

Increasing Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education
by High School Graduates as a Result of
Navigation 101

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FACULTY APPROVAL

Increasing Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education
by High School Graduates as a Result of
Navigation 101

Approved for the Faculty

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the implementation of Navigation 101 by the State of Washington increased the number of students attending a post-secondary institution. The post-secondary institutions that were considered consisted of public and private 4 year colleges, junior colleges, trade schools, and apprenticeship programs. The study compared the class of 2006 to the class of 2009 at a high school located in Southeastern Washington State. The results and conclusions of this study were used to determine whether or not Navigation 101 made a significant impact on increasing post-secondary enrollment and whether continued time and funding should be appropriated for the purpose of continuing the program.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background for the Project

In 2006, the State of Washington allocated funds to develop and implement a strategic plan that was designed to increase college attendance and to better prepare high school students for careers. The plan that was adopted was created by the Franklin Pierce School District and was named Navigation 101. For the school year of 2006-2007, the State of Washington appropriated \$6.4 million to implement the program. As of the 2008-2009 school year, Navigation 101 curriculum had been implemented in 221 schools throughout 103 school districts in the State of Washington.

Navigation 101 focused on 5 key areas; evaluating student performance, empowering the student to take responsibility of self, planning for the future, personalizing the students' educational experiences, and demonstrating growth and understanding. All were designed to help the student make clear and careful choices to help prepare for life after high school. Navigation 101 was taught using advisors. Each certified staff member at the school was assigned approximately 24 students. The advisor remained with the same students throughout the four years of their high school experience. Navigation 101 usually met one to two times during a month to go over lesson plans designed to cover set curriculum. Every lesson plan was driven by the Washington State Essential

Academic Learning Requirements and the American School Counselor

Association National Model Standards. In each session, the lesson plans focused around a theme. Themes included such topics as goal setting, career exploration, community building, and academic improvement. Every student participated in Navigation 101 by keeping and updating a portfolio. Once a year, the students presented the portfolio to their parents via a student-led conference.

Many in the profession argued that Navigation 101 was a waste of time and resources. However, it was hard to argue against what the goals of Navigation 101 were intended to do. Navigation 101 was intended to increase student performance in school. By students making a connection to an advisor or to their school, through the implementation of Navigation 101, the state hoped to decrease the number of students that dropped out and increase the number of students that graduated. Navigation 101 was also aimed at getting the students to take more responsibility for their education and future.

Many studies showed the link between completing high school and college attendance. One was more likely to pursue a post-secondary education if they acquired a high school diploma. In fact, the percentage of high school completers had increased since 1972 by 19%. At that time, 50% of high school completers attended post-secondary schooling. That number steadily increased until 2002 and has since fluctuated around 69% (Fry, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Continuing pressure on the United States economy and rapid changes in technology have been increasing the demand for a highly-skilled work force. The doors of opportunity for those with a high school education used to be many but now, those opportunities have dwindled. Many jobs in our society require some degree of post-secondary training. There has been a major push by our federal and state governments to increase the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education. One of the methods that the State of Washington experimented with was the use of Navigation 101. Navigation 101 touched upon many areas of students' educational and occupational careers. Among one of those areas was helping prepare students for a variety of post-secondary educational opportunities. The key question of the study was to ask if Navigation 101 increased the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education.

Purpose of the Project

The author of this study intended to accomplish an in-depth look at the value of Navigation 101 and its effectiveness on increasing post-secondary enrollment. Taking many factors into consideration, this project was designed to take a hard look at Navigation 101 and all of its requirements to determine whether or not it increased the likelihood that students continued their education after completing their secondary education. By looking at the purpose and

statistics over a 4 year time period, this study compared a number of students that did not have Navigation 101 and students that had 3 years of Navigation 101.

Delimitations

The time span that this study covered was from the school years 2006 to 2009. The study took place at a high school located in Southeastern Washington State. During the time of the study, the school had a total enrollment of 1618 students. The overwhelming majority of students consisted of 77% Caucasian. Students of Hispanic race made up the second largest student population at 14%. The remaining population was made up of four percent Asian, two percent African-American, and less than three percent consisting of Native American, Pacific Islander, and Multiracial. Special programs at the school included free and reduced meal program (18.3%), special education program (8.6%), transitional bilingual program (2.2%), and a migrant program (2.8%). The schools' drop-out rate was 4.9%. The school had a 76% on time graduation rate with an extended graduation rate of 77% (OSPI, 2009). The program that was the focus of the study was Navigation 101. The subjects that participated in this study included parents of students, staff, and the students.

Assumptions

The study was conducted by using research data from students who did not have Navigation 101 to those students who did. At the school that was used for the study, Navigation 101 was introduced during the 2006-2007 school year.

The majority of teachers that acted as advisors for groups of approximately 25 students were concerned with the appropriateness of Navigation 101. Many felt that it was a continued example of another program that pulled valuable instruction time away. Many advisors felt that the material and issues being covered were more suitable for counselors and parents to play more of a role in, not educators working as advisors. Due to the way the program was introduced to the staff, many passed on their frustrations and beliefs to their students in their Navigation 101 class. Unfortunately, that caused many staff members and students to adopt a negative outlook on Navigation 101 from the outset. Many of the training sessions for staff members left the teachers frustrated and confused on the purpose of each lesson. Throughout the 4 years of the study, many staff members continued to assume that Navigation 101 was a waste of time, resources, and money.

Research Question

The 4 year study determined whether or not the implementation of Navigation 101 had helped increase the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education from a particular high school located in Southeastern Washington State.

Significance of the Project

Post-secondary education had become extremely expensive and required significant sacrifices of time and money. Understanding the correlation that post-

secondary education played when determining knowledge, skills, and opportunities was extremely important. The State of Washington took steps to try to increase the numbers of students that sought a post-secondary education. They implemented Navigation 101 in many of the public high schools throughout the state. Individual schools were left to determine what their Navigation 101 program would look like but all the models had specific learning goals and instruction methods that were similar. The implementation of Navigation 101 required massive funding from the state and local districts. A significant amount of preparation time and materials were used to prepare each of the lessons.

Procedure

The most significant part of the procedure for this study was the collection of data for Navigation 101. The school in which the study was completed had kept specific data on Navigation 101 since it was introduced in 2007. The school district as well as the school in which this study was conducted kept extensive records and data which had been transferred into meaningful graphs and charts. The data was then shared with the educators who were responsible for carrying out the lessons and requirements of Navigation 101. The data gathered from this study was used to determine whether or not Navigation 101 increased the enrollment numbers in post-secondary education.

Definition of Terms

Race to the Top. Race to the Top referred to the \$4.35 billion incentive program designed by the United States Department of Education to spur progressive reforms in state and local district K-12 education.

Gatekeeper Courses. Gatekeeper courses consisted of developmental courses which were graduation requirements.

Running Start Program. The Running Start program in Washington State allowed high school juniors and seniors to attend college courses numbered 100 or above, tuition-free, while completing high school.

