

3. Grade Articulation Programs

- a. *The Transition Project:* This Project aimed at increasing levels of peer and social support during transition to high school and reducing the difficulties of mastering transition tasks. It had two primary components: (1) restructuring the role of homeroom teachers to include guidance and counseling and (2) reorganizing the regularities of the school environment to reduce the social setting flux. Midyear and end of ninth grade assessments were collected on participants and matched controls measuring self-concepts, perceptions of school environment, and eighth- and ninth-grade attendance and grade averages. By the end of ninth grade, participants had significantly better attendance records and grade point averages as well as more stable self-concepts than controls. Further, by the final evaluation point, they also reported perceiving the school environment as having greater clarity of expectations and organizational structure and higher levels of teacher support and involvement.

For more information, see:

Felner, R.D., Ginter, M. & Primavera, J. (1982). Primary prevention during school transitions: Social support and environmental structure. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 10, 277-289.

- b. *The Social Support Program:* This program provides teacher support, group support, and parental support to poor academic transition students. Sixty-six first year 6th graders were put into one of three groups: no-intervention, a group receiving Components A, B, and C, or a group receiving Component A only. Results showed that for full and partial intervention, mean GPA improved from pre- to post-intervention and from pre-intervention to follow up (only significant for full intervention group). The no intervention group maintained a higher mean GPA than both intervention groups post-intervention. The full intervention group had lower depression scores at post-intervention and follow up than pre-intervention. Full and partial intervention had lower anxiety scores at post-intervention and follow up than pre-intervention. Both groups did not significantly differ from the no-intervention group at post-intervention and follow up. Full and partial intervention groups' stress decreased over time on peer relationships only. Pre-intervention differences between no intervention and intervention groups on academic pressures were gone at follow up. The partial intervention group showed significantly greater teacher reported problems on socialized aggression and anxiety/withdrawal at post-intervention and follow up than full intervention and no intervention groups. Pre-intervention differences between no intervention and full intervention groups on socialized aggression were gone at post-intervention and follow up.

For more information, see:

Greene, R.W., & Ollendick, T.H. (1993). Evaluation of a multidimensional program for sixth-graders in transition from elementary to middle school. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 21, 162-176.

- c. *The Bridge Program:* This is designed to ease transition between middle and high school. It is a one-semester transitional program for all incoming ninth grade students and provides them with a variety of activities that promote academic achievement, responsibility, school spirit, fellowship, acceptance, and empowerment. Bridge students had 70.7% of their grades in core classes at or above C, whereas the previous non-Bridge ninth grade class had 68.5% of grades at or above C. As tenth graders, they averaged 75.8% of their grades above C, compared to non-Bridge tenth graders who averaged 68% of grades above C. Also, non-Bridge ninth graders had a 22% withdrawal rate from school (dropouts and transfers) while only 5% of Bridge ninth graders withdrew. Regarding discipline, Bridge freshmen were disciplined less (22%) compared to non-Bridge freshmen (34%). The majority of students and staff supported the program and thought it was effective.

For more information, see:

Sheets, R.A., IZard-Baldwin, G., & Atterberry, P. (December, 1997). Bridge: A Program Designed to Ease the Transition from the Middle Level to the High School. *Bulletin*, 81(593). The National Association of Secondary School Principals. For more information about the Bridge program, contact Gloria IZard-Baldwin at gizard@cks.ssd.k12.wa.us.

- d. *Sixth Grade Transition Groups (SGTG):* The goal is to increase students' ability to successfully negotiate the academic, social, and emotional challenges that accompany transition to middle school. Three hundred eight fifth graders received a social competency/stress reduction program. Results showed that 94% of the students said they found the group helpful, 72% said that Day 3 was most helpful, and 92% would recommend it to fifth grade students next year.

For more information, see:

Hellem, D.W. (1990). Sixth grade transition groups: An approach to primary prevention. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 10(4), 303-311.