**How Does Engaging with On-campus Systems of Care Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders**

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Supervision of Educational Leadership

Auburn, Alabama
December 10, 2022

Key Words: Wraparound Services, Graduation Rates, Systems of Care

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Abstract

For decades, schools have sought to level inequities facing students through programs focusing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: feed them and keep them safe and they can succeed. Though traditional services including free and reduced meal programs are helpful, they have not proven successful toward increasing graduation rates for students of color or from lower socioeconomic communities, which continue to measure below the average for the population. I argue that as school leaders face increased societal and political pressures to improve equitable access to educational programs and to increase graduation rates in their communities, they must embrace Freire's convictions to build school programs that challenge oppression, injustice, and disproportionate power in schools by providing quality educational experiences (Shor & Freire, 1987) and recognizing each student's expertise to explain their own life experiences (Singer & Pezone, 2003). This explanatory case study utilized semi-structured open-ended interviews to gain understanding of how participation in an extended wraparound systems of care model located on the campus of a southeastern Title-1 high school supported students with on-time graduation. Further, these young adults shared their life experiences and subsequent support for school leaders across the nation to implement similar programs to meet the socioeconomic, mental health, and other needs of students and families in their communities.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Auburn University Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology faculty and utmost appreciation to my committee members, who guided my educational journey and completion of this dissertation. In addition, special thanks to my colleagues, Dr. Rona Roberts, Melody Shelton, and Dr. Michelle Cantrell, who supported me throughout this process. Earning a Doctor of Philosophy in Education has been a life-long dream that I promised my mother, Dorothy Agnes Mehlrose I would achieve. I know she is smiling down from the Heavens, along with my beautiful son, Brenden Charles who was also taken from this world before his time. This dissertation is dedicated to them and my amazing daughter, Breanne Marie. I hope this encourages you to reach for the stars and fulfill your dreams. You, my love, are an inspiration and the reason I am here today. Seeing you smile with pride as I received my Educational Specialist Degree was the final push toward this goal.

To my participants: Anna, Ashley, Dee, and Tyrone, thank you for being vulnerable and trusting me to hear and tell your stories; it was an honor and privilege.

To my husband, Dr. Richard Paige, thank you for encouraging me to reach for this dream and being by my side always.

To my family: Eric and Alex Paige, Angie and Barry Switzer, Dawn and Jim Drass, Katelin and Brad Narlow, Cameron Switzer, and Jack Mehlrose I am blessed beyond measure for each and every one of you.

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ACGR         Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

SOC         Systems of Care

GED         General Education Diploma

NCES         The National Center for Educational Statistics

CCRPI         College and Career Readiness Performance Indicator

FCS         Full-Service Community Schools

SES         Socioeconomic Status

ESEA         Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

LEA         Local Education Agencies

FSCS         Full-Service Community Schools

NCLB         No Child Left Behind

NSLP         National School Lunch Program

ACT         American College Test

AP         Advanced Placement

IB         International Baccalaureate

MTP-S         My Teaching Partner Secondary

GEAR-UP         Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

AMP         Achieve My Plan

TCP         The Centergy Project

RESA         Regional Educational Service Association

SMC         Synthesized Member Checking

CTE         Collective Teacher Efficacy

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

Our educational system is the foundation of the American Dream: the belief everyone has equal opportunity and can make of themselves whatever they choose. However, as recent events have shown, there are systemic inequities woven into the fabric of our most sacred institutions. Education is no exception to this phenomenon; yet educational leaders have the potential to rewrite our story to assure equity of access to resources, curriculum, and the best teachers for all students regardless of their family background and issues perpetuated by the intersectionality of race and impoverished socioeconomic status.

Though race and socioeconomic status are separate entities, our unique experiences are often not linear in nature. In fact, a 2019 Kaiser Foundation report shows 9% of White Americans live in poverty compared to 21.2% and 17.2% of Black and Latinx Americans, respectively. Georgia's data reflects these trends with poverty rates for Whites at 9.1%, Blacks at 19.1% and Latinx at 19.7%. More specifically, 20% of children below the age of 18 in the city school system where the subject systems of care model exists live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). This case study investigates participant perceptions of one semi-urban, southern, Title-1 high school's on-campus extended systems of care center; a program providing extended wraparound and systems of care services (SOC) to those in need in an effort to close the achievement and graduation gaps between student groups based on socioeconomic status or identified as a student of promise.

**Background:**

A recent report published by The New Teachers' Project, *The Opportunity Myth: What Students Can Show Us About How School Is Letting Them Down—and How to Fix It*, has

garnered the attention of parents, educators, and policy makers. These words capture the cornerstone of this report:

> They're planning their futures on the belief that doing well in school creates opportunities—that showing up, doing the work, and meeting their teachers' expectations will prepare them for what's next. They believe that for good reason: We've been telling them so. Unfortunately, it's a myth. (TNPT, 2018, p.2)

The report, transformed into a polished webpage, studied over 4000 American schoolchildren, identified a myth of opportunity permeating our schools, and issued a call for corrective action. Students of color and from backgrounds of poverty report disparities in opportunities within America's public schools, unequal access to advanced courses and the best teachers, lower graduation rates, and fewer opportunities post high school than White, middle-class Americans. Policy makers across the nation are interested in the findings; however, evaluation of this report by individuals in the field warns against it as it cites very little scholarly works to support its claims. Critics also conclude the report connects this myth to teacher actions and inactions yet fails to address the role of school leaders and underlying systemic practices known to impede student growth and achievement. More importantly, it "suggests little explanation as to how schools can close these learning gaps nor how outside resources could support students with meeting the standards" (Datnow, 2019, p. 6). Though The Opportunity Myth is lacking in scholarly rigor, it does bring new attention to a classic and perpetual problem in America's schools: the academic achievement gap.