Acronyms

HSPE. High School Proficiency Exam

NCLB. No Child Left Behind Act

OSPI. Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

P.E.R.R. Purpose, Engagement, Rigor, Results

SESRC. Social & Economic Sciences Research Center

WASL. Washington Assessment of Student Learning

CHAPTER 2

Review of Selected Literature

Introduction

Throughout our history as a nation, we have faced many challenges. These challenges ranged from wars on the battlefield to wars in the classroom. Many times as a nation, we have witnessed new demands placed on the institution of public education as a result of challenges we faced at home and abroad. For example, when the Soviet Union successfully launched *Sputnik I* in 1957, it triggered the Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union. As a result, public education was redirected. Public education went from focusing on the humanities to focusing more on math and science. Recently, our nation has faced economic hardships that have increased unemployment rates and made everyday decision-making on spending more important. As jobs have become more specialized, global, and high tech, the demand for an educated workforce has increased. As a result, we have witnessed another redirecting in public education. Now, efforts by the federal and state governments have focused on increasing the number of students that go from secondary education to post-secondary education. Federal programs such as NCLB or Race to the Top have focused attention on spending resources on a variety of programs, some of which were designed to increase post-secondary education enrollment.

Collecting and Analyzing Data

In 2007, legislators from the State of Washington chose to mandate a program known as Navigation 101. Using federal and state money, the state hoped to increase high school graduation rates and, at the same time, increase post-secondary enrollment rates. Navigation 101 was also designed to get students actively involved in their education and expose them to several community and work-related opportunities.

The literature that was used in this study focused on three distinct areas that were relevant issues in public education. The first major issue that was addressed was two-fold; why did we feel the need as a nation to try to increase the number of students that attended a post-secondary educational facility and who should have been held accountable for preparing those students. In a report by Chad Aldeman titled *College and Career Ready: Using Outcomes Data to Hold High Schools Accountable for Student Success* (2010), Mr. Aldeman took a look at many problems with American high schools during the time period from 2003-2007. Using many different states that used federal and state funding to increase post-secondary enrollment, Aldeman used data gathered from studies to determine if the money that was spent actually had the effect that it was intended to.

Another key issue to this study was how we thought college was going to better prepare students for the world that they would live in. In a study completed in 2005 by Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini titled *How College Affects*

Students Volume 2: A Third Decade of Research (2005), Pascarella and Terenzini completed an in-depth study on the net effects of how college impacted career and economic attainment. The last major issue was whether or not the programs that were currently being used by states were actually having the effect on increasing post-secondary enrollment as they were intended. To get a better understanding of this issue, this study reviewed a report created by the Social & Economic Sciences Research Center (SESCR) titled *Navigation 101 2008 Annual Performance Evaluation* (2009) written by Kyra Kester, Paul Stern, and Kirby Pitman.

College and career-ready education had become a focal point in American education. Since 2009, the Race to the Top Fund had pumped \$4.35 billion into public education (Aldeman, 2010). The main focus of this money was to prepare students in high school to take the next step in education without having to take remediation coursework. The task had been placed on the high schools to increase the number of students that did not require remediation and many took up the task in a variety of ways. Some increased graduation requirements while others focused on making the courses in high school more rigorous. The school in which this study was conducted adopted the P.E.R.R. program which was intended to increase purpose, engagement, rigor, and results in the classrooms. By 2009, lawmakers had revised the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* in order to help hold the high schools responsible for increasing the success

of their students in obtaining a post-secondary education or a productive career. The main problem that Aldeman saw in high schools was that American high schools had become stagnate. He stated that recent state testing showed that fourth and eighth grade students' test scores had been increasing while high school students' test scores had been decreasing over the past two decades (Aldeman, 2010). He felt that there was an intense focus on middle and grade schools since studies showed that deficiencies and gaps in a child's ability levels developed at an early stage in the child's educational career. Aldeman believed that due to the focus on earlier educational intervention, high schools got underfunded and overlooked. One of the main problems at the high school levels, as Aldeman saw it, was that accurate tracking data had been absent since the passing of NCLB in 2002. Over the ensuing years, states had enacted methods intended to track data on graduation levels, college enrollment, college grade point averages, and college retention rates. By gathering the data, states more accurately measured the performance of their high schools with regards to preparing students to take the next step on their educational paths. In the school in which this study was completed, data had been tracked since 2005 on post-secondary education enrollment and performance. This data had been used to help drive Navigation 101 in a direction that the district, state, and local business leaders felt balanced the needs and requirements that were being placed on the workforce. With this data available, the schools were able to touch upon a variety

of topics. The students participated in lesson plans that were designed to take a more active role in planning their education, career exploration and experience, community involvement, and post-secondary education preparation.

Impact of Post-Secondary Education on Careers

Over the past years, there had been a significant focus on trying to come up with data that would demonstrate the benefits of pursuing a post-secondary education. In a study completed in 2005 by Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, a hard look was given to how college affected students. The study took place throughout the 1990s and looked at data that tried to link how college affects career and economic attainment and performance. A major concern for Pascarella and Terenzini was looking at the data with regards to career readiness. They concluded that seniors in college were more likely to have chosen a career path and more likely to be prepared to enter the workforce. Most of this was credited to maturity and the fact that seniors in college had a longer time to prepare. However, when the data started coming in from employers, something interesting started to develop. The employers were stating that the students entering the work force appeared to have been well prepared in academic and knowledge of subject content but seemed to be lacking in some basic career life skills. Some of the skills that employers seemed to think were lacking were intrapersonal communication and prioritizing their work loads. Whenever there was an area in which influential employers felt that the next generations of

employees were lacking, the end result was a shift in education at the college and secondary levels.

Pascarella and Terenzini went on to look at the net effects of post-secondary education on career and economic success. Their first area was to investigate what the net effects of college were. They statistically broke down data to see what type of advantages a person that sought a variety of post-secondary educational opportunities had over a person that completed high school with a diploma. If students attained a bachelor's degree, they had a 95% occupational status advantage over a high school graduate. If they attained an associate's degree, they had a 24%-44% advantage. Vocational training provided a 12%-22% advantage over a person with only a high school diploma. The studies concluded that as the amount of post-secondary education increased, workforce participation increased (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Job satisfaction levels also showed signs of increasing when attaining higher levels of learning. People experienced a higher level of prestige, higher earnings, and autonomy in their work. The study also showed that a link could be made to earned income and post-secondary education levels. According to the study, a person with a bachelor's degree was more likely to earn 38% more in their annual income than a person with only a high school diploma. A person with an associate's degree was more likely to earn 22% more than a high school graduate. There was also some significant data linking the acquirement of a post-secondary degree versus a non-

