. Day two is centered on what ADHD coaching is, the self-regulation process, and how to be a good ADHD coach. Day three’s main ideas are about building relationships, obstacles to successful coaching, and the value of accountability in coaching. Finally, the manual has an extensive appendix that has the ICF and ADHD core competencies, checklists, worksheets, and different resources for academic coaches.

**Critical Facts from the Document:** The critical facts surrounding the manual are essentially the main ideas from the document. The only thing to add is that the manual is specifically designed as a training tool and as such, it is organized in a manner that the trainers deemed critically important.

**Summary:** The 3-day portion of the manual is 62 pages and covers the various components that the trainers and writers deemed important for educators to know before becoming academic coaches. As stated above, the manual moves through the three-day training schedule and offers educators key components to becoming an ADHD academic coach, from describing ADHD to emphasizing the successes that can occur with coaching. Additionally, the manual describes the self-regulation model without specifically calling it the self-regulation model; i.e. it describes “planning and goal setting, organization, time management and prioritization, developing and maintaining focus and concentration, social skills, and evaluation.” While the document does not specifically articulate this model as self-regulation, the key components are extremely similar to the self-regulatory processes.

**Questions about the Program:** The main questions derived from looking through the document are: Who are the authors and what are their credentials? What is “JST Coaching LLC”? The questions surround the validity of the document because there is no information about the company creating the manual and the trainers training the educators.

**Analysis**

**Evaluation Usability:** The greatest use of the manual for the evaluation is the description it offers about the coaching procedure, difficulties in coaching, and the purpose of ADHD coaching. As the secondary evaluator had no previous knowledge about ADHD academic coaching, the manual provided key insights into the program. Additionally, the manual was a key source of information when creating the likert-type items in the coaching questionnaire, as many of the items were written from direct knowledge ascertained by reading the manual.

**Audience Usability:** The document is extremely clear, concise, and informative for the intended audience. What is missing from the manual is a clear table of contents, which could help to introduce the manual and more thoroughly cover how, and why the information is presented in such a way.

**Trustworthiness of the Information:** The trouble with the information is that there is no information about the authors and the company that created the manual. As such, the secondary evaluator found the document informative, but was unable to completely trust the information presented without more information about how and who created the document.

**Logic:** The document fits nicely into the logic model because it delineates the goals of coaching, the difficulties in coaching, and the purpose of coaching. This aided the secondary evaluator in completing the logic model and gaining a deeper understanding of the ADHD coaching model. The document is organized logically and it was clear that it was created specifically for the training program. The only thing the secondary evaluator lacked was a clear understanding of how the manual was used during the training; which could only be rectified by attending the training.

**Evaluation Criteria:** The only thing that guided the evaluation was that the ICF core competencies that are delineated in the manual. These competencies were the sole foundation for what the coaching questionnaire was created; these are the factors from which the items were written to embody.

**Standards:** There are two sets of standards and competencies that the manual describes: ICF core competencies and code of ethics and the ADHD coaching core competencies. Both of these standards set the benchmark for what coaches should focus on when conducting coaching sessions and the foundational knowledge they must adhere to during the process of academic coaching. When reading through these standards the secondary evaluators, who had no previous knowledge of ADHD academic coaching, was left having no questions about the program and feeling as though all aspects of the program were clear and concise. Finally, the standards for both set of standards gave numerical lists that help to further describe and define the standards from which the manual sets as essential to the coaching process.

**National, State, or Local Policies, Laws, or Regulations:** The manual falls within the code of ethics that all educators must follow when engaged in the educational realm. However, it does not delineate whether the manual falls within any national, state, or local policies, laws, or regulations.

**Internal Comparisons:** Since this is a brand new program that began at the beginning of the 2013/2014 school year, there is no real comparisons that can be conducted within the school community itself. This is the reason that the program officer requested the evaluation be conducted in the first place.

**Benchmark Comparisons:** There are no other programs that exist at ‘Study School’ from which a benchmark comparison could be drawn.