Graduation from high school benefits individuals in many ways; however, achievement gaps based on race and socioeconomic status plague America's schools. Graduation rates in the

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United States are reported using the adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR). "ACGR is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class" (The National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). Calculation of the United States' ACGR includes all 50 states and the District of Columbia; it does not include schools under the authority of the Bureau of Indian Education schools. ACGR cohorts are comprised of students who enter the beginning of the earliest high school grade (typically grade nine) for the first time. The cohort is then adjusted by adding students who transfer into the cohort and removing those who transfer out due to emigration to another country or death.

The 2018-19 ACGR for all public high school students was reportedly 85.8% (The National Center for Educational Statistics, 2020). The ACGR is considered the most accurate measure available for reporting on-time graduation rates (Seastrom et al. 2006); however, deeper analysis of the data reveals White students graduate on time with their cohort 3.6-percentage points higher than the national average while Black students' graduation rates are 6.2-percentage points lower. Similarly, Latinx students' ACGR is 4.1-percentage points lower at 81.7%. Students of color from lower income families experience the lowest four-year cohort graduation rate at just 78% according to *The Condition of Education - Pre-primary, Elementary, and Secondary Education - High School Completion - Public High School Graduation Rates-Indicator* (2020). This intersectionality of race and economics is a prevailing symptom of the systemic inequalities of our societal and educational institutions.

Unfortunately, as the Race Gap in graduation rates has narrowed, the Poverty Gap has increased. Private organizations, including the Schott Foundation (2015), America's Promise

Alliance (2017), and John Hopkins University (Allensworth, 2020) which track graduation rates based on race and socioeconomic status report even lower findings. Even though the gap is beginning to narrow in all but 15 states with students of color driving overall increases in graduation rates, "gaps remain considerable at 10.8 percentage points between Black and White students; and 8.6 percentage points between Hispanic and White students…these students continue to disproportionately fall off track to graduate on time" (Atwell et al., 2020). We cannot ignore that in the age of increased accountability and pressure for schools to perform, this national crisis, which has been studied and tracked for over fifty years with little change, must be solved. Individuals who do not complete high school suffer perpetual socioeconomic disadvantages throughout their adult lives including higher rates of poverty and unemployment than high school graduates (Iceland, 2013; Campbell, 2015) the data used to measure these rates does not consider that dropouts often come from families living in generational poverty (Duncan et al., 1998; Campbell, 2015).

Generational poverty is a symptom of a darker history of systemic racism plaguing American culture and institutions. Our educational system, despite legislation and court rulings including the Fourteenth Amendment and Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka Kansas (1954) is not immune. The Fourteenth Amendment states, "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws". Known as the equal protection clause, when applied to education it asserts that no child living in a state establishing a public school system may be denied equal access to schooling. Though public-school segregation legally ended with the 1954 Supreme Court's Brown decision declaring segregation

in United States' public schools unconstitutional, "never in U.S. history has there been a year when even half the country's Black children attended schools where a majority of children were White (Irons, 2004, p.38; Feagin & Barnette, 2004). Even in desegregated schools, White and Black students experience internal segregation by exposure to different learning experiences, discipline practices, and social expectations (Feagin & Barnette, 2004; Finn & Servoss, 2015; Witt, 2007).

Discipline data recorded since 1975 shows Black students, especially males, are overrepresented in corrective actions administered by school leaders (Finn & Servoss, 2015; Gregory et.al. 2016; Witt, 2007). This contributes to the national graduation rate crisis as a single suspension from school lowers the likelihood of graduating high school by 14-20% (Balfanz et al., 2015). The over-disciplining of students of color, known as the school-to-prison pipeline, affects children from kindergarten to graduation (Wald and Losen 2003; NAACP 2005; Advancement Project 2005; Children's Defense Fund 2007) and is instrumental in the racial disparity of America's prisons. Recent research suggests the school-to-prison pipeline may be disrupted by providing educators with empathy training and adopting a rehabilitation mindset toward disciplining (Bull, 2019; McIntosh et al., 2017; Okonofua et., al, 2016).

The 1992 McCaul, et al. study, Consequences of Dropping out of School: Findings from High School and Beyond, estimated the collective financial impact of individuals not graduating from high school on communities at $6 billion per year. These costs included social services, crime prevention, and lost income. Estimates of lifetime lost income for the class of 1980 dropouts alone place the amount at $228 billion (p. 198). This amount, when calculated for inflation rates, measures an astounding $713,321,796,116.50. Worse than the financial impact to

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society and the individual is a cultural stigma fueled by beliefs that dropouts are "misfits" who struggle with poor social adjustment and low self-esteem, possess ineffective personal skills, display antisocial behaviors, and thwart implicit and expected age norms (McDill & Pallas, 1986; McCaul et al., 1992; Dorn, 1993). Thus, it is important for schools to develop interventions designed to combat the effects of poverty including homelessness, mental illness, and hunger, which affects 15.5 million American families (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2014; Evans et al, 2005; Martinez et al., 2018; Winicki & Jemison, 2003).

