

ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPACT OF
HIGH SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to all youth. When things get tough, don't ever forget that there is always someone to listen to you and lend a helping hand. It's not going to be easy, but trust me when I say, that you deserve happiness and the opportunity to shine in your own way.

God, thank you for allowing me to set out on this journey. This journey allowed me to pursue my passion for education. I accomplished a goal, that for many years, I thought was impossible. Thank you for listening to my prayers and leading me through this journey.

To the most important people in my life: my son Aiden, Mammy-The most amazing mother and woman, my husband Juan, my brothers Jesus and Ulises, my sister-in-law Laura and my dear Lexie. You have been my strength throughout my life. Without you, I have nothing and without you I would be nothing. Thank you for inspiring me each and every day. You are my motivation and the reason I have overcome many obstacles.

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ABSTRACT

The need for student support services to be delivered during the school day is imperative. The word *education* involves far more than delivering curriculum to students. Providing support, services through intervention programs at the school site can address a world of circumstances that might otherwise go unnoticed. Furthermore, by acknowledging, identifying and providing supports, students can far exceed expectations on an academic and personal level. Data for this qualitative study were collected and analyzed. One-on-one interviews, involving 22 questions, were conducted with five high school administrators at sites that oversee the intervention programs at their respective sites. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed, and then coded and analyzed with Dedoose web-based qualitative data analysis software. The findings focused on six major areas: support programs, referral process, academic setting, academics, discipline and attendance. Analysis of the qualitative interview data showed that in many identified themes and subthemes, administrators revealed that the support and services delivered through intervention programs positively impact student academics, behavior and attendance. The administrators' perceptions link the positive impact and the need for intervention programs to support students' academic and personal needs.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Imagine a classroom with four to five students and one of those students meets the criteria for a mental disorder with severe impairments across their lifetime. Now imagine eight to ten students in a classroom and two of the students meet the criteria for a mental disorder with severe impairments across their life. Now continue the pattern and imagine the number of students that currently sit in a high school classroom of 30 or more students that meet the criteria for a mental disorder with severe impairments across their lifetime. The numbers are astounding. Baker, Kamphaus, Horne, and Winsor (2006) stated:

In a classroom of 30 students, about 5 will be explosive, unpredictable, and aggressive, have poor self-regulation and social skills, and be well behind their classmates in academic competence. Another 12 will have more moderate but discernible academic or behavioral problems. This aggregate can derail academic instruction in a classroom. (p. 43)

Clearly there is a need for support. Mental disorders in adults that first emerge in childhood and adolescence highlights the need for a transition from the common focus on treatment of U.S. youth to that of prevention and early intervention (Merikangas et al., 2010). Students need access to intervention programs, support services and resources to assist them with addressing their mental health needs. Otherwise, these needs are interfering with the student's ability to fully participate in

the classroom. More so, these disruptions may also be interfering with a student's academics, discipline and attendance.

Approximately 1 in every 4 to 5 youth in the United States meets the criteria for a mental disorder with severe impairment across their lifetime (Merikangas et al., 2010). It is evident that youth are experiencing factors that are influencing their mental health. Youth are faced with extenuating circumstances that increase their stress and anxiety levels. Many times these youth do not have the coping mechanisms to deal with those factors. This invades and impacts their lives in so many ways, specifically when it comes to their education.

Statement of Problem

Students are struggling emotionally with depression, anxiety, stress and other emotional issues which hinder student learning, classroom participation, discipline, and attendance. In the United States, 1 in 5 children and adolescents suffer from a diagnosable mental, emotional, behavioral disorder (Amaral, Geierstanger, Soleimanpour, & Brindis, 2011). A significant number of youth in the United States experience mental health problems to a degree that impairs daily functioning (Koller & Bertel, 2006). High school students need access to resources on high school campuses to learn coping skills and strategies to help them handle their emotions and furthermore get them back in the classroom.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Students are struggling to achieve academic excellence because they are experiencing emotional issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress. Disciplining

students when these behaviors arise by issuing referrals that lead to detentions, suspensions and even expulsions only cause students to miss more classroom instruction and allow for the behavior to continue escalating. Consequently, student attendance is immensely impacted. Koller and Bohler (2006) noted, “As a result, teachers are increasingly faced with students who lack the optimal social and emotional resources to focus and, therefore, benefit from academic instruction in the classroom (Koller, Osterlind, Paris, & Weston, 2004).” (p. 199). Students’ emotional needs are not being met and they are missing additional instructional time which indirectly and directly affect their learning. Koller and Bertel (2006) noted:

The educator’s challenge then, is not only teach content driven academic pedagogy required by the school district, but also the ability to create a classroom environment where all learners’ needs are addressed. This includes the development of a positive self-concept. (pp. 198-199)

If the goal of education is to ensure student learning and academic success, as well as lifelong success, then all of these issues need to be addressed. Students need to have access to resources on their school campus to help them meet their needs

Participants in the Study

The study was conducted at two comprehensive high schools in the Central Valley of California. The participants were selected based on the administrative personnel who oversee the intervention programs daily. Five administrators were identified and interviewed using the same series of questions regarding the intervention programs offered at their specific school site. Two administrators were

interviewed at High School A and three administrators were interviewed at High School B. The interviews were conducted one-on-one and were recorded.

During each one-on-one interview, the five participating administrators were asked questions on five major areas related to the subject of this study; specifically related to intervention programs, mental health, supports and services and their impact on academics, discipline and attendance. Approximately three to four questions were asked in each of the areas. The consideration of their administrative involvement and participation in the intervention programs at their specific site was considered in selecting the participants for the interviews. The consideration of gender was not considered.

Research Question

Three research questions were considered and answered during this study.

RQ1: What type of intervention programs are available at the high school level?

RQ2: What type of mental health services support the intervention programs at the high school level?

RQ3: How do the intervention programs and mental health services provided at the high school level, support student academic achievement, discipline and attendance?

Hypothesis

Access to intervention programs on high school campuses positively impact student mental health needs and support academics, discipline and, attendance.

Limitations

A qualitative design was used to conduct this research study. This qualitative study included five participants from two comprehensive high schools that were identified as overseeing the intervention program. The number of participants needs to be larger in order to accurately represent findings of a broader population. Also, gender and the type of school sites were not considered.

Definition of Terms

California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). A high school exit exam that is mandated by the State of California; all high school students must take the exam and pass in order to get a high school diploma.

Care center (CC). An intervention program located on a high school campus in the Central Valley of California, established to address mental, emotional, and physical needs of students. The supports and services delivered by the intervention program include: mental health support services, counseling services, peer resource support and health services support.

Small learning community (SLC). A collaborative group of teachers, counselors and administrators working under one umbrella to support students' academic needs.

Turnaround Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS). The intervention program for at risk students that are in danger of dropping out of school. TOPS assists students with credit recovery to help them return to their comprehensive site and counseling services to assist with behaviors.

University Institutional Review Board (UIRB). Established by the California State University to ensure that all policy and protocols are being followed in order to be approved for thesis/dissertation research.

Summary

Connecting the need for intervention programs and resources at the high school level to support mental health needs, academic success, discipline and attendance is an essential component for student achievement.

In Chapter I, the author summarizes the theoretical foundation that support the purpose for the design of an investigation of intervention programs that support student needs, specifically related to mental health, academics, discipline and attendance at the high school level. The problem was stated, accompanied by the research question and hypothesis, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, and operational definitions.

Chapter II surveys the relevant research in this area, while Chapter III explains the methodology employed in this study. Chapter IV presents the findings of the research and Chapter V discusses the implications of those findings, and makes recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The physical, mental and emotional safety and well-being of students are equally important factors to consider when ensuring that they will have the opportunity to be successful on a personal and academic level. It is important to consider how (a) mental health effects students (b) student academics, behavior and attendance are impacted (c) intervention programs support students. The following literature review will discuss the three topics identified.

