

A study into the effectiveness of tutorial programs



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This study examines tutorial programs. With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, states and local school districts are to provide assistance to students that

fail to meet state academic performance standards on state mandatory exams. Because the

commitment provided by state education agency to local school districts, importance is

placed on tutorial services administered to assist under prepared students at the

elementary and secondary level. With the establishment of the 21st Century Community

Learning Center at the Helena-West Helena School District, it becomes important to

understand how this program assists under prepared students.

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With the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act section 4205(b) (1) holds states

and local school districts accountable for student performance on state mandated test. It

requires school districts provide remedial educational assistance to students that fail to

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meet state academic performance standards. The state of Arkansas provides remedial

developmental programs to its local school districts. Tutorial services were among the

efforts funded by the Arkansas Department of Education aimed to provide academic

assistance to under prepared students in elementary and secondary education.

The 2006-07 academic year funds were allocated by the Arkansas Department of

Education to the Helena -West Helena School District for assisting under prepared

students. Specifically, the initial funding was \$150, 000. Since the beginning, tutorial

services in local school districts have been shared in allocation of developmental

education funds from the state.

Because of the commitment provided by the state to local school districts and the

importance placed on the tutorial services by administrators to assist under prepared

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students at the elementary and secondary level, it is important to see how these programs

are providing services at local school districts.

Since induction, the Arkansas Department of Education established the 21st Century

Community Learning Center within the Helena -West Helena School District.

This local

school district was established and accredited by the Arkansas Department of Education

and the North Central Accreditation Agency.

The establishment of the 21st Century Community Learning Center at the Helena -

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West Helena School District, it has received funds from state appropriations.

The mission

of the 21st Community Century Learning Center names the provision of tutorial services

as one of its goals. The 21st Century Community Learning Center states its mission is:

Provide services and programming in academic areas where scientifically

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base research has been conducted and is available, such as reading, mathematics and early childhood.

Aleshia Blakely, program director, reported that faculty and staff felt that developmental education should be a major purpose of the Helena -West Helena School

District 21st Century Community Learning Center program. In addition Blakely stated

that the local 21st Century Community Learning Center goal is:

Enable elementary and secondary schools to plan, implement, or expand learning opportunities for the benefit of the educational, health, social services and recreational needs for the community.

Within the framework of this goal, the staff initiates effective programs to carry out

the goals.

The state of Arkansas has tutorial programs at local school districts to assist students.

The 21st Century Community Learning Center within the Helena-West Helena School

District provides academic help at no cost for students who are having academic

difficulty or wish to improve their learning. Furthermore it offers programming services

in other areas based upon the need of the student population. This is a student service

located administratively under developmental services.

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide information on tutorial services within the

Helena -West Helena School district. The only program organized is the 21st Century

Community Learning Center after school program. This study will be designed to study

the effectiveness of the after school program in the Helena-West Helena School District.

In this study, these issues will be researched: 1) goals, 2) program development, 3)

tutorial subjects, 4) location of services, 5) evaluation of tutorial services.

This research

will provide administrators, program directors and legislatures with the development and

status information on the 21st Century Community Learning Center program at the

Helena -West Helena School District.

Tutorial services is one of the major services funded by the Arkansas Department of

Education. Little or no information has been systematically collected on the status or

development of tutorial services. Evidence on the success of tutorial programs are

virtually non-existent.

A further purpose is to provide recommendations that will contribute to the continued development and existence of the program at the Helena-West Helena School

District.

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Statement of problem

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The Helena -West Helena School District has been taken over by the Arkansas

Department of Education. It is imperative that assistance be provided to students so they

can pass state mandated tests. These tests are the 1) End of Course Exam and 2) ITBS

(Iowa Test of Basic Skills). Overall there is a need to prepare students for post secondary

education. This study attempted to answer the following questions:

What is the population of the program (culture)?

How will this program impact other programs?

What is the effectiveness of this program?

Limitation of Study

This study was limited to the Helena -West Helena School District and other small

school districts in the U. S. Data gathered from the study was limited to these categories:

1) Goals, 2) Program Development, 3) Tutorial Subjects, 4) Location of Services, 5)

Evaluations of Tutorial Program. According to the ERIC database, there have been no

studies conducted at the rural level.

Methodology

This study was designed to produce a descriptive document. The data was obtained

through interview and documentary type of descriptive research. It describe the

development and status of tutorial program in the state of Arkansas focusing on the 21st

Century Community Learning Centers at the Helena West Helena School District.

Finally, the study provides recommendations and implication affecting the functioning of

tutorial services.

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The method of obtaining data for the research questions included: the selection of

sample, the development of the interview format, the interview process, and the

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collection of data.

Selection of Sample

The study included the administrators of Westside Elementary School and Eliza

Miller Jr High School and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program

director. They had specific responsibilities for directing the tutorial program during the

2006-2007 academic year. The two schools are part of the Helena-West Helena School

District that has a total of five administrators. These administrators agreed to participate

in the study.

Development of Interview Format

The interview questionnaire format was designed by the researcher to gather

important information data concerning the 21st Century Community Learning Center at

the Helena West -Helena School District. The interview format was submitted to each

administrator for approval. Following approval, it was field tested by submitting it to

administrators and staff and selected students. They had knowledge and experience in

tutorial programs and knowledge of the 21st Century Community Learning Center tutorial

program located at the Helena West Helena School District.

Interview Process

The interview process was significant in gathering data according to literature. Many

people are more willing to communicate orally than writing. Therefore this type of

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process will provide more data more readily and fully than would a questionnaire.

Furthermore, the literature indicated that through the interview process an investigator is

able to encourage subjects to help them probe deeply into a problem. A combination of

the structured and unstructured interview format was the best method of utilizing the

interview process, according to literature: therefore that process was used in this

study (Van Dalen, Understanding Educational Research, pp 329-331).

Data Collection

The data collection for this research study included a visitation schedule, the interview

format questionnaire. A tape recorder was used in order to free up the researcher and the

researcher was able to be more attentive and guard against errors that sometimes are

made in written accounts.

Organization of the Research Paper

This research paper was organized as follows:

Introduction

Review of Literature

Methodology

Results

Discussion