Scrutiny of American political and cultural institutions has become prevalent due to disparities in access to health care, education, and safety illuminated during the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020. Early data analysis has led to a call to action in Connecticut (Laurencin & McClinton, 2020), Chicago (Kim & Bostwick, 2020), Virginia (McClaren, 2020), and New York (Tai et al., 2020). As of June 2020, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported 55.6% of Americans diagnosed with Covid-19 were Black or Latinx although they represented just 13% and 18% of the community populations, respectively. Even more concerning is that these statistics may be much higher as race and ethnicity typically are under reported during hospital intake. In addition, deaths for Blacks in all states and Washington DC were double or triple that of Whites (Tai et al., 2020, Coronavirus Disease 2019, 2020, McLaren, 2020, US Census Bureau, 2020). These studies have linked the disproportionate numbers of Black, Latinx, and impoverished Americans experiencing infections, hospitalizations, and deaths to long standing systemic and societal factors including socioeconomic status limiting access to quality healthcare. District of Columbia pastor, Timothy Freeman, epitomizes the growing concerns, "COVID-19 is affecting Black and Brown people in disproportionate numbers, and not just because we're Black and Brown, but because of the social and economic conditions people are

forced to live in..." (Johnson, 2020; McLaren, 2020). Members of these communities are likely

to work more hours and earn less than their White counterparts. Many also rely on public

transportation, labor in essential businesses that remained open throughout the pandemic, live in

crowded communities (McLaren, 2020), and delay seeking medical attention. This "reflection of

racial inequality and social exclusion existed before the Covid-19 crisis (Kim & Bostwick, 2020)

and can be directly linked to higher percentages of people of color who do not receive their high

school diploma.

In addition to the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020 and 2021, the deaths of Black citizens at

the hands of police officers the first six months of 2020 illuminated another aspect of racial

inequality: discrimination and lack of opportunity for individuals based on race. Say their names:

Ahmaud Arbery (February 23), Breonna Taylor (March 13), George Floyd (May 250, Tony

McDade (May 27), Rayshard Brooks (June 12). Their 2020 deaths sparked renewed energy for

the Black Lives Matter movement, social justice reform, protests against inequality, and

disagreement among Americans. The phrase, *say their names*, which became a unifying rally cry

for those fighting against racial injustice, police brutality toward persons of color, and systemic

racism originated with the African American Policy Forum. The organization was founded in

1996 to "connect academics, activists, and policymakers to promote efforts to dismantle

structural inequality… dedicated to advancing and expanding racial justice, gender equality, and

the indivisibility of all human rights, both in the U.S. and internationally" (Crenshaw & Harris,

2021). Less than one month after the first draft of this paper, Jacob Blake (August 25), a father of

six, was shot in the back by police officers and paralyzed; Daniel Prude and Steven Taylor

(September 2) were shot and killed by police officers.  For some, the thought of inequality or

prejudice 55 years after the end of Jim Crow was unimaginable. Their privilege, whether based

on race or socioeconomic status, blinded them from realization that systemic racism tears at the fabric of our nation.

The events of that summer reinforced what many people of color and some educational leaders already know:  little has changed since President Clinton's Race Advisory Board concluded

- racism is one of the most divisive forces in our society

- racial legacies of the past continue to haunt current policies and practices that create unfair disparities between minority and majority groups

- racial inequities are so deeply ingrained in American society that they are nearly invisible

- most White Americans are unaware of the advantages they enjoy in this society and of how their attitudes and actions unintentionally discriminate against persons of color. (Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race, 1998)

**Problem Statement**

For many individuals working in the American education system, the events of 2020-2021 made more public our dirty secret: students of color, students placed at risk, and students hailing from impoverished families have fewer educational opportunities, experience greater instances of school discipline, suffer misunderstanding by their teachers, and are more likely to leave school than White and middle to upper class students. Furthermore, the lack of improvement in graduation rates for these populations regardless of existing programs and the push from federal, state, and local authorities to produce higher assessment scores to show school success, have led school leaders to seek alternative, creative solutions. Some schools have

implemented extended wraparound services using elements of the full-service community school (FSCS)  and systems of care (SOC) approaches on school campuses to eliminate the challenges students from low- SES families experience.

Ben Agger's Critical Social Theory (CST) is entrenched in several beliefs that focus, not only on race, but also on other areas of social injustice including poverty. The foundation CST include the following ideals:

- anti-positivism- we create knowledge

- constructivist- we can move toward a better tomorrow

- we can expose the roots of structural injustice

- we have the power to move beyond innate and systemic consciousness to transform society

- we can effect change at the local level

- we can change structures through knowledge

- we can maintain current levels of freedoms as we progress. (Agger, 2013; Bates, 2016)

Wraparound services, traditionally supported by federal government grants or self-funded through progressive school systems, have been the norm of the educational landscape for decades; yet implementation varies greatly. Traditional wraparound services involve cooperation between families and community support including psychological treatments and occupational health services (Stroul & Friedman, 1996). The goal of traditional wraparound service models is collaboration among stakeholders to support the needs of children with debilitating mental health concerns (Graves & Shelton, 2007; Jivanjee & Robinson, 2007). In recent years, schools have

extended support beyond mental health to include other basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter to close the gaps between socioeconomic groups.

For over 30 years, the state of Georgia has made significant investments in programs and innovations to improve children's mental health through interagency collaboration and communication. Systems of Care (SOC) plans focused on improving mental and behavioral health services for Georgia's children on behalf of state child-serving agencies, legislators, and community organizations representing youth, family, and providers (Interagency Directors Team, 2020). The State Department of Education continues to provide Georgia schools funding to meet this goal.  This framework, initially articulated by Beth Stroul and Robert Friedman in *A System of Care for Children with Severe Emotional Disturbance* (1986), focused on children with serious emotional, behavioral, and psychological disorders. Many schools and systems contract with outside agencies to provide social and emotional support to students with severe behavioral and emotional challenges.