Mental Health

Nearly 80% of youth who need mental health services do not receive them (Amaral et al., 2011). A significant number of youth in the United States experience mental health problems to a degree that impairs daily functioning (Koller & Bertel, 2006). Approximately 1 in every 4 to 5 youth in the U.S. meet criteria for a mental disorder with severe impairment across their lifetime (Merikangas et al., 2010). The proportion of youth with mental health problems has continued to increase, with an estimated 21% of America's children, ages 9-17, affected by a mental health or an addictive disorder (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services [USDHHS], 1999). The number of youth suffering from a mental health condition is astounding.

Adolescence is a developmental period when children may be particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of stress. Stress is a clear risk factor for mental

health disorders, which have been estimated to affect approximately 1 in 5 children, ages 9 to 17 years (Suldo, Shaunessy, & Hardesty, 2008). Data from the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) indicated that 8.5% of teens had attempted suicide; 29% had felt sad or hopeless; 45% of the students had used alcohol in the last month; and 22% had used marijuana. Those who self-harm are of school age and it is to be expected that schools and their teachers will be aware of each individual problem and will respond appropriately as part of their pastoral-care provision (Best, 2006).

The dramatic increase in suicide and suicidal behaviors among high school-aged adolescents underscores the importance of teachers recognizing and helping students at risk (Freedenthal & Breslin, 2010). Koller and Bertel (2006) discussed:

Increasingly, more children with a variety of emotional needs are included in the general classroom setting, placing increased demands on both the special education and general education teacher. The educator's challenge then, is not only teach content driven academic pedagogy required by the school district, but also the ability to create a classroom environment where all learners' needs are addressed. This includes the development of positive self-concept. (pp. 198-199)

According to Amaral et al. (2011), there is a strong association between poor mental health and other health and development concerns for young people, including education achievement. Because of this important intertwine between mental health

and academic success, schools must be active partners in the mental health care of children (Koller & Bertel, 2006).

Academics, Behavior and Attendance

Academics

The realm of education includes more than just delivering curriculum to students. Signs and symptoms of chronic difficulties regarding problem behavior and/or emotional adjustment commonly occur in the school environment (Dishion, 2011). Powerful predictors of leaving school without graduating include poor academic achievement; chronic misbehavior; poor peer acceptance; and absences, tardies, and chronically uncompleted work (Doll, Spies, & Champion, 2012).

Recognizing these predictors is imperative in supporting students on many levels.

Teachers play an essential role in identifying students with mental health needs and behavior. Often, the first to spot emotional or other psychosocial problems in adolescents are teachers (Freedenthal & Breslin, 2010). About 54% of teachers reported teaching diverse or at risk students (Baker et al., 2006). Baker et al., (2006) explained:

In a classroom of 30 students, about 5 will be explosive, unpredictable, and aggressive, have poor self-regulation and social skills, and be well behind their classmates in academic competence. Another 12 will have more moderate but discernible academic or behavioral problems. This aggregate can derail academic instruction in a classroom. (p. 43)

High academic failure and dropout rates remain significant issues in the United States, with estimates of over 20% of public school students failing to earn a diploma (Stillwell, 2009). Casillas et al. (2012) stated:

In some states and communities, these rates exceed 50% of all entering ninth-grade students. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation includes systematic monitoring of students' academic progress through standardized achievement testing, but this does not ensure the proper identification and intervention of at risk students. (p.407)

Behavior

Understanding and identifying behaviors is imperative. Robbins, Oh, Le, and Button (2009) defined:

Social control, refers to an individual's skills in engaging the social environment in ways that support and reinforce his or her learning activities.

Self-regulation refers to the ability to self-manage or regulate attitudes, behaviors, and feelings that affect students' receptiveness to, and implementation of, learning activities. (p.1170)

We now know that measuring critical psychosocial factors (motivation, social control, self regulation) as well as behavioral factors, can increase schools' abilities to identify and intervene with students at risk of academic failure and dropping out (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004). Feindler and Engel (2011) acknowledged:

Although anger is a common and natural emotion, or internal event, problems associated with the inappropriate expression of anger remain among the most serious concerns of parents, educators, and the mental health community. If left untreated, youth aggression seems unstable over time, predicts social adjustment difficulties, and may lead to additional antisocial behaviors. (p. 243)

Problem/risky, unhealthy, and antisocial behaviors, poor mental health, and poor academic achievement should be addressed by a comprehensive, coherent, and integrated approach, rather than the disjointed approach to prevention and promotion taken by education today (Flay, Graumlich, Segawa, Burns, & Holliday, 2004).

Attendance

There are many factors that can contribute to a student's reluctance to go to school (Allison, Nativio, Mitchell, Ren, & Yuhasz, 2014). School refusal behaviors go beyond a child's dislike or disinterest in school (Lingenfelter & Hartung, 2015).

Lingenfelter and Hartung (2015) noted:

School nurses and administrators see it every day. Students who are absent from school—again. Their names appear frequently on absentee lists. Parents have received notification that future absences will require a physician's note. On the surface, it appears that these students have behavior or truancy problems. For some students, that may be the case. However, for a significant number of students, the issue is much larger and more complex.

For these students, the anxiety and depression that they are experiencing make it extremely difficult, or even impossible, to attend school. (p. 1)

Studies show that students with higher rates of absenteeism and higher rates of school mobility are more likely to drop out of school during middle school or during the transition from middle to high school (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) reported that “in 2004–2005, 45% of students with an emotional disorder dropped out of high school. In 2005–2006, only 43% of students with an emotional disturbance graduated with a diploma” (as cited by Gourley, 2009, p. 1). These statistics have a profound effect on our educational system and on student academic success.

Intervention Programs

Schools are a key setting for identifying youth with emotional and behavioral problems and linking them to treatment (Burnett-Zeigler & Lyons, 2011). School-based health centers (SBHCs) are uniquely positioned to serve adolescent health needs by providing low-or no-cost services in a teen-centered accessible environment (Amaral et al., 2011).

Bush and Wilson (1997) discussed the Youth and Family Center, an intervention program, and the data collected: “In the first year of the program, more than 3,400 students used the services of the centers. Managers logged a total of 3,686 physical health visits, 2,677 mental health visits, and 1,485 support services” (p. 39). Bush and Wilson (1997) discussed the results from their study:

The questionnaire distributed to principals after the first year reflected an equally positive outcome. Virtually all the principals believed the centers provided quality services (98 percent), had a positive reputation (93 percent), and were valuable to their students (96 percent). All the principals recommended that the district establish additional centers to serve other schools. (p. 39)

Principals' perceptions regarding access to intervention program is clearly supported in the study by Bush and Wilson (1997).

Another intervention program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), is an example of systemic innovation, involves an efficient and comprehensive approach to behavior management in a school system (Dishion, 2011). Dishion (2011) stated,

The program developers focused on the use of positive reinforcement and other behavior management strategies (specifically prompting, clear expectations, behavior monitoring, functional assessment, etc.) to create a school system that effectively promotes students' educational and behavioral health needs. The goal is to provide support services and in return allow students to be in their classrooms, participating and learning. (pp. 593-594)

Anderson, Houser, and Howland (2010) discussed another intervention program, Full Purpose Partnership (FPP) and explained:

The mental health services that were introduced into these schools after the implementation of FPP were overwhelmingly viewed as providing a vital

asset to both students and schools. In fact, providing school-based mental health services was identified as a crucial step. As one teacher noted, having mental health services in the school ‘has been a benefit for our children [and families] because the children have needs that the educators cannot fulfill.’ The use of wraparound care, which often utilizes mental health services and other necessary resources to ‘wrap’ children with the supports they need to succeed, and addressing all aspects of a student’s life instead of just school were both viewed as very important. (p.40)

Casillas et al. (2012) shared insightful results from their study:

Overall, the findings from this study demonstrate the importance of including a comprehensive assessment system to evaluate the interplay of multiple factors (academic achievement, psychosocial, behavioral, demographic, school-based) in understanding academic performance. By measuring the range of factors related to academic success (or risk) in the present study, educators can align interventions to students’ unique needs and have a better chance of improving their performance. Indeed, educators need to be able to address students’ psychosocial needs before they manifest in failing grades or dropping out of school. (p. 416)

Access to support services through intervention programs can provide students with support services they, otherwise, may not have access to.