degree post-secondary education. Those who obtained a post-secondary degree were 15% more likely to earn a higher salary than those taking college courses without obtaining a degree (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Pascarella and Terenzini concluded that there was a direct correlation to the type of courses and the exposure to career-related experiences to increasing the likelihood of success in a career. They determined that when the courses taken were more directly linked to the choice of career, the more likely the impact on getting a job and securing employment appropriate to the course of study. Navigation 101 also tried to expose career guidance to students at the high school level by requiring that they obtain three career-related experiences. This was carried out in a variety of ways. Job research or a job shadow were two of the more common methods used to fulfill this requirement. Success in the classroom usually was directly proportionate to the success in a career. Pascarella and Terenzini concluded that college grades and being employed full-time in a career were directly related. Navigation 101 had students track their high school grade performance and allowed them to reflect and respond to the grades that they earned. Self-reflection was directed to having the students take more responsibility for their educational performance. Having an opportunity to diversify experiences in high school was important as well. This was considered to be a key to social evolution and one of the areas in which business leaders believed that the work force was lacking. Navigation 101 was designed to

actively get the students engaged in extra-curricular activities in their school. This gave the student an advantage when entering a post-secondary educational facility. Upon continuation of this practice, it was believed that this social interaction led to more successful and rewarding careers. Another aspect that Pascarella and Terenzini looked into did not yield the results they were expecting. Did the place where a student attended post-secondary education matter on the level of success achieved? Their thoughts were that what a student did during college had a greater impact on his or her career success than where he or she attended college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Navigation 101

Upon identifying some areas of concern with regards to linking post-secondary and career readiness to public education, legislators from the State of Washington proposed adopting Navigation 101 as a tool to be used to satisfy a wide range of concerns about students' future academic and career success. In 2008, there was a performance evaluation created by the Social & Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC). The study was created by Kyra Kester, Paul Stern, and Kirby Pitman. The study was titled *Navigation 101 2008 Annual Performance Evaluation*. In this report, it was stressed that the importance of Navigation 101 increased students' career life-skills in personalizing, planning, demonstrating, empowering, and evaluating. Navigation 101 pursued these goals in a variety of ways but they all focused around increasing parental involvement,

community support, and targeting underperforming students. Navigation 101 relied heavily on evaluation. This was a strong connection to the beliefs shared by Aldeman. Due to regular evaluation of the progress of Navigation 101, it had won support from several key legislative officials from the state.

Legislators from the State of Washington came up with a set of areas they believed they could use and collect data from in order to measure a student's progress. The study broke down the data into a series of indicators ranking from one to six. Indicator one focused on the students' ability to excel in important career life-skills mentioned previously in this study. By completing a student-led conference every year, it was believed that the students would plan, demonstrate, and evaluate their own educational experiences. In doing this, the student-led conferences were designed to empower the students and personalize their own individual tracks during the educational process.

The other indicators were more similar to benchmarks. They gave a linear view of the individual progress of the student. Indicator two focused on on-time matriculation from grade to grade. Since the program was relatively new, it took some years to establish a credible graduation rate. Until recently, the school districts were asked to report the number of students that were moved on to the next grade levels.

Indicator three focused on what the report deemed as gatekeeper courses such as physics, chemistry, and algebra II. These challenging courses were used

to compare school to school on successful enrollment and passing of these courses. The schools in the state were compared side by side with the rates of enrollment and success in these courses.

Indicator four measured the passing rates on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). However, this assessment has since been revised and renamed the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE).

Indicator five focused on on-time graduation rates. The students that met all of the state requirements and were allowed to graduate were compared to those who did not meet the same requirements. Those numbers were then compared from school to school.

The sixth and final indicator focused on remediation rates. Whether or not a student was ready to function in a post-secondary institution had become a focal point in public education. Time equaled money and due to increased post-secondary costs, students were finding it difficult to afford college. The more prepared they were to enter post-secondary education without taking any remedial courses, the quicker and cheaper the post-secondary education would be.

The study also focused on the rates of change. The school in which this study was conducted struggled with the adaptation of Navigation 101, as did many other schools. From polling the teachers, about half were in favor of the program while the other half were either against it or did not completely understand the merits of the program. The legislators from the State of

Washington knew this was going to be a challenge. However, when one considered that two of the key driving forces of Navigation 101 were to help students build long-term relationships with adults and to strengthen the partnership of schools and families, it was hard not to see the merits in the program.

The SESRC report chose a sample group of 20 schools statewide that had implemented the Navigation 101 program. The schools themselves ranged from small to large, alternative to middle schools, and high schools. The study had results in each of the 6 indicators previously listed.

The results for the student-led conferences took into consideration gender, demographics, grade point average, and student/parent approval ratings. The most notable piece of data was the approval ratings. Of the parents completing a questionnaire, 94% found the conferences worthwhile. When compared to the students, 82% of the students gave the student-led conference high approval ratings (Kester, Stern, & Pitman, 2009). The school in which this study was completed demonstrated an approval rating of 86.3% parent approval and 68.2% student approval (Chelin, C., personal communication, April 24, 2010).

Indicator two was actually canceled as a key indicator for assessment. This was due to the fact that the chosen school districts' graduation requirements were so broad and varied that side by side comparison made it too difficult to come up with accurate and meaningful data. However, 2008-09 data from the

school in which this study was conducted demonstrated that out of 36% of the students attending a community college, 53% of those students required a pre-100 level class in mathematics, 20% required a pre-100 level class in writing, and 4% required a pre-100 level class in reading (Chelin, C., personal communication, April 24, 2010).

Indicator three was designed to track the progress of Washington schools by tracking certain gatekeeper courses. When gathering the data, the researchers focused on student requests for these courses, actual enrollment in courses, and the number of students that passed. Unfortunately, the data from indicator three was determined to be impractical due to confusion with how the data was reported by the chosen schools. As a result, the study used three schools that were determined to have accurately reported the data. The data demonstrated a 70% average passing rate in algebra II, 62% average passing rate for chemistry, and a 58% average passing rate in physics (Kester, Stern, & Pitman, 2009). The school in this study did not participate with this data collection; therefore no data was available.

Indicator four focused on Navigation 101 working as a motivator for academic effort with the hope of increasing WASL scores. Out of the 20 schools that participated in the SESRC study, there was a slight degree of discrepancy between WASL score data between the control group and the non-control group.

Indicator five focused on graduation rates. In the year 2007, the graduation rate for the SESRC schools was at 84% while the school in this study was at 93% (Kester, Stern, & Pitman, 2009).

Indicator six dealt with remediation rates for high school to college students. The state average was 57% while the SESRC schools averaged 56% (Kester, Stern, & Pitman, 2009). The school in this study averaged a 28% remediation rate during that same year (Chelin, C., personal communication, April 24, 2010).

Summary

The conclusions in the SESRC study noted some consistent outcomes to their data. The goal of getting the students and parents more involved in the students' education decisions were being met at a high rate. From that data, the researchers felt that the information provided favorable assessment to student-led conferences being conducted. The study also showed that benchmarks for improving reading and writing scores on the WASL were being met. Lastly, the researchers believed that early implementation of Navigation 101 had a positive impact on college readiness and in decreasing remediation rates.