Though SOC programs serve their purpose, educators, and their leaders across the state struggle to meet the changing cultural and economic landscapes and needs of students, specifically those from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, thus, these principles develop effective service-delivery systems for all children, including those with or who are susceptible to emotional and behavioral problems (Interagency Directors Team, 2020). Research into policy reveals Georgia Department of Education Superintendent Richard Woods' growing concern for student mental health and well-being. In June 2018, the Georgia Department of Education's communications office released news that the DOE would provide $1 million in aid to school

systems to assure the ability to provide wrap-around services (Georgia DOE, 2018). A January

16, 2019, news publication quotes Woods asserting,

> ....the need for additional resources in the area of students' mental health and emotional
> well-being, which he said could be weighed down by numerous internal and external
> factors, such as living in poverty or coming from a family of divorce… we're looking at
> how we can take some of the baggage off of our kids and get them in the best position to
> learn," Woods said." following a tour of Lafayette High School in Northern Georgia.
> (Madden, 2019)

External analysis and evidence suggested by Yohannan, et. al. (2017) call for a

collaborative approach to services among family, school, mental health, and community services

to improve outcomes and minimize gaps in services. Based on the apparent success of the

program evaluated for this study,  seeking partnerships from private and faith-based

organizations within the community may potentially increase the number of students benefiting

from the more comprehensive wraparound models, perhaps even reaching students from higher

income families, who may not traditionally appear to need such services during difficult financial

and emotional times. Although centralized support services currently exist in most communities,

getting the services into the schools and involving school personnel in planning and delivery is a

novel approach.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative explanatory case study is to identify student perceptions of

services provided by an on-campus extended systems of care service model at a semi-urban,

diverse southeastern high school and any connections to achieving on-time graduation and their recommendations to school leaders considering an SOC model in the future. For many educators, including me, this is not another program to improve school accountability: it is a moral and ethical necessity that has for far too long been ignored. We cannot continue to accept systemic inequities as the norm in our society or in our public schools. Thus, it is important to identify specific resources that are helpful, or not, to assure services offered truly meet the needs of participating students. The purpose and mission of this center, an extended on-campus wraparound SOC model located in a semi-urban southeastern community, is to increase graduation rates among those identified as students of promise. This study focuses on identifying graduates who frequently participated and allowing them the opportunity to share their stories and is intended to determine if the mission is being met, what areas they are doing right, and additional suggestions for support are needed. This center, initiated by a former principal, has become a model for similar programs across the southeast. After retiring from public education, Mrs. Colburn launched The Centergy Project, a consulting firm supporting schools in Georgia, Illinois, Alabama, and Virginia with building the "right-sized systems of support tailored to the needs and resources of your district and community" (Colburn & Beggs, 2020). This study's micro-level analysis is designed to guide school leaders faced with federal, state, and local mandates to increase student achievement and four-year cohort graduation rates in their decision to initiate their own on-campus SOC model.

**Research Questions**

Specifically, the research questions are (1) To what extent does participation in full-service community school wrap around service model programs impact the social-emotional

wellbeing of students of promise and support meeting their graduation goals? (2) What do administrators interested in creating an on-campus extended systems of care service model need to know from participants to best address the social, emotional, economic, and academic needs of students when considering an onsite extended wraparound service delivery model? Invited participants were chosen from a database, provided by the director and guidance counselor, of recent graduates who engaged in extended wraparound services offered by their center during their time in school.

**Frameworks**

In 1943 Herman Maslow, an American psychologist, developed a theory of self-actualization based on a hierarchy of needs one must fulfill to reach the goal of self-actualization. Maslow stated, "this means that the most pressing goal will monopolize consciousness and will tend to organize the recruitment of the various capacities of the organism." He further advocated that those pressing goals would kindle the motivation for an individual to move to the higher needs as the satisfied needs can no longer act as "active motivators." His theory "is one of, if not, the most referenced motivational theories in scholarly and management literature" (Gobin et al, 2012, p. 204) and has been cited by educational leaders as the basis for many programs designed to meet the most basic physiological and safety needs of their students. Traditional and nontraditional symptoms of care, wraparound, and extended services are rooted in the assertion that without having the basic needs met, "the most pressing goal will monopolize consciousness and will tend of itself to organize the recruitment of the various capacities of the organism" (Maslow, 1943.) Thus, state and local governments have attempted to close the gaps by providing food through school lunch and breakfast programs,

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mandates for school safety, and funding for systems of care programs. Examples such as national school lunch and breakfast programs were designed to fulfill the dietary needs of low- SES children and currently operate in over 100,000 American public and private schools. These food programs are designed to combat food insecurity serving an average of 29.4 million children daily in fiscal year 2019 (Tiehen, 2020).  Though these policies and programs serve a needed purpose, they are not nearly enough to close the poverty gap in our schools.

Historically, educators have relied on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs when developing programs and policies to support underserved or high poverty individuals, believing students may not effectively participate in learning experiences if their basic needs are unfulfilled. Coming to school hungry, improperly clothed, or traumatized due to unsafe living conditions leaves the child unable to focus on cognitive tasks associated with learning, to have higher rates of absences than their peers, and experience more learning difficulties (Murphy, J., et al., 1998 & Raine et al., 2003).  Though these policies and programs serve a needed purpose, they are not enough to close the poverty gap in our schools.