Summary

Chapter II reviewed the previous literature related to how (a) mental health affects students, (b) student academics, behavior and attendance are impacted, and (c) intervention programs support students. Chapter III presents details about participants, methods, procedures and describes this study's research questions, and the procedures for collecting and analyzing qualitative data.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to analyze the perceptions of administrators regarding intervention programs at the high school level. This researcher created 22 interview questions related to the intervention programs. This researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the five administrative staff that were identified as those individuals overseeing the intervention programs at the two comprehensive sites. The design allowed the researcher to analyze the interviews and come up with the significant findings. This chapter is organized into four sections: participants, methods, data analysis, and summary

Participants

The study was conducted in the Central Valley of California. The selection of participants in this study took into consideration the type of school (public comprehensive high school), and administrative staff that oversee the daily functions of the intervention programs at each site. Although there are many intervention programs at the secondary education level, this research specifically studied the intervention programs at the public comprehensive high school level. The sites selected to participate were those most recently established in the district. Administrative personnel that oversee the daily functions of the program on a daily basis were selected for this study. Although the titles of the administrators differed,

their role, participation and collaboration within the intervention program were defined as equally imperative (see Table 1).

Table 1

Interview Participant Demographics

Last Name	School Site	Position	Gender
Administrator 1	High School A	Principal	Female
Administrator 2	High School A	Assistant Principal	Male
Administrator 3	High School B	Principal	Male
Administrator 4	High School B	Assistant Principal	Male
Administrator 5	High School B	Assistant Principal	Male

In the first stage of this study, a qualitative questionnaire was used to conduct one-on-one interviews. The interview included 22 questions related to the intervention programs and its support and services specifically affecting student academics, discipline and attendance. The participants were selected based on the administrative staff that manage and oversee each of the intervention programs at each comprehensive site.

High Schools Selected for Study

High School A and High School B are public comprehensive high schools that were selected for this study. Each site provides programs that support students in a multitude of ways. One high school established “academies” to support students’ academic interests. The other high school established small learning communities (SLC) to support student academic interest. A care center was established at High

School A to support students' needs that impede their academic success. High School B embraced TOPS to support students' needs at their comprehensive site.

High School A

High School A opened on August 28, 2006. The school can accommodate 2,500 students. As of January 2015, the student enrollment was at 2,359. The school has four administrative staff: principal, associate principal of curriculum, assistant principal of counseling and assistant principal of supervision.

High School B

High School B opened on August 11, 2010. For the 2014–2015 school year, the student enrollment was at 2,214. High School B reflects the socioeconomic and ethnic diversity of the city where the school is located. The school has four administrative staff: principal, associate principal of curriculum, assistant principal of counseling and assistant principal of supervision.

Administrators at High School A

Administrator 1, Principal

Administrator 1 has a combination of formal and informal experiences. Formally she earned an Associates in Nursing from a junior college in the Central Valley. She earned her bachelors degree from California State University (CSU), Sacramento in 2002 and Masters in School Administration from CSU-Stanislaus in 2005. Recently, Administrator 1 decided to return to CSU-Stanislaus to pursue her passion of education to further support others. She is taking psychology course work including: Counseling Techniques, Abnormal Psychology and Brain Development.

Administrator 1 served as a nurse at the high school level for 20 years. Eight years later, she was inspired to improve the lives of students through teaching nursing skills to high school students. While teaching, Administrator 1 directed the Medical Office Pathway Program and partnered with 20 local medical businesses who gave student interns the experience necessary to gain a job in the medical field. As a teacher, Administrator 1 participated in piloting a curriculum called, The Real Game, California for the California Department of Education (CDE). The objective was to raise awareness of life beyond high school. Administrator 1 moved into administration 9 years ago. Administrator 1 served as the Assistant Principal of Supervision and Pupil Services at the high school level. Currently, Administrator 1 is the principal where she has implemented two programs specifically designed to be interventions: The care center and the success skills course for high risk students.

Administrator 2, Assistant Principal

Administrator 2 has been in education for 8 years. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from CSU-Stanislaus and a Masters in Educational Leadership, from Brandman University, part of the Chapman University System. Administrator 2 began his teaching career as an English language arts and social science teacher at the junior high level. He also taught, one year of sixth grade and 2 years of high school history. Administrator 2 led the implementation of a credit recovery program, Advance Pathway Academy, at another school in California. Administrator 2 moved into administration at the high school level as the assistant principal of supervision in

2013. In his role as assistant principal of supervision, Administrator 2 became responsible for the implementation of the care center.

Administrators at High School B

Administrator 3, Principal

Administrator 3 has been in education for 28 years. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from California State University, Stanislaus and a masters degree from the University of St. Mary's. Administrator 3 began his career in education as a junior high school social science teacher. After 7 years as a junior high school teacher, Administrator 3 moved into administration at the high school level. Administrator 3 served as an administrator in discipline and in curriculum and instruction.

Administrator 3's extensive experience and commitment to students' success is clearly defined through his approach in supporting educational support programs.

Administrator 4, Assistant Principal

Administrator 4 has been in education for over 20 years. He earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Cincinnati and a master's degree from CSU-Stanislaus. Administrator 4 began his career in education at the elementary level. Administrator 4 taught elementary school in Ohio for 4 years. When he moved to California, he transitioned as a teacher to the junior high level. As a junior high teacher, he taught mathematics and physical education for 7 years. Administrator 4 decided to transition to the high school level. He taught 1 year of mathematics and then moved into administration. As an administrator, Administrator 4 served as an

assistant principal at the junior high level for 5 years and has spent the last 4 years as the assistant principal.

Administrator 5, Assistant Principal

Administrator 5 has been in education for 16 years. He earned a bachelor degree from New Mexico State University and a master's degree from CSU-Stanislaus. Administrator 5 began his career in education as a teacher at the high school level. He taught a range of mathematic classes from Algebra to AP Calculus for 13 years. Administrator 5 moved into administration 3 years ago. Administrator 5 has served as an assistant principal at the high school level.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the perspectives of administrators regarding intervention programs at the high school level. This researcher interviewed the five administrators, identified at the two comprehensive high school sites as the individuals who manage and oversee intervention programs.

This researcher conducted a qualitative study utilizing an interview design. This design was purposeful for this study because this researcher wanted to conduct one-on-one interviews via open ended questions. The 22 open-ended questions provided the interviewees the opportunity to elaborate on their perceptions of intervention programs via their responses.

Approval from the CSU-Stanislaus, Institutional Review Board (UIRB) was received to conduct this study. This researcher identified 22 questions to be asked as part of the administrator interviews. The interview questions were evaluated by this

researchers' chair, Dr. Dennis Sayers. The permission from administrators from the two comprehensive high schools was obtained personally prior to conducting the one-on-one interviews. The participants were provided with an informed consent letter followed by the 22 open-ended interview questions. Every effort was made to maintain confidentiality in this study.

The participants in the interviews were provided with an informed consent letter followed by a copy of the 22 questions that would be asked during the interview. The interview process was accomplished in approximately 25-30 minutes. The participants were aware that the interviews would be one-on-one and would be recorded. These conditions were approved and accepted by the participants, who were identified in Table 1.

Data Analysis

The qualitative design was used to conduct this study and address the following research questions:

RQ1: What types of intervention programs are available at the high school level?

RQ2: What types of mental health services support the intervention programs at the high school level?

RQ3: How do the intervention programs and mental health services provided at the high school level, support student academic achievement, discipline and attendance?

The interview data were analyzed utilizing Dedoose, a web-based qualitative data analysis software that allowed this researcher to import transcriptions of the interviewees' responses and to code and analyze these data. The participants of this study who were interviewed approved and agreed to be referenced throughout this study.