**Trends, Patterns, Consistency**: When examining the manual as a whole the only gaps found were that there was not a clear pattern for the data presented; i.e. why were certain things covered in day 1, 2, or 3. Without an introduction to the manual and the 3-day training it was hard for the secondary evaluator, who was not at the training session, to visually understand how and why information was presented in the order it was. Also, the appendix was the most informative piece of the document as it offered real-world application for the coaching model and the importance of ADHD coaching.

**Solutions**: The manual creates a way for the program to evaluate how the coaches are operating within the ADHD model. Since the document creates a picture of how coaches should act, the type of skills they need to be successful, and the purpose of coaching, program officers could use the manual and the various checklists it offers to accurately evaluate how their coaches are functioning within the coaching model.

APPENDIX C

**Group Document Analysis**

**Document Name:**

1. Proposal for Learning Center shift to Academic Coaching (Maximizing Individual Learning Environments (MILE)).
2. Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) 5 year Plan
3. Learning Center (Academic Coach Program) Plan for the Fall

**Document Author and Position:** S. Biggs, Learning Center Director

**Date Written:** September 2011- June 2013

**Document Type**: The documents are a compilation of a 5-year strategic plan for the Learning Center Staff and services offered.

**Document Location**: The documents are hard copies created for presentation to ‘Study’ School Board.

**Unique Characteristics of the Document**: A developmental blueprint of the planning process that evolved the learning center staff from learning center teachers to academic coaches.

**Audience for the Document:** School Board

**Purpose for the Document:** 5-year strategic plan to expand services currently offered to students with learning differences.

**Main Ideas from the Document:** Study school would like to develop a system whereby Learning Center teachers spend more time developing student self-regulated learning in addition to the current offering of academic content support.

**Critical Facts from the Document:** Learning Center will evolve from groupthink to individual services for students. The learning center focus will shift to developing self-regulation through academic coaching putting emphasis on developing student skills surrounding planning, organization, monitoring progress, and self-efficacy.

**Summary:** Compilation of documents reflecting a thoughtful plan that began three years prior to academic coaching implementation. The documents emphasize the successes that can occur with coaching. Documents include presentation to the school board, parents, and teachers defining how academic coaching will change the current model of content assistance by shifting responsibility to students while at the same time offering extra help with ‘learning how to learn.’ In addition the documents detail the expenditures and logistical planning that will inform the current program evaluation.

**Questions about the Program:** The documents were presentation. The thoroughness of the implementation is not evident. The overall concept is presented but scheduling conflicts, student improvement measures, and staff satisfaction and skill development monitoring systems don’t seem to be evident.

**Analysis**

**Evaluation Usability:** Will inform the questionnaire construction.

**Audience Usability:** Simplistic, not allot of details to further inform how different aspects of the academic coach program were developed.

**Trustworthiness of the Information:** Trustworthy, in that it is the conceptual delivery of the academic coaching program beginning 3 years prior to implementation.

**Logic:** Documents informed the inputs and expected outputs of the program.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Documents will inform the progress toward output expectation.

**Standards:** The Development of self-regulated learners is a standard for output. Input standard is skill of the academic coaches.

**National, State, or Local Policies, Laws, or Regulations:** N/A

**Internal Comparisons:** Since this is a brand new program that began at the beginning of the 2013/2014 school year, there is no real comparisons that can be conducted within the school community itself. This is the reason that the program officer requested the evaluation be conducted in the first place.

**Benchmark Comparisons:** There are no other programs that exist at ‘Study School’ from which a benchmark comparison could be drawn.

**Trends, Patterns, Consistency**: The overall idea of the learning center was presented, but the presentation lacked details about the implementation of the process. A consistent pattern was the lack of detail preparation for the processes that changed: student schedules, teacher schedules, parent buy-in, student-teacher education of the process, and transition period progress monitoring.

**Solutions**: A stronger 5-year plan with subsections that described the changes needed, the plan, the obstacles and the solutions. In addition no plan exists for monitoring progress of the program. Is the program doing what they think it will do?