Though Maslow's influence on wraparound SOC services models and traditionally provided supports are prevalent in our schools, the theoretical framework of this study is rooted in the works of Brazilian educator and leader, Paulo Freire. Freire compels educators and leaders to build school programs that challenge oppression, injustice, and disproportionate power in schools by providing less fortunate individuals with quality educational experiences (Shor & Freire, 1987) and recognizing each student's expertise to explain their own life experiences (Singer & Pezone, 2003). Providing former extended wraparound service model participants opportunities to express their experiences and review them for accuracy aligns to Freire's prolific

words, "Why not establish an intimate connection between knowledge considered basic to any school curriculum and knowledge that is the fruit of the lived experience of these students as individuals?" (Freire, 1998, 2001). Freire's philosophies still ring true today and are necessary if we are to disrupt the current educational paradigms of inequity. Freire's critical pedagogy urges educators to employ active teaching and learning experiences aimed at developing a future citizenry equipped to engage in the work necessary to change their societies at a local level and beyond.

This study provided the opportunity for frequent participants in a school-based extended SOC wraparound service model to express their experiences and to disrupt the current educational paradigms rooted in inequity. The focus on student voice provides school leaders with valuable data upon which to develop customized systems of care for their populations and to address the systemic injustices related to the intersectional of race and economic conditions. Subsequently, utilizing this theoretical approach potentially provides an institutional solution to a systemically unjust educational experience for historically underserved populations.

**Importance of the Study**

Our governmental leaders and policy makers have been tracking the achievement gaps between student populations including socioeconomic status, for decades with little to no change. The time has come for educational leaders and policy makers to accept and address the systemic inequalities inherent in our educational system related to the intersectionality of race and socioeconomic familial status. No child should be forced to choose between an education and contributing economically to the support of their family. No child should come to or leave school hungry or without their physiological and safety needs being met. Students with emotional and

psychological instabilities should have on-site and on-demand mental health services at school in collaboration between family, community, school, and medical entities. The in-depth review of literature aims to better defining the problem, examining historical context, understanding current and past attempts to close the gap between groups in student achievement and graduation rates, investigating social justice and disruptive theories, and understanding the potential impact of extended wraparound services provided by an on-campus SOC center, illuminating best practices for institutions beyond this case.

**Gaps in the Research**

This study seeks to  provide evidence of the positive effects of school based extended wraparound services in the lives of students traditionally identified as at risk due to factors related to socioeconomic status and underrepresentation in the educational system; an area that is specifically lacking in current research. Although wraparound SOC services have been present for decades, programs this study participants frequented are relatively new and are growing in popularity. This is despite little research into their overall effect on participants. This study has the potential to inform best practices to close the gap in graduation rates for students based on the intersectionality of Race and Socioeconomic status; something that has eluded practitioners for decades despite best intentions, money, and legislation aimed at eliminating the problem.

There have been numerous studies related to programs and policies to close the graduation and achievement gaps, however, full-service community schools providing extended wraparound systems of care, cultural fluency and efficacy training for teachers, and onsite supports are relatively new. Studies into their impact are necessary to inform future practices, not only for an individual school-based delivery model, but, also for potential programs across the

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country and social justice for all American schoolchildren regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

**Assumptions**

There are several assumptions associated with this empirical inquiry into the contemporary phenomenon related to disparities between the intersectionality of race and socioeconomic status' impact on high school success as defined by graduation with the four-year cohort.  The case study method focuses on a "particular issue, feature, or unit of analysis…. to understand and examine the processes of…activities within an organization" (Noor, 2008, p. 1602).

An assumption to address is expecting graduates who participated in SOC programs would be comfortable speaking with me about their experiences and perceptions. I currently work in the district's central office as the Social Studies Literacy and Content Coordinator. This title and simply working at the central office has the potential to intimidate some individuals. To support participants' comfort, each received sample interview questions prior to the face-to-face interview. We also reviewed survey responses prior to beginning the semi structured interview and Zoom recording. Doing so allowed interviewees to be reflective, provide the subjects with a preview of topics of inquiry for the interview, and bult rapport.

**Limitations and Delimitations**

Important limitations to note include the location and passing of time.  The specific location and characteristics of the subject semi-urban southeastern Title I school with an economically and racially diverse population of under 2500 students may not replicate with

fidelity or apply to schools with different demographics or location. Additionally, the factor of time may change participant perceptions positively or negatively and/or their memory of the programs offered by the program they frequented. To address this, interview participants only included those from the 2018 and 2019 four-year graduation cohorts.

Another limitation to this study is the potential for researcher bias; considering I have strong opinions about the need to provide equitable access to all educational programs and systems of care to assure every student has as close to the same opportunities as possible. I have dedicated the past five years professionally and academically to this topic. My job responsibilities include curating and creating curriculum resources and learning experiences that address equity of access for students of all ability levels and ethnicities, include student social and emotional needs, and represent the diversity of our learners. For this reason, I continually focused on reflexivity, the specifically conscious effort to be "critically self-reflective about their own preconceptions, relationship dynamics, and analytic focus (Polit & Beck 2014) about the processes by which data have been collected, analyzed, and presented" (Galdas, 2017). Additional qualitative methods to avoid bias were executed and included offering participants the opportunity review the results, checking for alternative explanations, and reviewing findings with the dissertation committee and/or peers.

The use of E-mail as a communication tool became a limitation to the study. I originally planned to communicate with potential participants via E-mail, however, realized the individuals I was seeking as participants did not utilize E-mail as a primary communication tool. Consequently, I submitted a revision to the Auburn University International Review Board to allow for communication via text messages. This shift allowed me to better recruit individuals

for the interviews and to effectively communicate logistics including dates and times for Zoom interviews and member checking with study members.