Summary

Chapter III presented in detailed manner the participants in this study, the methods used to collect the data and the data analysis process. Chapter IV will convey the qualitative and quantitative results of this analysis.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of administrators regarding intervention programs at the high school level. A qualitative approach was utilized in conducting this study. The qualitative method involved an interview composed of 22 questions. The interviews were conducted one-on-one with the five administrative staff identified as overseeing the intervention programs at two comprehensive sites. Dedoose, a web-based qualitative data analysis program, was utilized in documenting the interviewees' responses and coding themes to determine the most frequent codes that related to this study. This chapter provides the results of the interviews.

Participant Demographics

This study was conducted at two comprehensive high schools in the Central Valley of California. The participants were selected based on their roles as administrators who oversee the intervention programs at their respective sites. Five administrators were identified and interviewed using the same series of questions regarding the intervention programs offered at their specific school site. Two administrators were interviewed at High School A, and three administrators were interviewed High School B. The interviews were conducted one-on-one and were recorded.

Before the administrators were asked to participate, their permission was secured by this researcher. Five out of the five administrators signed the informed consent letter before beginning the investigation. They were informed of the approximate time needed to complete the one-on-one interviews. The five administrative staff, personnel that oversee the intervention programs, were asked to express their views and opinions about meeting the needs of at risk students. Gender was not considered.

The participants were provided the purpose of this study and asked for their approval to record the interview. The interview questions were designed as open-ended questions. The questions focused on five areas relevant to this study: intervention programs, mental health support services, academic support, discipline and attendance. Each area contained three to four questions specifically related to the area of interest. In this manner, it was the belief of this researcher that the participants would concentrate on each point and gradually move onto the next area.

The research questions that were taken into account in conducting this study and interviews are the following:

RQ1: What type of intervention programs are available at the high school level?

RQ2: What type of mental health services support the intervention programs at the high school level?

RQ3: How do the intervention programs and mental health services provided at the high school level, support student academic achievement, discipline and attendance?

Analysis of Coding

Interview Findings of the First Stage of Analysis

When conducting the interviews, this researcher focused on a series of 22 open ended questions that allowed the participants to explain in depth their perceptions on the intervention programs at the high school level. Six categories of themes were created based on the findings from the interview questionnaire: support programs, referral process, academic setting, academics, discipline and attendance.

After importing the participants' transcribed interviews into Dedoose, the web-based qualitative data analysis software was utilized. This researcher created a list of codes of themes that appeared in more than one interview; thus, the codes were named based on the most frequently occurring topics or ideas that came up from at least two participants (see Table 2 for a complete list of codes).

Table 2

Final Code List

Themes	Created codes
Support programs	Care center, TOPS, internal programs, external programs
Referral process	Referral by teacher/self-referral, referral by parent, referral by school staff
Academic setting	Collaboration among general and special education teachers, general education, alternative education
Academics	Graduation, improvement in academics, interference with academics
Discipline	Student behaviors that impact discipline, school safety
Attendance	Barriers that impact student attendance, Student Attendance Review Board (SARB)

The following section will present rank orders of the different categories.

Excerpts from the interviews are included to exemplify the participants' views and opinions on these topics.

Support Programs

For the category of support program, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create four codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include care center, Turnaround Opportunity School (TOPS), internal programs and external programs. In addition, the researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 3).

Table 3

Rank Order of Support Programs Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Support Programs
1	Care center
2	TOPS
3	Internal programs
4	External programs

Care center. The care center was ranked first in terms of code frequency.

Participants discussed the supports and services that are available to students through the care center at High School A.

The care center is centrally located on the campus of High School A.

Administrator 1 at High School A stated, “The care center is a program that supports student with mental health needs, physical health needs and many more...the idea of the care center is to remove the barriers to success for all students.” Administrator 2 explained the supports and services available to students through the care center.

Administrator 2 stated,

The care center provides mental health support services, marriage and family counseling services, student assistant specialists, adult volunteer mentors, peer resource support and medical support staff such as the school nurse, health clerk and LVN [licensed vocational nurse]. These supports are all housed within the care center office.

Among that among the objectives of the care center, Administrator 2 explained that the goal is to provide students a place to go where they can ask for help or talk to someone about all things going on in their life. Administrator 1 shared that the care center continues to seek partnerships from community agencies to better support students on campus.

TOPS. The TOPS was ranked first in terms of code frequency. Participants discussed the supports and services that are available to students through TOPS at High School B. TOPS is housed at High School B. TOPS is a program that works with freshman and sophomore students. Administrator 4 noted, “TOPS is a program designed to support students that are at risk of dropping out of school.” Administrator 5 further explained,

The idea behind TOPS is to help students who are at risk of dropping out of school, are at risk of being transferred to a continuation school due to lack of credits or have behavior issues. TOPS gives students a second chance to get their grades back on track, receive support services to address behavior needs, all while staying on a high school campus.

Administrator 4 shared that TOPS is intended to be a preventative measure. When students participate in the TOPS, students have the opportunity to increase their understanding of the relationship between education and a career. He also elaborated that TOPS assures that students will receive an opportunity to change behavior and receive support with credit recovery in order to get back on track to graduate.

Administrator 3 explained the counseling component that is a part of this program, aside from the academic support it is intended to provide students.

Administrator 3 noted, “We have counseling support services that are provided through the Center for Human Services Agency...they provide students with decision making trainings, anger management counseling and support counseling.”

Internal programs. Internal programs was ranked third in terms of code frequency. Participants discussed the internal supports and services that are available at each high school campus. Administrator 1 discussed how students are preparing to become peer mentors in order to provide support to other peers at High School A. Administrator 1 stated,

The internal programs that we have this year I'm excited about. We have about 30 kids who are seniors and we sent them to the second annual County Peer Mentorship Program. We are training these 30 students to be peer mentors within our school. So not only do we have staff on campus who can support our students and be there for interventions but we have students that will be equipped to talk to students.

Administrator 2 further described the Link Crew program. Link Crew is a student lead program that helps new students when they arrive on campus. The Link Crew leaders take new students on tours around the campus, help get their books, access their lockers and help them find their way around campus. Administrator 2 shared that the Link Crew Program has helped new students make connections with others on campus, which makes the transition to a new school less stressful.

Administrator 3 acknowledged that school staff such as the school psychologist, school nurse and health clerk all play an important role when it comes to providing support services for all students at High School B. Administrator 4 further explained that the health clerk plays a critical role in collecting important medical information regarding each student's health and medical background.

External programs. External programs was ranked fourth in terms of code frequency. Participants discussed the external supports and services that are available at each high school campus. The three top mentioned programs include: Center for Human Services (CHS), Woman's Haven Center and Family Concerned Counseling.

Center for Human Services. CHS provides mental health services, shelter services, youth services, school based services, substance abuse treatment and is a family resource center. Administrator 5 explained that CHS provides services on multiple levels to students and their families. Administrator 5 elaborated,

The Center for Human Services helps students, parents and families. If the parents are having financial problems or employment problems, the Center for Human Services is able to get them in contact with different organizations that can help with these areas.

Administrator 3 illustrated his perceptions about continued support for students from CHS. Administrator 3 acknowledged that students further benefit from counseling services from CHS, on campus, even after the completion of the program. He explained that frequently, although the academic issues are resolved, there are other aspects related to the student that need continued support. He shared that

having someone on campus with the support services that CHS offers, is a benefit to TOPS students and all the students on campus.

Administrator 1 noted, “We have counseling support from the Center for Human Services.” Administrator 1 acknowledged that the staff from CHS have helped in creating awareness of mental health and the need for mental health supports and interventions district wide.