Each of the pieces of literature reviewed in this study provided information regarding key instrumental questions that were being faced by public educational institutions. The gathering of data was extremely important and relevant when it was used to determine policy. Taking the data and then linking it

to reasons for changing policies was equally important. Increasing college enrollment was considered to be a stimulus to the economy. Reflection of data was necessary in order to adjust and reorder priorities.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Treatment of Data

Introduction

There were a variety of methods that were used to gather data for this study. Most of the data was collected using the QUANTITATIVE-Qualitative Model, often referred to as the QUAN-Qual Model (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). The quantitative data was collected by observing and analyzing charts and graphs that were constructed by various administrators that tracked the data for Navigation 101 at a specific school. The qualitative data was collected using surveys made by administrative officials. This study was conducted in a public high school located in Southeastern Washington State. The people that participated in this study consisted of parents of the students, staff, and the students themselves. The instruments that were used in conducting the research for this study were a collection of a mixed design of data which consisted of PowerPoint presentations by administrative officials, charts and graphs, and surveys of parents of students, staff, and students. The time period for the study ranged from the 2006 to 2009 school years.

Methodology

The research method used in this study was descriptive in nature. The basis of the study was to determine whether or not Navigation 101 was having an impact on increased enrollment rates in post-secondary institutions. Information

was identified and collected in order to resolve the question. A population was targeted and a procedure was established. Information and data were gathered to determine the connection between Navigation 101 and post-secondary enrollment rates. The data was then analyzed and generalizations and predictions were made using the QUAN-qual model.

The QUAN-qual model was a type of mixed model research designs.

In the QUAN-qual model, also known as the *explanatory mixed methods design*, quantitative data are collected first and are more heavily weighted than qualitative data. In the first study or phase, the researcher formulates a hypothesis, collects quantitative data, and conducts data analysis. The findings of the quantitative study determine the type of data collected in a second study or phase that includes qualitative data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The researcher can then use the qualitative analysis and interpretation to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. When quantitative methods are dominant, for example, researchers may enliven their quantitative findings by collecting and writing case vignettes.

(Gay et al., 2009, p.463)

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of a portion of graduating classes from the years 2006-2009 from a public high school located in Southeastern Washington State. The average enrollment of this school during this study was

approximately 1600 students. Since completion of all the standards in Navigation 101 were required in order to graduate, most all of the students were part of the study with the exception of students who did not graduate or who participated in early college enrollment courses known as the Running Start program. Those students were excused from Navigation 101 requirements. The school in this study consisted of approximately 84 staff members who were also used to gather data. The remaining participants consisted of parents of the students involved in Navigation 101. The study tracked post-secondary enrollment status of graduated seniors from 2006-2009 school years. The population of the school was multicultural consisting mainly of middle income Caucasian students, staff, and parents. However, there was a significant population of Hispanic and Afro-American students that participated in the research.

Instruments

The majority of instruments that were used in the collection of data for this study derived from in-house surveys. Navigation 101 was designed to be measured through feedback from the students, staff, and parents of the students. Throughout the year of implementation of Navigation 101 students participated in surveys that asked a variety of questions that dealt with varying degrees of how they thought Navigation 101 met their educational needs. The staff was also given an opportunity to voice their feelings through surveys as well. Once a year,

parents were required to come and participate in a student-led conference. At that time, the parents filled out surveys that identified their views on Navigation 101.

These three different surveys were used to formulate graphs and charts that were utilized by the school and the school district to determine whether or not Navigation 101 was having the desired effects that it was intended to have. In addition to the qualitative data that was gathered, quantitative data was collected on post-secondary enrollment rates that corresponded to the dates of the study. All the data was tracked by the school administrators as well as district administrators. The data was compiled in charts and graphs. The compiled information was then shared via PowerPoint to staff and students. All of the collected quantitative data was sent to National Student Clearinghouse where it was professionally prepared for the school and put into an aggregate report format. The National Student Clearinghouse report was the primary instrument used in the collection of data for this study.

Design

The general strategy of this study was to determine whether or not Navigation 101 was successful in increasing post-secondary enrollment rates. This was one of the main areas in which Navigation 101 was intended to encourage growth. The study was designed to compare post-secondary enrollment rates of graduates from a particular public high school who received instruction in Navigation 101 with students who did not receive the instruction.

Procedure

The data for this study was compiled and kept yearly beginning in 2006. The data was updated each year. A request was made of the head administrator to provide the data that was gathered for all of the surveys given and the data of the results of the tracked students who enrolled in a post-secondary institution from the years 2006-2009. Upon collection of the data, the author sorted through the information to gather the pertinent data that correlated with the fundamental question of this study. One assumption was that Navigation 101 had assisted the students in formulating a plan for after high school that consisted of post-secondary educational pursuits.

Treatment of Data

The data for this study was used to compare a population of students that did not receive training in Navigation 101 to those who did receive training. The data that was collected was tabulated and results were presented using a variety of charts and graphs.

Summary

The fundamental question in this study was to determine whether students who received Navigation 101 training when compared with students who did not receive such training improved the rate of post-secondary enrollment. This descriptive study used the QUAN-qual model to target a specific population of students from a mid-sized public high school located in Southeastern Washington

State. The participants in the study consisted of students, parents of students, and staff members from the years 2006-2009. The study tracked the post-secondary enrollment rates of students that graduated from a specific educational institution. In addition, data was collected from surveys that were administered to students, parents of students, and staff. There was also data that was collected from graduates that was gathered through surveys and compiled by school and district administrators. The collected data was then sent to a national institution to be professionally prepared for publishing. A basic assumption of this study was that exposure to Navigation 101 increased post-secondary enrollment rates.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Data

Introduction

Over the past decade, an emphasis had been placed on increasing the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education. The federal government had allocated financial resources through educational acts such as NCLB and Race to the Top. The legislation was partly designed to help the students make clear and careful choices to help prepare them for life after high school. States were left to come up with programs that were designed to address these concerns. This study was a 4-year examination to determine whether or not the implementation of Navigation 101 by the State of Washington had helped increase the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education. The study focused on one particular public high school in the state.

Description of the Environment

The time span that this study covered was from the 2005-2006 to the 2008-2009 school years. The location of the study was a public high school located in Southeastern Washington State. The city had a population of approximately 65,000 people and consisted of three public high schools. The participants in the study were school and district administrators, parents of students, students, and staff members from the school. The students were predominantly Caucasian in ethnicity with Hispanic, Asian, and African-

American making up the remainder of the balance. The materials that were used to conduct the study consisted of charts, graphs, and PowerPoint presentations that were compiled by school officials. The program that was studied was Navigation 101. Navigation 101 was adopted by the State of Washington in 2006 and was designed to focus on five key areas; evaluating student performance, empowering the student to take responsibility of self, planning for the future, personalizing the student's educational experiences, and demonstrating growth and understanding.