A delimitation to note is the impact of Covid-19 on the graduating class of 2020 due to unexpectedly shifting to a 100% on-line learning environment that greatly affected their educational expectations and performance.  On March 12, 2020, students and teachers left for home with the anticipation of two-week digital learning to slow the spread of the virus, no one foresaw those two weeks extending into the remainder of the 2019-2021 school year and beyond. During this time, federal, state, and local governmental agencies provided unprecedented support to communities including food deliveries, computer distribution, access to wi-fi hot-spots for free internet usage to families in need. Additionally, many school systems froze grades on March 13, 2020, for students who were satisfied with their performance as of that date and allowed only positive movement of grades for the final quarter. To assure participants of the graduating class of 2020 did not confuse community and school-system at large supports with those provided by the SOC program and to eliminate the possibility of students graduating on time with their four-year cohort due to non-traditional grading policies, this study excludes the class of 2020.

**Definitions of Terms**

- *Participation*- active engagement in services and programs as identified by the SOC model director, anecdotal records, and exit surveys.
- *Full-service community school wrap around service model programs* – any program or support system beyond traditional wraparound mental health services offered to students on their school campus. Examples include food pantries, group counseling, career counseling, mentoring, etc.

- *Recent high school graduate* – a student who graduated with their four-year cohort between 2018 and 2019.

- *On-time graduation* – the state of Georgia defines on-time graduation as within four years of enrollment in a public high school. The expectation is all students will graduate on time with their cohort.

- *Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)* – the number of students who graduate from high school with their four-year cohort with a regular high school diploma, divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

- *Four-year cohort* – the number of students who enter grade 9 for the first time adjusted by adding into the cohort any student who transfers in later during grade 9 or during the next three years and subtracting any student from the cohort who transfers out, emigrates to another country, transfers to a prison or juvenile facility, or dies during that same period.

- *Wraparound services*- provisions to give a child the support he or she needs throughout the school day. Includes academic, social, and behavioral.

- *Extended wraparound systems of care service* - supports that go beyond those traditionally provided at school. Examples include mental health counseling, food pantries, clothing closets, etc.

- *Students of Promise*- individuals traditionally placed at risk due to socioeconomic status or who are underrepresented due to race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

**Summary**

Education leaders face the difficult task of providing equity of access to America' future, our children, despite systemic inequalities within our existing political, social, and economic structures and institutions. Many are considering integrating a systems of care (SOC) model into their on-campus support programs to disrupt the current paradigms. To assure effective use of limited funds and to address the needs of their unique communities, the input of their most valuable stakeholders should be forefront when considering any SOC model. This study seeks to provide educational leaders interested in doing so with information to assure a successful model for implementation on their school campus.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

**Purpose Statement**

This literature review focuses on the inherent inequalities to access to education indicated by high school graduation rates, participation in the most rigorous educational opportunities, teacher perceptions, school culture, and climate for students experiencing intersectionality of race and low socioeconomic status (low SES). The review is organized into sections revealing the disparity in high school graduation rates for Black and Latinx students, reasons for these disparities including historical context, traditional supports to close this gap, and the need for innovative, nontraditional supports. Research was conducted by utilizing key word searches including graduation rates, wraparound services, systems of care, food insecurity, full-service community schools, social justice, mentoring, etc. Care was taken to assure a balanced approach as journals, governmental publications, and books from useful, peer-reviewed scholars were included.

**Organization of the Literature Review**

This literature review focuses on defining the problems related to dropping out of high school and the impact the decision has on the individual and schools. It then investigates the historical contexts around high school graduation including accountability measures and governmental programs to address the crisis. Next, focus is placed on factors that contribute to the national dropout crisis and actions to potentially remedy them. See figure 1 for the organization of the literature review.

**Figure 1:**

*Organization of the Literature Review*
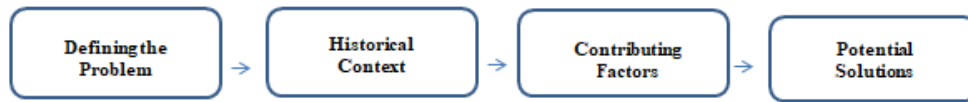


## Defining the Problem

Graduation from high school is the foundation for successful adulthood and is the cornerstone of the American education system. Self-reported data from surveys and studies place the United States' high school graduation rate around 90%, up nearly 50% from the mid-20th century (Pharris-Ciurej et al., 2012). However, multiple studies indicate only 65-70% of American high school students earn a high school diploma (Balfanz & Legters, 2004; Orfield, et al., 2004). National surveys on education attainment appear to inflate graduation rates by 4-5% when self-reported by individuals aged 19-30 (Hauser, 1997). It seems many respondents may be inadvertently reporting the earning of a General Education Diploma (GED) as an "alternative certification program" (Pharris-Ciurej et al., 2012). Studies by Cameron and Heckman (1993) and Heckman and LaFontaine (2006) revealed that nearly 50% of students who drop out of high school continue their education and earn a GED. A GED is a positive achievement and better than no high school diploma, however it is an alternative that has consistently shown to be sub-par to a high school diploma in the American economy.  Though GED recipients tend to earn higher wages than individuals with no high school diploma, those who complete a GED program most often hail from "larger families, with lower incomes, less educated parents… and poorer background characteristics than high school graduates" (Cameron & Heckman, 1993, p.12).

The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) reports the 2018-19 national adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for public high school students at 85.8%, the highest on record since the rate was first measured following the 2010–11 school year. Although trends measuring graduation rates among the general population of high school students show improvement over time, the data are deceiving when considering race and socioeconomic status. Further analysis of the school year 2018-19 ACGR in the *report The Condition of Education - Preprimary, Elementary, and Secondary Education - High School Completion - Public High School Graduation Rates- Indicator* (2020) reveals Asian/Pacific Islander students had the highest ACGR (92.6%), followed by White (89.4%), Latinx (81.7%), Black (79.6%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (74.3%) students. In this same report, extrapolating students from low socioeconomic status (SES) exposes an ACGR of 80%: nearly six- percentage points below the rate reported to the public. This report is not alone in findings showing disparity in graduation rates among diverse student populations.