Woman’s Haven Center. Woman’s Haven Center provides case management, behavioral health services, legal services, children and teen support services, individual and group counseling. Administrator 1 described how the Woman’s Haven Center has partnered with the care center to bring awareness to students about important topics that they are personally experiencing. Administrator 1 noted, “There are a lot of issues that are non-spoken issues. In working with the Woman’s Havens Center, we have been able to bring awareness to these non-spoken issues such as dating violence.” Administrator 1 noted that the partnership with the Woman’s Haven Center, has provided the Care Center with many more resources to offer students.

Family Concerned Counseling. Family Concerned Counseling seeks to assist in developing emotional, social, and physical well-being. The therapists specialize in working with adolescents, children and their families. Administrator 1 explained, “We have a partnership with Family Concerned Counseling...they have provided the care center with an intern staff for marriage and family therapy.” Administrator 1 illustrated how the intern staff have been an immense support for the care center. The

intern staff has provided an extraordinary amount of counseling hours for students on campus at no cost to students or their families. These hours of counseling have provided students with much needed support and guidance.

Referral Process

For the category of referral process, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create four codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include referral by teacher/self-referral, referral by parent, and referral by school staff. Two of the codes were ranked first because they were mentioned the same number of times: referral by teacher/self-referral. Referral by parent was ranked second and referral by school staff was ranked third. In addition, the researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 4).

Table 4

Rank Order of Referral Process Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Referral Process
1	Referral by Teacher/Self-Referral
2	Referral by Parent
3	Referral by school staff

Referral by teacher/self-referral. Two codes, referral by teacher and self-referral were ranked first in terms of frequency of applied codes. The participants that referred to this area of the study described the referral process made by teachers and by self-referral.

Administrator 1 explained the teacher referral process. Administrator 1 indicated, “A teacher can refer a student by sending him or her to the Care Center.” Administrator 1 further illustrated the teacher referral process. She stated, “We have a pass. It’s called a ‘fast pass’ so teachers can use it to send a student immediately to the care center.” Administrator 1 shared that in the event a student was to become upset or angry in a classroom, in order to avoid disruption to the learning progress, the teachers use the ‘fast pass’ to have the student referred to the care center immediately for assistance. This procedure has allowed for instruction to continue while getting assistance for the student in need.

Administrator 2 illustrated another way in which the referral process by a teacher is made at High School A. Administrator 2 explained, “Teachers contact the care center via phone or email regarding a student.” Administrator 1 further discussed the process that follows after a referral has been received via phone or email. He explained that the office staff proceeds with the referral by sending a staff member to pick up the student from a class that will be the least disruptive to his or her schedule. He further noted that individual students are brought to the care center to discuss anything that they might be experiencing.

Administrator 3 described the referral process at High School B for TOPS. Administrator 3 stated, “Referrals are done a lot of different ways...parent referral, teacher referral, and self-referral.” Administrator 3 further acknowledged that frequently it is a teacher who initially makes contact and requests support for individual students and any specific needs.

Administrator 1 elaborated on the self-referral process for the care center. Administrator 1 explained, “We have students that walk in every single day to refer themselves for a myriad of reasons.” Administrator 1 discussed that students are aware of the services the care center offers because of the outreach the program at High School A. Students know they can ask for help.

The referral process is intended to be non-evasive for students identified as needing help by the teacher during class and/or the students who advocate for themselves and requesting help. Referral by teacher and self-referral were ranked first in this area of study. The participants discussed those processes and their perceptions about how they are used to provide support. At the same time, participants discussed the importance of the process to be as non-evasive as possible for the student involved and for other students in the classroom.

Referral by parent. Referral by parent was ranked second in terms of frequency of applied codes. The participants that discussed this area of study described their experience as administrators when parents seek support for their student(s). Administrator 1 explained, “We have parents that call and they are concerned about their child. Parents ask for either a counselor or a peer mentor or somebody to meet with their child because of a concern.” Parent referrals are important because they provide the school and staff the opportunity to connect with the student as soon as the referral is received. Administrator 1 shared that not connecting with the student may result in something that can be prevented.

Referral by parents ranked second in this area of study. The participants discussed the processes and their perceptions about how the processes are used to provide support to students. Referrals made by parents are imperative. These referrals provide the school and staff with essential information to provide appropriate services and interventions for the student.

Referral by school staff. Referral by school staff was ranked third in terms of code frequency. Participants described the process used when students are referred by school staff to the intervention program TOPS or to the care center for supports and services.

At High School B, the administrative team collaborates with the school counselors and school staff to determine which supports and services the student will need to be successful. Administrator 5 elaborated on the referral process when determining if a student would benefit from participating in TOPS. Administrator 5 described,

The counselor will talk with the administration that oversees TOPS. The counselor will let them know that they feel the student is a good candidate for TOPS. A student would be a good candidate because of their low grades or maybe there are other emotional or discipline type issues that need to be addressed.

Administrator 5 further illustrated that when students are referred by school staff, or by themselves, the administrator immediately brings the referred student to the attention of the school counselor. The team of staff collaborate to address all

aspects of the students' needs in order to determine if the intervention program will meet the needs of the student.

Administrator 2 noted how High School A meets weekly in the care center to discuss students who have checked in with a "fast pass." Administrator 2 explained that the "fast pass" indicates the student was referred by a teacher. The goal of the team is to determine if there is a need for further support. If so, the team will address how to meet those needs. Otherwise the goal is to ensure the student has received the support they need at the time of the referral and will remain in class and not miss anymore instructional time. Administrator 2 noted, "This is especially important if the same student keeps getting sent to the care center with a fast pass."

Referral process was the fifth theme discussed amongst the five participants. This theme was accessed by questions regarding administrators' perceptions on intervention programs at the high school level. Four codes were created by Dedoose to identify the frequency of individual code applications and the frequency. The staff referral process ensures a collaborative approach to provide students with appropriate services to meet their needs.

Academic Settings

For the category of academic settings, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create three codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include collaboration among general education and special education teachers, general education, and alternative education. In addition, this researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 5).

Table 5

Rank Order of Academic Settings Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Academic Setting
1	Collaboration amongst general education teachers and special education teachers
2	General education
3	Alternative education

Collaboration amongst general education teachers and special education teachers. Collaboration amongst general education teachers and special education teachers was ranked first in terms of code frequency. Participants described the collaboration efforts that are made to work together in supporting students.

Administrator 2 shared that care center staff and administration work collaboratively to review the cumulative files of students who have self-referred or who have been referred by a parent or school staff. Administrator 2 explained that sometimes the school psychologist is invited to attend the meetings. Together, the team of care center staff, administration and school psychologist consider interventions, supports and services that may be offered by the care center, classroom teachers, and the community service agencies.

Administrator 3 discussed the collaboration efforts involving all staff at High School B and how the small learning communities (SLC) support this process:

We have built in the opportunity for teachers sharing the same group of students when we meet in collaboration time to spend time talking about

individual students that might need some supports. We actually call that intervention time when we talk about possible needs for our kids. That's the regular education teachers within the small learning communities that are talking about kids that they share and issues that maybe come up over the course of the year.

Administrator 4 gave an example to describe how collaboration amongst general education teachers and special education teachers further support students with the shift to common core. Administrator 4 noted that not all programs have made the shift to common core. As a result many students are struggling academically because the programs are not aligned. Administrator 4 acknowledged, "So we are learning. Staff is working together and finding alternative options to help support students during the transition to common core."

Participants discussed the collaboration processes currently in place that support teachers and school staff in assisting students and addressing their needs. The explanation of the process and the example clarified how this process is essential in providing teachers and school staff the opportunity to come together, discuss and explore supports and services for students within the intervention programs.

General education. General education was ranked second in terms of frequency of applied codes. Participants discussed the supports and interventions that assist students in a general education setting. Administrator 3 illustrated,

We have intervention programs designed to help all students that are struggling in math and English. They are support classes that we have in

place to help students in those core subjects so that they can be academically successful. After school tutoring has also provided support for students who need a bit more explanation to fully grasp the concepts of the curriculum.