Research Question

The 4-year study determined whether or not the implementation of Navigation 101 had helped increase the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education from a particular high school located in Southeastern Washington State.

Results of the Study

In figures 1-3, quantitative data was collected over a period of 4 years. Out of a total of 100% of graduates for each year, each figure demonstrated the total number of students that enrolled in a post-secondary institution within three areas.

Figure 1 represented the percentage of students that were enrolled in a post-secondary institution the fall of the year immediately following their graduation from high school. In 2006, 50% of the graduates enrolled in a post-secondary institution the following fall. In 2007, that number increased to 58%. In 2008, the number increased again to 64%. After 4 years of Navigation 101, in 2009, that number decreased to 61%. The data showed an overall increase of 11% in the number of students that enrolled in a post-secondary institution the fall immediately following their graduation from high school.

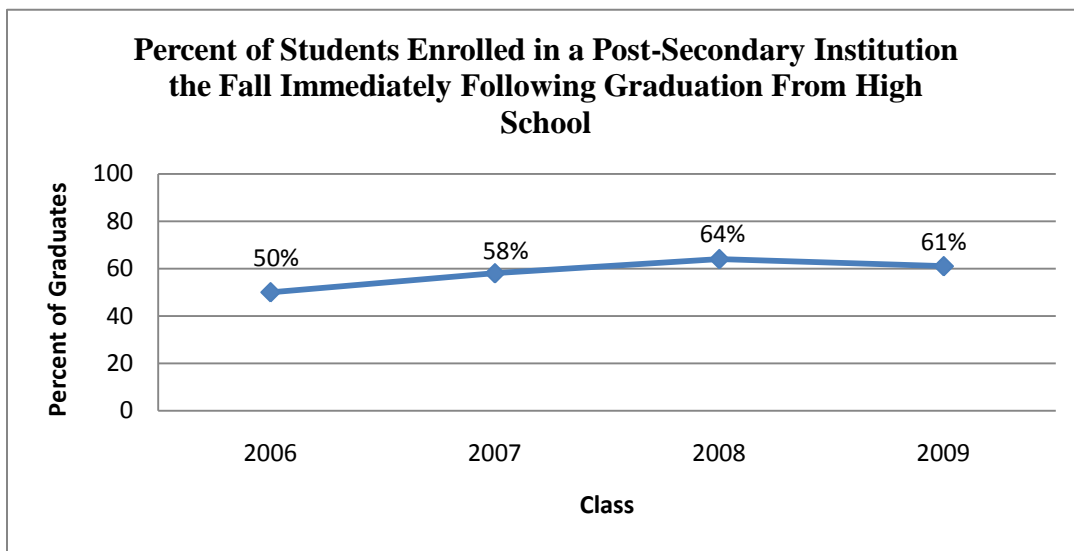


Figure 1

Figure 2 demonstrated the number of students that were enrolled in a post-secondary institution at any time within 1 year of graduating from high school. The chart included base data from figure 1 and adjusted for the increased number

of post-secondary enrollment numbers. The data showed that the post-secondary enrollment rates for 2006 were 58%. In 2007 there was an increase to 66%. In 2008, the number increased to 69%. In 2009, after 4 years of Navigation 101, the total number was 63%. The data indicated a total increase of 5% over the 4 year study.

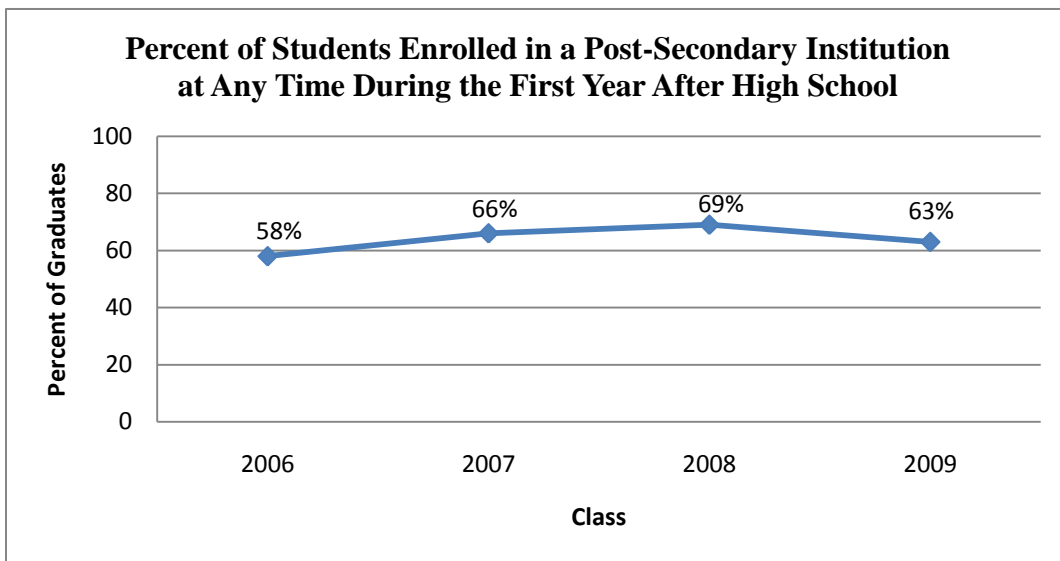


Figure 2

Figure 3 demonstrated the number of students that were enrolled in a post-secondary institution within 2 years of completing high school. Out of the total number of students that graduated in 2006, 65% were enrolled in a post-secondary institution. In 2007, 69% were enrolled. In 2008, 74% were enrolled. By 2009, 63% of the students that graduated were enrolled in a post-secondary institution

within 2 years of graduating. The data indicated a decrease of 2% over the 4 year study.