Private organizations tracking national high school graduation rates share shockingly lower cohort graduation rates for Black and Latino males when compared to published reports commissioned by the United States Department of Education. For example, the NCES 2014-15 ACGR for White (85%), Black (75%) and Latinx (81%) graduates were much lower than those reported by The Schott Foundation for Public Education, a racial and social-justice change-oriented educational foundation established in 1991. The Schott Foundation for Public Education estimated the United States high school graduation rate for Black males at 47%, 57% for Latino males, 75% for White males, and 76% for Low SES students that same year. The publication warns the actual numbers may be lower depending on how local school districts calculate completion (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2015). Baruti Kafele, a transformational

leader dedicated to creating positive school climate and culture, changing the attitudes of students traditionally placed at risk, motivating Black males to excel in the classroom, and developing school leadership practices for inspiring schoolwide excellence, reminds us, "we can't ignore the statistics that tell us that our education system is failing far too many of our young Black males" (2012, p. 68).

The shockingly low privately calculated high school graduation statistics for young men of color and students from low SES families contribute to a sense of urgency for educators, policy makers, and community organizations to formulate strategic alliances aimed at studying the factors contributing to student accomplishments that can assist them with graduating from high school and transitioning to post-secondary opportunities. Perez Huber et al (2015) report that only "1 of 11 Latino males and 17 of 100 African American or Black males will earn bachelor's degrees" (pg. 3). If America's schools are to meet an overall 90% graduation rate, they must increase four-year cohort graduation numbers by almost 200,000 students (Atwell, et al., 2020). These statistics make it clear that to benefit students from diverse backgrounds and Low SES conditions, schools must be aggressively innovative in the creation of a school environment that considers the needs of all students beyond the stated curriculum and the school doors.

**Historical Context**

Schools across our country face federal, state, and locally mandated accountability measures intended to increase student growth and achievement, improve graduation rates, better school climate, and obtain higher evaluation scores. As a result, many state boards of education and legislators have adopted extensive grading systems for schools. Georgia's school evaluation

measurement instrument, named the College and Career Readiness Performance Indicator (CCRPI), calculates school effectiveness based on indicators including high school graduation rate, student attendance, and closing the achievement gap through student growth. Students most often identified as students of promise due to social factors, including socioeconomic status, often affect the overall rating in multiple areas. For example, the achievement score for an English Language Learner with a diagnosed learning disability who receives free or reduced lunch is calculated three times in the current Georgia model.

Pressures from these outside forces inevitably lead school leaders to enact policies and adopt programs to improve their CCRPI score. It is the school leader's responsibility to assure students have everything they need to learn; however, it is becoming increasingly necessary for schools to seek innovative programs and resources to meet the needs of their students, both inside and outside the school building, to keep them in school, and assure they meet their four-year cohort graduation deadline. Teachers then have the responsibility, which often becomes a struggle, to enact these innovations with fidelity in a system that fails many of our children. The barriers to achievement among our students of promise are great and existing institutional and systemic structures are not equipped to support them. Thus, many school leaders seek creative ways to meet the needs of their students in efforts to narrow, and eventually close, the achievement gap.

Research designed to investigate measures for closing the achievement gap is extensive as are suggestions for improving academic performance for students of color, from low SES backgrounds, and traditionally placed at risk. School climate, teacher quality, equity of access, social- emotional learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, collective efficacy, restorative

justice, and teacher preparation programs are among many of the current efforts to meet this goal. Another common form of support for students of promise is the full- service community school (FSCS) program. Funding for Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) often comes from US DOE grant programs requiring recipients to coordinate academic, social, and health services through school, local educational agencies, and community-based nonprofit organizations (Full-service Community Schools Program, 2022). Full-service community schools (FSCS) provide non-traditional support including food and clothing pantries, wraparound mental health services, mentoring, academic tutoring, career counseling, childcare, medical and dental services, housing support, and more. FSCS models have been funded through the grants from the United States Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE), which is authorized under section 5411 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended (ESSA). These grants encourage synchronization of academic, social, and health services via collaborations between public schools; the schools' local educational agencies (LEAs); and community-based associations, nonprofit organizations, and other public or private entities (Dryfoos, 2002; USDOE, 2019).

Although many see FSCS programs as new, they date back to early education innovators and advocates including John Dewey and Jane Adams, who both sought partnerships between the schools and the communities they served. Flint, Michigan's Lighted Schools, launched and led by Frank Manley in 1935, set a foundation for the thousands of community school programs of today that are based upon the democratic ideal of respect for each individual person and their right to participate in the affairs of the community . . . a program characterized by change in response to changing needs, continuous experimentation to seek out satisfactory ways of achieving common goals, and careful evaluation of the results of its activity. (Decker, 1999)

The 1980s ushered further public health and hospital agencies into schools through health clinics following increased concerns related to adolescent morbidity caused by sexual activity, illicit drugs, violence, and stress related illnesses. These clinics intended to meet the significant medical, dental, and mental health needs of America's schoolchildren (Dryfoos, 1998).

**School Accountability Measures**

For the public education leader, concerns such as these have been compounded by over 50 years of legislation requiring schools to quantify students' academic progress. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); providing federal grants to state educational agencies to better the quality of elementary and secondary schooling for our nation's schools.