Administrator 5 further elaborated that TOPS has supported students in mainstreaming back into the general education classroom. Administrator 5 noted, “We had 12 students graduate back to the comprehensive high school site in one year.” In further detail, Administrator 4 gave an example about returning students to the comprehensive site after receiving support services from TOPS:

The rate TOPS is able to get students back on track to graduate is astounding. TOPS students have recovered missing credits and worked on behaviors through counseling. For example, sometimes we get sophomores that are in need of completing 45 credits to be on track to graduate...TOPS has been very successful in getting those students back on track.

Participants discussed the intervention programs, supports and services and how those assist students in getting back on track for graduation and returning to the classroom.

Alternative education. Alternative education was ranked third in terms of frequency of applied codes. Alternative education programs within the district were mentioned in the excerpts pertaining to alternative education. Participants explained the need to provide support services in order to prevent students from being removed from a comprehensive site and transferred to alternative education programs.

Administrator 5 explained that TOPS was created as an opportunity for students to

address behavior issues and remediate credits versus moving to an alternative education site.

Administrator 5 noted that prior to the TOPS program, students who were behind in credits were sent to an off-site continuation program to recover credits. With the TOPS program, for example, sophomores who were behind in credits and were likely not going to graduate, had the opportunity to participate in TOPS to recover lost credits and eventually return to the comprehensive high school program. Administrator 4 also stated that the students received services and supports on site where they are known among staff. This feature contributes to the staff's efforts to help their own students succeed and return to the comprehensive program. Administrator 5 further illustrated how the intervention program, TOPS, supports students' academic needs without having to remove them from the comprehensive site.

Participants discussed alternative education and the number of supports and services that have recently been implanted to help students, while at the comprehensive high school site. Participants stated that although alternative education is necessary to support students achieve personal and academic goals, alternative education programs need to be located at the comprehensive high school site. In doing so, students have the opportunity to see the vast opportunities they have that otherwise would be missing.

Academics

For the category of academics, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create three codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include graduation, improvement in academics and interference with academics. In addition, this researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 6).

Table 6

Rank Order of Academics Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Academics
1	Graduation
2	Improvement in Academics
3	Interference with Academics

Graduation. Graduation was ranked first in terms of frequency of applied codes. Graduation was discussed the most often for this category. Among the number of objectives that apply to academics, graduating students from high school is an essential component of education.

Administrator 1 described the data from previous years regarding the supports the intervention programs have been able to implement to assist students in graduating. Administrator 1 noted,

The data show that about 50% of the students who had two or more F's, are now passing all their classes; 50% less students have two or more F's. So while 50% still are failing, the other 50% are not.

Administrator 1 further acknowledged that teachers had a difficult time accepting the high number of students who were failing. However the principal was encouraging and actually praised teachers for the progress their students had made when the number of students failing dramatically dropped by 50%.

Administrator 3 explained his perceptions on the skills that students need to develop in order to be successful. Administrator 3 stated,

We are trying to get students to manage their day. This will help students to be successful in a school setting, on a daily basis and, obviously, the end result is to get passing grades and then ultimately graduate with a high school diploma.

Administrator 5 further supported Administrator 3 by discussing the essential skills to be successful and graduate. Administrator 3 described, “One of the goals is to get kids back on track and provide them with the skills and knowledge that they need to be successful at the comprehensive high school as they graduate from the programs and high school.” Administrator 5 noted,

Every quarter we meet and we review student information. We run the reports on all the students. We can see how many credits the student have earned and how many more they need to be on track to graduate.

Administrator 5 stated, “The ultimate goal of the intervention programs is to graduate more students.” It is important to identify students who are not on track to graduate in order to “catch” those who need supports and services to help them achieve this goal.

Improvement in academics. Improvement in academics was ranked second in terms of frequency of applied codes. Participants referred to the improvement in academics on multiple facets. Administrator 1 described, “I think that we are pushing really hard on instruction to make it more student centered rather than teacher centric.” Administrator 1 illustrated her perceptions on the impact supports and interventions have on student improvement in academics. Administrator 1 stated,

I think the other things that have helped academic improvement would be the success skills classes. We felt like students in special education had a teacher advisor who really cared about them and helped them find success. So if we looked at our high risk students who were not finding success academically, meaning that students had two or more F's, a teacher advisor would be assigned through a success skills class to help support their academics and help them get back on track.

Administrator 1 further described how the success skills class improves student academics and provides a foundation for future success in academics. Administrator 1 stated,

The success skills class, in my hope, is going to teach students skills to be studious. Perhaps the student did not fully learn those skills at school or at home. So, by teaching students those skills through the success skills, students can use those skills while they finish high school and use those skills throughout their life as they go on to college or a career.

Administrator 2 described his perceptions on the objective of the care center and how the program supports academics. Administrator 2 stated,

The objective of the care center is to address any and all barriers to student learning so that students have, in their private lives and school lives, the skills that they need so they can be academically successful.

Administrator 4 explained his perceptions on the improvement in academics by sharing the benefits of the APEX program. The APEX program allows students to participate in online based classes in addition to their curriculum classes allowing them to remediate missing credits or classes. Administrator 4 discussed,

With APEX, students really take advantage of the system to get back on track. Some students take their time and get back on track, but as I said, we have had about 60% success rate on getting students back on track, and that number will very likely go up. We continue to monitor every semester.

Providing academic support is essential to providing students with the opportunity to excel. If students are improving academically, they are learning and applying important skills that move them through their educational career. Otherwise, interference with academics may result in lost opportunities for students.

Interferences with academics. Interferences with academics was ranked third in terms of frequency of applied codes. Participants described how the interferences within academics proved to be challenging. By identifying those interferences and providing resources, services and the supports through the intervention programs, interferences are being addressed.

Administrator 2 described, “What we do to determine if we're meeting the needs of students is that we hold weekly meetings that I run with the care center staff.” He further explained that once the team identifies those needs, the care center can provide the supports and services through the intervention program to assist the student.

Administrator 5 elaborated on his perceptions about circumstances that interfere with academics and affect student learning. He described how supports enable students to feel successful, rather than hinder their academics. Administrator 5 stated,

We can get to the issues of why students are struggling, and a lot of times you see that students don't want to come to school because of issues they are going through. So we get them support and provide them with someone to talk to. Sometimes we decide to give students a success skills class when we do reviews at our weekly meetings and we determine that they are struggling academically. We can add an elective to their schedule, which also helps them feel more successful and then come to school more often.

Interferences with academics can immensely impact student learning. The participants that referred to this category shared their perceptions and gave examples regarding current practices in place that provide support for students.

Academics was the fourth theme discussed amongst the five participants. This theme was accessed by questions regarding administrators' perceptions on the impact of intervention programs, supports, services have on student academics at the

high school level. Three codes were created by “Dedoose” to identify the frequency of individual code applications and the frequency.

Discipline

For the category of discipline, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create two codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include student behaviors that impact student discipline and school safety. In addition, this researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 7).

Table 7

Rank Order of Discipline Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Discipline
1	Student behaviors that impact student discipline
2	School safety

Student behaviors that impact student discipline. Student behaviors was ranked first in terms of frequency of applied codes. The participants shared their perceptions regarding behaviors that interfere in and out of the classroom that affect student learning and how the intervention programs and their supports and services have assisted students. Administrator 3 discussed how inappropriate behaviors have been reduced through the support from TOPS and the other intervention programs available at High School B:

We have an intervention room. We switched over from our ‘In-School-Suspension’ room to more of a proactive way of trying to deal with students

that are having difficulties in class. So in that program students have a chance to read articles about better ways of making decisions and other activities that help the student reflect on their personal behavior. Our intervention room is another strategy that we have used to help students deescalate behaviors before it becomes a discipline issue.

Administrator 2 at High School B attributes the decrease of behavior and discipline, to the supports from the care center. Administrator 2 stated,

Our discipline over the last two years has decreased. With the care center, students will go there and report issues that they feel are going on, so staff are able to intervene before students break out into a fight or have a conflict with their peers; we can bring them together and we can mediate any conflicts they have going on, before it becomes a discipline issue.