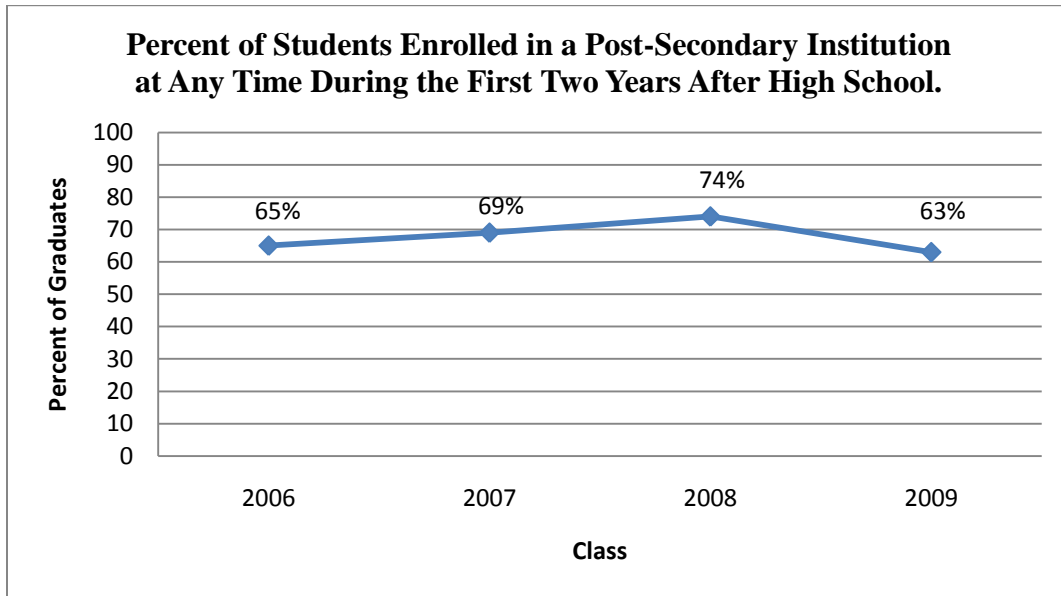


Figure 3

Figures 4-8 demonstrated qualitative data that was gathered from the class of 2009. This was the class that had been the first to complete four full years of Navigation 101 training. The data in the graphs were from survey questions of the parents of students, students, and staff members after completing 4 years of Navigation 101.

In figure 4, the data demonstrated the feedback from a question asking students and parents to what extent they felt Navigation 101 helped in choosing high school courses and/or programs that helped with their career paths or plans for life after high school. The results were that 81.5% of students believed that

Navigation 101 was somewhat helpful to very helpful to them. Eighteen point five percent of students surveyed believed that it did not help them at all. Of the parents surveyed, 90.9% believed that Navigation 101 was somewhat to very helpful. Nine point one percent of parents believed that Navigation 101 was of no help at all.

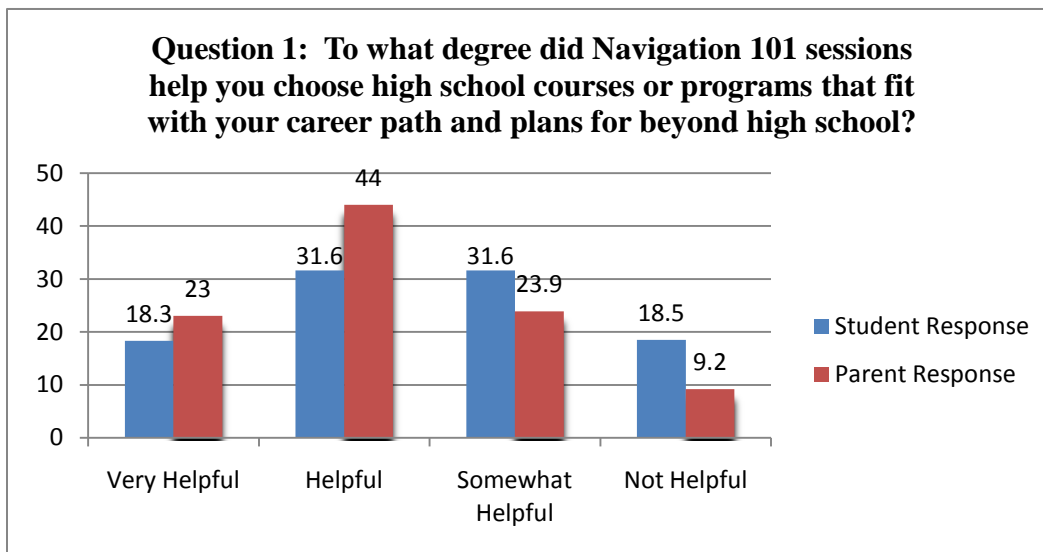


Figure 4

Figure 5 addressed the question of whether or not Navigation 101 helped give the parents and students more information on post-secondary options such as careers and colleges. The data indicated that 86.8% of the students believed that Navigation 101 somewhat helped to greatly helped in this area. Thirteen point two percent of students believed that Navigation 101 did not help them at all. Out of the parents, 92.3% believed that Navigation 101 was very to somewhat helpful

while 7.7% of parents believed that it was of no help at all when obtaining information about options in careers and colleges following graduation.

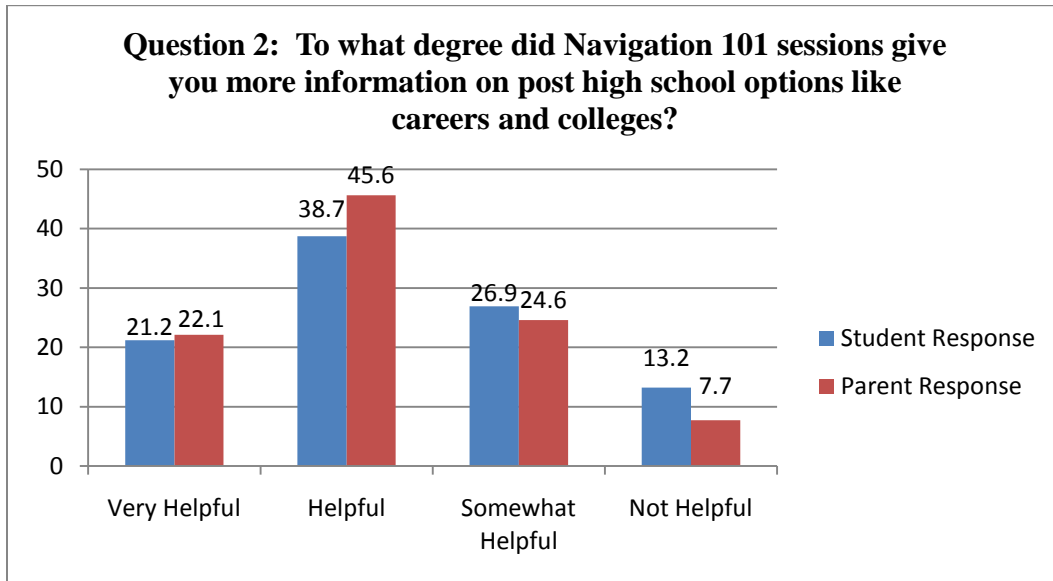


Figure 5

Figure 6 addressed the question of whether or not Navigation 101 was worthwhile. This was an overall question of the program’s worthiness. Out of all of the students that completed the survey, 59.5% believed that Navigation 101 was worthwhile while 40.5% felt that it was not. When compared to the parents, 82.1% of parents believed that Navigation 101 was worthwhile, while 17.9% believed that it was not.

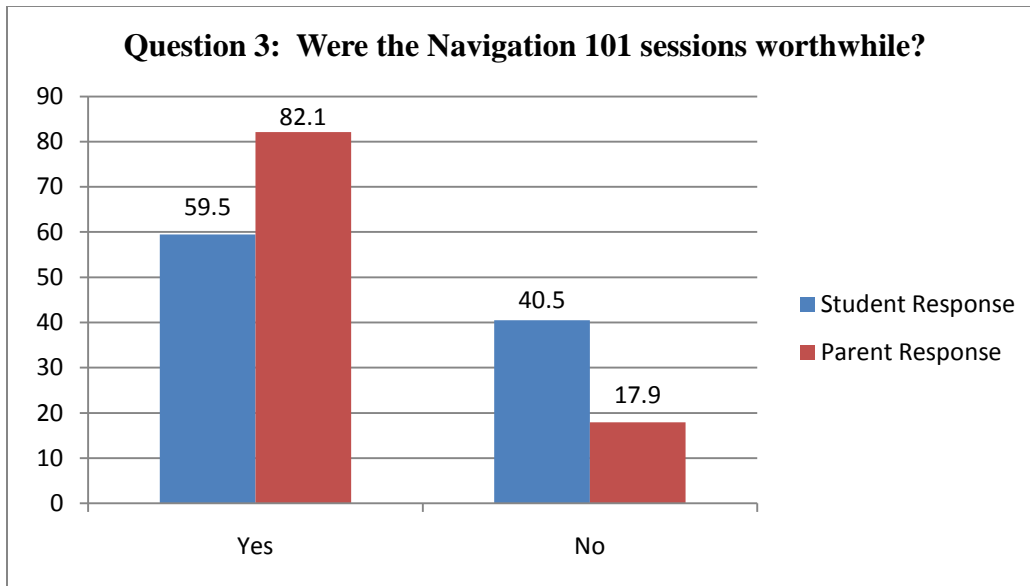


Figure 6

Figure 7 demonstrated the results of a survey given to the staff at the high school. The question that was asked was whether the staff felt that the students were better prepared for life after high school as a result of Navigation 101. The results indicated that 73.2% of the staff believed that Navigation 101 helped better prepare students for life after high school while 26.8% of the staff surveyed did not believe that Navigation 101 achieved this goal.

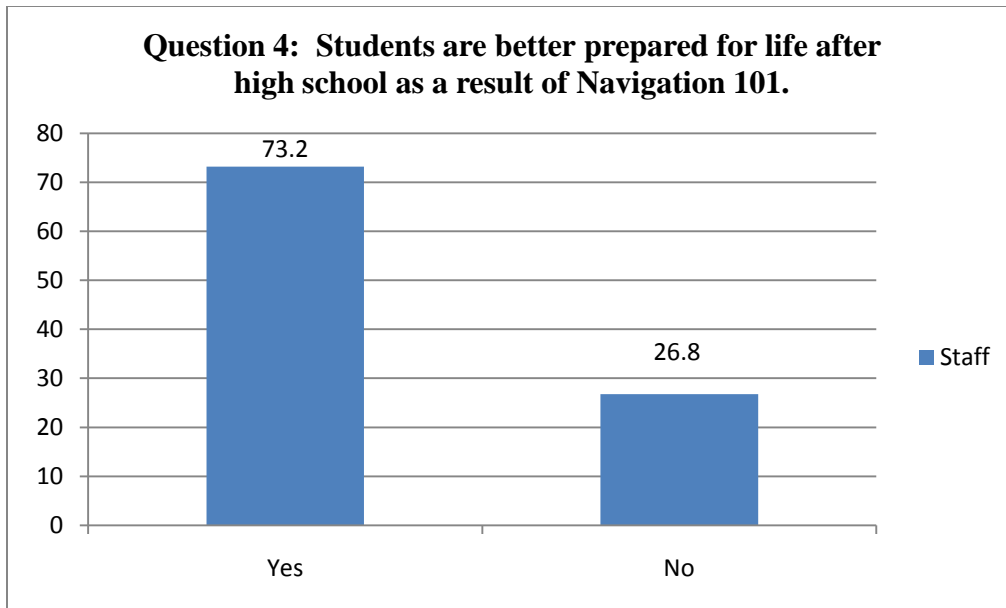


Figure 7

Figure 8 demonstrated the results of a survey question to the staff that asked if Navigation 101 improved personalization of the school. The results indicated that 58.5% of the staff agreed that Navigation 101 met this goal while 41.5% of the staff believed it did not.

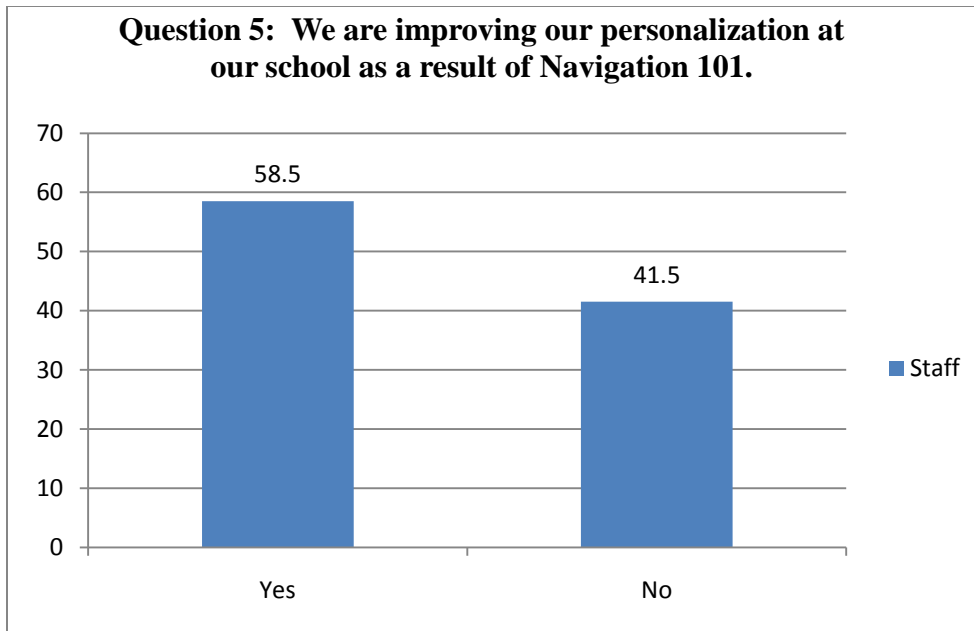


Figure 8

Findings

The results of the quantitative data demonstrated split results. The number of students that were attending a post-secondary institution continued to increase from 2006-2008. However, the class of 2009 decreased in the number of graduates that were attending post-secondary institutions. This was the class that received 4-years of Navigation 101. One could argue that Navigation 101 appeared to have met its goals but the class of 2009 countered that argument. The results of the qualitative data indicated that the students believed that Navigation 101 was worthwhile and was achieving its goals. The parents indicated a stronger belief that Navigation 101 was working accordingly. The staff also indicated

approval for Navigation 101 but the margin of approval was lower. The parents had the highest margin of approval of the program followed by the students and then staff.

Discussion

Navigation 101 appeared to have the success that it was intended to have. The fundamental question in this study was whether Navigation 101 was increasing the likelihood that a graduate from high school would pursue a post-secondary education. The data appeared to support that question.