Administrator 2 discussed the drastic drop in the number of referrals over the last 3 years. Administrator 2 noted, “For the 2011–2012 school year, 6,590 referrals were submitted. For the 2012–2013 school year 4,909 referrals were submitted. For the 2013–2014 school year 3,995 referrals were submitted.” Administrator 2 also acknowledged the drastic drop in the number of fights on campus. Administrator 2 shared, “For 2011–2012, 58 fights were recorded. For 2012–2013, 44 fights were recorded. For 2013–2014, 17 fights were recorded.” Administrator 2 stated that in part he gives recognition to the care center for its efforts to address behaviors and issues that might result in disciplinary action. He stated that perhaps other factors

may contribute, but the effort of the care center needs to be recognized. Since the care centers implementation, discipline numbers have drastically dropped.

The perspectives of the participants regarding this area of this study contribute to the decrease in discipline issues based on the intervention programs and their support services. The care center and TOPS have been an essential part in ensuring that students' behavior needs are met.

School safety. School safety was ranked second in terms of code frequency. Participants discussed their perceptions on school safety and how school safety also impacts school culture. Administrator 2 acknowledged, "School safety is one of the most important components of the school culture at High School A." He further noted that when students feel they are safe at school, they attend school regularly and they are more involved. He further stated that when students feel they are not safe at school, they miss out on many of the activities school has to offer because of fear and other reasons. He shared, "...and that's not right for any student to feel that way. So it's our job to work together to make sure that our students feel safe at school." He explained that the care center has assisted with providing counselors for students to talk to, when they feel they are not safe for any given reason.

Administrator 1 illustrated her vision for the care center in the near future. Administrator 1 shared, "I would like to see us do more on school safety...I believe we could do more to provide students a sense of security when coming to school." Administrator 1 further discussed that the care center will continue to seek

partnerships with community service agencies, like CHS, Woman’s Haven Center and Family Concerned Counseling, that have been important resources.

Principals’ perceptions regarding the importance of implementing supports for students to feel safe at school and outside of the school are identified in the number of supports and services that are implemented through their intervention programs.

Attendance

For the category of attendance, Dedoose allowed this researcher to create two codes that belong to this area of study. Those codes include barriers that impact student attendance and SARB. In addition, the researcher utilized Dedoose in identifying the highest frequency of applied codes (see Table 8).

Table 8

Rank Order of Attendance Code Application

Code Application Rank Order	Attendance
1	Barriers that impact student attendance
2	SARB

Barriers that impact student attendance. Barriers that Impact student attendance was ranked first in terms of frequency of applied codes. This area of study was discussed the most often for this category. Participants discussed that the barriers that impact student attendance vary. Administrator 5 acknowledged, “Attendance should not be the factor that impedes student learning. We need to find ways to address attendance issues so that students can come to school.”

Administrator 2 acknowledged that student attendance is a crucial component of students' academic success regardless of what class or program they are a part of. Administrator 2 noted that there are a number of reasons as to why students have poor attendance. He stated that many times students stop trying when they see "bad" grades or when they know they are failing classes. Administrator 2 also discussed that if students do not feel safe at school, they will not attend school for fear that something will happen. Administrator 2 stated, "The care center has been an important factor in supporting students that are habitually absent for an array of reasons." The care center provides many services, but the care center also seeks support from community service agencies to support students who are frequently absent from school.

Administrator 5 illustrated the barriers that impact student attendance at High School B and TOPS. Administrator 5 explained, "Mostly students get to high school, and they find themselves failing classes and then they don't want to come to school anymore." He further elaborated on that this needs to be addressed so that student feel that they have support rather than feel shame.

Barriers that stand in the way of students attending school can be detrimental to a student's education. Finding ways to address those barriers through the supports, services and intervention programs is imperative to ensure that students will have the opportunity to excel academically.

Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). SARB was ranked second for this category. SARB intends to provide support to students and their families, in order to help students return to school and have healthy school attendance.

Administrator 2 noted the district goal for attendance. Each site is responsible for meeting that percentage. Administrator 2 stated,

The district goal for attendance is 98%. For the 2012–2013 school year school, school attendance reached 94.7%. For the 2013–2014 school year, attendance reached 95.4%. The increase in attendance toward reaching the district goal is partly credited to the care center.

Administrator 2 shared, “We always want to see improvement, even if it is in small quantities. Those small increases mean there is improvement and we are helping our students.”

If a student is habitually tardy or absent SARB will intervene. Administrator 5 explained that when SARB intervenes, an attendance contract is made between the district, parent and school. Administrator 5 further discussed that the contract provides formality to the importance of the student’s attendance. Administrator 5 acknowledged, “We have had several students who have come to us with SARB contracts for attendance. As of this year, we have had no violations, so their attendance has been doing really well.” The SARB fully supports each of the comprehensive high schools. The supports that the review board provides families and students, helps students improve their attendance.

Attendance was the fourth theme discussed amongst the participants. This theme was accessed by questions regarding administrators' perceptions on intervention programs at the high school level. Two codes were created by Dedoose to identify the frequency of individual code applications and the frequency.

Discipline was the sixth and final theme discussed amongst the five participants. This theme was accessed by questions regarding administrators' perception on intervention programs at the high school level. Participants discussed their perspectives on the impact behaviors have on students and student discipline. Two codes were created by Dedoose to identify the frequency of individual code applications and the frequency.

Summary

Chapter IV presented the findings of the qualitative data. The results were based upon interviews with administrators and analyzed by utilizing the Dedoose web-based qualitative data analysis program. Six major themes were identified based on the data collected from the qualitative interviews. The findings of each stage were discussed and analyzed. Chapter V will further discuss the conclusions of the mixed methods research, and may include recommendations for future research regarding this area of study.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify the perceptions of administrators regarding intervention programs at the high school level. A qualitative design was used in this research study. This researcher conducted the one-on-one interviews to gather data. The questions provided the interviewees the opportunity to elaborate on their opinions regarding the intervention programs at their high school site. This qualitative study focused on the five major themes. The themes were: intervention programs, mental health, academic support, discipline and attendance.

Research Questions

The interview questions guided this researcher in examining the administrators' perceptions on intervention programs at the high school level. The questions also identified essential factors and aspects that have impacted the need for support from intervention programs and mental health services on student academics, discipline and attendance at the high school level. The three research questions that guided this qualitative study were:

RQ1: What type of intervention programs are available at the high school level? This study identified two programs: the care center and Turnaround

Opportunity School (TOPS). The care center is centrally located on the campus of High School A. The care center is a program that supports students with mental

health and physical health needs. Supports and services are housed in the same location. The objective of the care center is to identify and address the needs of students and provide support services. The idea is to provide support and services to break down barriers that hinder student learning and academic success.

The TOPS is located at High School B. TOPS is a program that works with freshman and sophomore students. TOPS is a program designed to support students that are at risk of dropping out of school. The idea behind TOPS is to help students who are at risk of dropping out of school, are at risk of being transferred to a continuation school due to lack of credits experiencing behavior issues. TOPS gives students a second chance to get their grades back on track, receive support services to address behavior needs, while staying on a high school campus.

RQ2: What type of mental health services support the intervention programs at the high school level? The care center provides mental health support services such as student counseling and family support counseling. The care center has partnered with Center for Human Services (CHS), Woman's Haven Center and Family Concerned Counseling to provide counseling support services to address a multitude of student needs. The care center also has assistant specialists, adult volunteer mentors, peer resource support and medical support staff such as the school nurse, health clerk and licensed vocational nurse (LVN) to assist students with personal and medical needs.

TOPS has partnered with CHS for counseling support for students. Also, TOPS has partnered with the CHS Agency to provide students with the opportunity to

receive training on decision making, anger management counseling, support counseling and academic guidance.