Aldeman (2010) conducted a study to determine how several states were using money allocated to high schools to increase post-secondary enrollment. Aldeman concluded that the tracking of data was one of the areas in which the high schools were lacking and the reliability of the data that was received was compromised. In this study, data had been tracked for several years on the attitudes and results of post-secondary enrollment. Programs such as Navigation 101 had been used to help increase those numbers, the data was readily available and it indicated that the program was working.

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) conducted a study throughout the 1990s to try to establish a link on how college affects career and economic attainment and performance. They concluded that post-secondary education was crucial to one's career and economic success. Their study helped make the argument for the importance of obtaining a post-secondary education. Studies like theirs were

what helped drive the push by federal and state governments to invest in programs such as Navigation 101 to increase the likelihood that a student would pursue post-secondary options. This study helped confirm that Navigation 101 had enjoyed a level of success in the State of Washington.

Summary

This study used both quantitative and qualitative survey data to determine whether or not Navigation 101 had increased the number of graduates that pursued a post-secondary education from the 2006-2009 school years. By focusing on one particular school located in Southeastern Washington State and by targeting a distinct population, this study was able to determine whether or not Navigation 101 had been a success. Results of the study indicated that the school enjoyed success by increasing its numbers of post-secondary enrollment in all years except the last year, 2009.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This study was an in-depth look at Navigation 101 and its effectiveness on increasing enrollment in post-secondary institutions. The cost of post-secondary education had continued to increase dramatically over the past decades. At the same time, job markets shifted and placed a large demand for workers with new skills. As a result, federal and state governments started looking at methods in public high schools that would help prepare students for the new challenges. Taking many factors into consideration, this project was designed to take a hard look at Navigation 101 and all of its requirements to determine whether or not it increased the likelihood that students continued their education in a post-secondary institution. By looking at the goals and statistics over a 4-year time period, this study compared a number of students that did not receive Navigation 101 to students that had 3 years of Navigation 101 training.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into one program that the State of Washington was using in public classrooms to better prepare students to face many of life's challenges. Federal programs such as NCLB and Race to the Top had provided monetary resources to help the states find new and inventive ways to carry out this task. The State of Washington adopted a program called

Navigation 101 and implemented it in several public schools throughout the state. Although each school varied in demographics, the goals of Navigation 101 were the same for every school. One of the main goals of Navigation 101 in Washington State was to increase the number of students that pursued a post-secondary education. Since time equaled money, the schools tried to give the students the best opportunity to prepare for life after high school by providing lesson plans that discussed job and educational options. Data was collected from one particular high school located in Southeastern Washington State. The data reflected a 4-year collection of surveys which tracked student enrollment rates in post-secondary institutions after graduating from high school. The data also reflected opinions on the effectiveness of Navigation 101 from students, staff, and parents of students.

Literature was selected to help reinforce the main idea of this study. Chad Aldeman (2010) conducted research from 2003-2007 that looked at how money was spent on similar programs and whether or not they were having productive results. He concluded that the main problem was how the data was gathered. Lack of consistency among the schools of study made the data that was gathered invalid. The data that was collected for this study was valid because of the consistency in which it was gathered throughout the 4-year time period. Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini (2005) conducted a study throughout the 1990s that looked at data that tried to link how college affects career and economic

attainment and performance. They concluded that pursuing a post-secondary education was crucial in obtaining economic independence and self satisfaction. They believed that people who had a post-secondary education felt a higher level of prestige, enjoyed higher earnings, and experienced autonomy in their work. One of the major goals of Navigation 101 in the State of Washington was to increase the numbers of students attending a post-secondary institution.

Kyra Kester, Paul Stern, and Kirby Pitman (2009) completed an evaluation of Navigation 101 from the State of Washington in 2008. A key area in which Navigation 101 was designed to cover included increasing students' career life-skills by instructing them in ways of personalizing, planning, demonstrating, empowering, and evaluating their educational and career choices. The evaluators identified six indicators, or benchmarks, that were used in the evaluation. These indicators included student-led conferences, matriculation rates, rigorous coursework, passing of a state assessment, graduation rates, and college remediation rates.

Data that was collected for this study consisted of charts, graphs, and PowerPoint presentations that were constructed by administrative officials and then shared with students and staff. The qualitative data consisted of surveys that were conducted during student-led conferences. Students and their parents were asked to complete a short survey which consisted of questions regarding program effectiveness and worthiness. Quantitative data was collected that tracked post-

secondary enrollment rates of students that graduated. This data tracked students in four-year schools, junior colleges, and trade schools.

Conclusions

This study demonstrated that the money that was allocated to the Navigation 101 program in the State of Washington appeared to be producing the desired results in one particular high school. Aldeman (2010) feared in his study that money was being wasted because no meaningful data could prove otherwise. At the school in which this study was conducted, data had been consistently kept for the four years in which Navigation 101 had been instituted. The quantitative data demonstrated that in the two years following graduation, students attended a post-secondary institution at an average rate of 58% in 2006, 64% in 2007, 69% in 2008, and 62% in 2009. Overall, the quantitative data demonstrated an increase in post-secondary enrollment of 4% since Navigation 101 was introduced. This was a positive example when the study completed by Pascarella & Ternezini (2005) was considered.

The qualitative data that was collected demonstrated that Navigation 101 was considered to be a success and worthy of continuation. The data reflected opinions of students, staff, and parents of the students. The majority of parents and students believed that Navigation 101 was beneficial in helping students choose coursework in high school that better prepared them for college, increased their knowledge of post-secondary options, and believed in the program's overall

worthiness and effectiveness. A small minority of parent and students believed that Navigation 101 was not effective. The staff demonstrated a 3 to 1 ratio of approval on whether or not they believed Navigation 101 better prepared students for life after high school. However, the percentages of difference were closer among the staff when asked if Navigation 101 had increased personalization in the school. The numbers were 58.5% in agreement and 41.5% in disagreement.

Recommendations

The author of this study believes that the Navigation 101 program is having a positive impact on the students at the particular high school in which this study was conducted. Although there are some staff, students, and parents that disagree, the overall numbers indicate that the program is a success. The data that was collected shows that post-secondary enrollment numbers have increased every year since the program was instituted in 2006 except for the class of 2009. This could have been caused by a few events. Every now and then, a school has a class that goes through that is an under-achieving class. Another possible cause of the drop in number in 2009 could have been the near collapse of the American economic system. The year of 2009 was a difficult year for the United States economically. Many jobs were lost when industries slowed down. This trickle effect resulted in large numbers of people losing their jobs. The effect of the increase in unemployment could have been directly linked to the decreasing

numbers in post-secondary enrollment. The main recommendation of this author is to continue looking at the quantitative and qualitative data in the future to determine whether a trend can be more clearly linked to Navigation 101 and its impact on post-secondary enrollment rates.

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