RQ3: How do the intervention programs and mental health services provided at the high school level, support student academic achievement, discipline and attendance? The care center's objective is to break down any barriers that hinder student academic performance, behaviors that are disruptive and can lead to disciplinary action and obstacles that impede students to attend school daily. In collaboration with staff, parents and fellow students, the care center identifies students with academic struggles, behavior and attendance issues. The care center assists students by using the support of internal and external services, such as local community agencies-CHS, Woman's Haven Center and Family Concerned Counseling, to provide peer tutoring, after school academic support, counseling services and family support services to the students to help them overcome the barriers that are obstructing their success.

TOPS provides students the opportunity to use an internal curriculum system to assist students with credit recovery. The curriculum program that TOPS offers, allows students to get back on track by making up credits they had previously failed to attain. In addition, TOPS collaborates with the CHS to provide counseling. The counseling services assist students with developing anger management and social skills that will help them remain in the classroom and out of trouble. TOPS and CHS also collaborate to address attendance issues and/or concerns to ensure that students are attending school daily.

Interpretation of Qualitative Findings

Dedoose offers a variety of features that allowed this researcher to identify more complex results from interview datasets. One of those interesting features is filtering the data based on user, descriptor, code and media. In this study, this researcher filtered the data through the variables that were provided by the participants during the one-on-one interviews and allowed qualitative analysis of the relationships between meaningful patterns and specific codes. Also, the administrative role within the intervention program was an essential variable that was considered in conducting the interviews.

Interpretation of Second Stage Findings

Data were collected regarding the intervention programs at each of the comprehensive high schools that were involved in this study. The data that were collected provided meaningful information that gave this researcher an opportunity to focus attention on some significant areas. The data, in great part, served as support for many of the significant key points that were brought up during the interviews. Furthermore, the data provided supporting documentation that administrators referred to during their one-on-one interviews.

Recommendations for Future Research

The limitation of the small size of the administrator sample needs to be addressed in order to provide more accurate perspectives from administrators regarding intervention programs at the high school level. A larger sample size may result in research and provide important information that more fully explores aspects,

barriers, ideas and needs regarding the impact of intervention programs and mental health services on academics, discipline, and attendance. Extending the size of the qualitative study's sample will give more accurate findings. Consideration of gender, personnel and the type of school (public, non public, continuation, alternative) may lead future studies to discern if, and in what way, these factors have influenced the perspectives of administrators.

This qualitative study included five participants. Five administrators were interviewed. Administrators' participation and involvement with intervention programs were the only variables that were taken into account. The size of the qualitative sample should be expanded to better representative perspectives. More extensive variables should be considered, such as types of school, involvement of personnel, level of training of personnel involved, level of education of personnel involved, and gender in order to more fully study the differences and similarities between variables, giving a broader representation of influencing factors. This study had a notable diversity of participants that generated important assessments of administrators' perceptions regarding the intervention programs at the high school level. Future research still needs to address more aspects, ideas, and opinions that can be generalized to a larger population of administrators and high school level intervention programs.

This researcher conducted one-on-one interviews for each participant. Each interview was approximately 25-30 minutes in length. A second interview is highly recommended in the future research, which will allow clarification of important

points that were not understood clearly in the first interview. When the participants are given a chance to look at their transcripts, they often feel the need to add something and clarify some points, which may change their answers, and importantly, to assure they are comfortable and satisfied with their transcribed interviews. Additionally, it is also helpful for the researcher to review the first transcripts and highlight some areas that need to be discussed in the second interview. After transcribing the first interview, this researcher may misunderstand some unclear answers or need to follow up with important questions that can be meaningful and interesting for this area of the research. For the previous reasons, a second interview is needed to get deeper and accurate knowledge, leading to a useful future study that extends the findings of the present study.

Summary

One-on-one interviews were conducted using 22 questions. The interviews focused on administrators' perceptions on intervention programs at each high school site that was selected for this study. The exploratory sequential design was perfectly fitted to this study, allowing this researcher to explore perspectives held by administrators at the high school level.

The world of education is constantly evolving. An educational setting, the classroom, school environment and culture look very different today than what it did years ago. The needs of students go beyond academics. Those needs may include mental health, behavior, emotional, medical support and many others. All of these needs have one thing in common, they affect students in more ways than one. As an

educational system and as an educator, we owe it to students to provide intervention programs, like the care center and TOPS, to support the needs of students. By providing supports and services to address the needs of students, academic and personal, students will excel. Furthermore, students will be given the opportunity to achieve beyond their own expectations. On the contrary, if the needs of students go unnoticed and/or ignored, the consequences could be devastating.

This study highlighted important student needs and how intervention supports and service programs are currently addressing those needs. Perceptions of administrative staff that participated clearly support the intervention supports and services. It is never too early to begin implementing these supports and services. It is the responsibility of the educational system to implement and support intervention programs, supports and services to ensure that each individual student will have the best opportunity to shine and excel academically and personally.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

HIGH SCHOOL A AND HIGH SCHOOL B

Origin of Program:

1. Describe the intervention programs available to students on your campus?
2. Tell me about the history of the intervention program. How did it come about? How long has the program been in place?
3. Explain the objective the intervention program strives to accomplish?
4. Tell me about the personnel that work, assist and oversee the program?

Student Services:

1. Describe the internal and external resources available to students via the intervention program?
2. Explain how students access the intervention program?
3. Tell me about the population the intervention program serves?
4. Describe the data source used to obtain and track information about the population the intervention program serves?
5. Describe additional information the data source conveys about meeting or not meeting the needs of students?

Impact:

1. Describe the data source and the information that has been collected to address the impact the intervention program has made on academics, attendance and discipline
2. Explain the length of time that data has been collected.
3. What does the data say about the intervention program impact on student academic performance?
4. In your opinion, explain how the intervention programs have impacted student academic performance?
5. What does the data say about the intervention programs impact on student attendance?
6. In your opinion, explain why and how the intervention programs have impacted student attendance?
7. What does the data say about the intervention programs impact on student discipline?

8. In your opinion, explain why and how the intervention programs have impacted student discipline?
9. Describe the impact the intervention programs have on school culture?
10. In your opinion, explain why and how the intervention programs are effective and/or not effective?
11. What is the vision for the intervention programs in the future?
12. Describe what you would implement to further support the intervention programs?
13. Give details about additional factors you would like to acknowledge regarding the intervention programs that were not previously mention?

APPENDIX B:
INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant:

You are being asked to participate in a research project that is being done to fulfill requirements for a Master's Thesis in Education at CSU Stanislaus. Through the process of interviewing school administrators we hope to learn (1) What type of mental health and/or intervention services are available at the high school level that provide support for students struggling emotionally? (2) How do the mental health and/or intervention services provided at the high school level, support student learning? (3) How do the mental health and/or intervention services provided at the high school level, support academic achievement? If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to answer interview questions. The interviews will be one on one with me. In addition, I will meet one on one with three other school site administrators. Each interview will be between 45 to 60 minutes.

There are no known risks to you for your participation in this study. **There are no precautions that you will need to take.**

It is possible that you will not benefit directly by participating in this study; however, information that you can provide will add to the knowledge base that will help students and teachers create and promote a safe and positive learning environment for all. The information collected will be protected from all inappropriate disclosure under the law. All data will be kept in a secure location. I understand that my schools program and my participation will be clearly identified.

There is no cost to you beyond the time and effort required to complete the procedure(s) described above. Your participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate

in this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. You may withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

If you agree to participate, please indicate this decision by signing below. If you have any questions about this research project please contact me, Vanessa G. Chavez-Valdez, at 209-550-3400 ext. 2094 or my faculty sponsor, Dennis Sayers at 209-664-6721. If you have any questions regarding your rights and participation as a research subject, please contact the UIRB Administrator by phone (209) 667-3784 or email IRBAdmin@csustan.edu.

Sincerely,
Vanessa G. Chavez-Valdez
Special Education Teacher
Enochs High School-Modesto City Schools
209-550-3400 ext. 2094
Valdez.v@monet.k12.ca.us

Participant Signature

Date