The 2001 reauthorization of ESEA, renamed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), was signed into law by President George W. Bush and further emphasized America's commitment to providing a quality education to all students. NCLB set the ambitious goal for all children to be 'proficient' in the areas of reading and math by 2014. This placed more emphasis on standardized testing as proficiency equated to performing at the average grade level. NCLB provided local education agencies with funds for increasing books, supplies, after school tutoring programs, and improving pedagogy through teacher training, however early opponents to NCLB believed funding would not be enough to raise achievement for the nation's low-SES students and schools. Green and Anyon (2010) warned, "without addressing the growing economic obstacles faced by students and families in low-income urban schools, goals such as the one in NCLB to have all students reading at grade level by 2014 are not feasible" (p. 224). Renowned scholars in race relations in education, including Richard Valencia, added to the assessment

debate by asserting underlying, covert racial beliefs that measures of achievement "maintain the status quo" of White cultural dominance in our schools (Kohli, et al., 2017),  President Barack Obama, in response to rising questions, concerns, and protests about the effectiveness and inherent inequity of NCLB, replied:

> We are a place that believes every child, no matter where they come from, can grow up to be anything they want… And I'm confident that if we fix No Child Left Behind, if we continue to reform American education, continue to invest in our children's future, that's the America we will always be. (2011)

President Obama's call to action and growing opposition to NCLB among parents, politicians, and educational leaders, led to negotiating reauthorization of ESEA by federal legislators to rectify the one-size-fits-all nature of NCLB. Their work was rooted in ideals including "America's families, students and teachers deserve an education law that advances progress for all students—especially our most vulnerable children " (US Department of Education, 2013). At the time, United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan did not believe ESEA or NCLB adequately assured equity of access to education for all American school children; thus, did not support its first passage by the House of Representatives. However, in December 2015, Secretary Duncan backed the bi-partisan work of legislators and equated the reauthorization of ESEA, retitled Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA), to a "civil rights law" assuring "a fair shot at a great education to every child in America – regardless of zip code" (US Department of Education, 2015).

President Barack Obama signed ESSA into law on December 10, 2015, shepherding in a new era of accountability rooted in protection of students' civil liberties by holding schools

responsible for ineffectively serving their students, whose students do not make progress, or having low graduation rates over extended periods of time accountable to act for change. Our nation's long history of educational legislation has resulted in increased utilization of standardized assessments at the federal, state, and local level to measure student achievement, progress, and growth. Additional funding provided through these laws aims to address the concern that many students from low-income and urban families achieve inadequately on standardized assessments, more specifically, in reading and writing (Lipman, 2004).

**Title I Schools**

Included in funding under the 1965 ESSA and continued in subsequent reauthorizations, is Title-1, designed "to provide financial assistance… to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low-income families to expand and improve their educational programs by various means . . . which contribute particularly to meeting the special educational needs of educationally deprived children" (Public Law 89-10, p.27). These monies often provide the base funding for services provided by FSCS wraparound programs in public schools. Educational legislation commonly assumes all students will succeed regardless of financial support provided by state and local taxes: this is simply not the case. As suburban living became more desirable for American families following the Great Depression and again after World War II, many moved out of cities- taking with them businesses and services that provided a valuable tax base (Borman & D'Agostino, 1996). By 2004, the discrepancies in funding for schools serving a majority of low-SES or minority students and suburban schools equated to an average of $966 less per student. This discrepancy has grown to exceed $2100 today (Beilan, 2019; Greene & Anyon 2010; Carey, 2004).

It is no surprise to school leaders in urban and rural settings that high school dropout rates are higher within communities serving large numbers of students and families from low socioeconomic backgrounds as measured by participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Research confirms that barriers related to poverty among individuals from low socioeconomic status (SES) directly link to student academic success. The damaging effects of these barriers include lower academic achievement (Hair et al., 2015), home and family turmoil (Evans et al, 2005), emotional health needs (Engle, 2009), concerns over food and uncertainty related to meals (Winicki & Jemison, 2003), homelessness (Herbers et al., 2012), and inefficient childcare after school hours (Mahoney et al., 2005).

**The Poverty Gap and Its Impact**

In 2008, The Center for Evaluation and Educational Policy released a policy brief centered on improving high school graduation rates. Among the problems authors Stanley and Plucker (2008) noted was a markedly lower graduation rate in Indiana schools among minority students and students from low-income families: the cumulative graduation rate in Indiana for the 2006-07 school year was 76% however, graduation rates were lowest in urban and rural areas with high concentrations of poverty. Similarly, national studies reveal that schools with the lowest rates by which students advance through grade levels and to graduation were schools with the highest levels of poverty and a lack of resources (p.2). This phenomenon is also prevalent in standardized testing data that indicate a growing gap in achievement between children from high and low-income homes. Known as the poverty gap, it is "40% larger today than it was 25 years ago and is twice as large as the Black-White gap" (Michelmore & Dynarski, 2016, p.1). Children from impoverished families experience higher rates of economic instability that links to poor

educational outcomes (Gennetian et. al., 2015). Additionally, research on relational experiences among children from impoverished backgrounds indicate family structures and social relationships create conditions in which poverty is sustained from generation to generation (Sharam & Hulse, 2014) and is the outcome of a system of social relationships and not merely the effect of deprivation of income or entitlements (Green 2009, 310),

These trends, started following the Great Depression and World War II, have become a national crisis that is spreading from the cities into suburban and rural systems as urban poor families are continually displaced by gentrification of their neighborhoods. As a result, the non-academic needs most often linked to poverty and low SES have become problematic in a growing number of school systems across the country. Educators report increases in undesirable student behaviors, including classroom disengagement and attendance issues that lower academic achievement and intensify the drop-out risk (Berliner, 2013). Other concerns include higher reports of food insecurity, negative teacher perceptions of minority and low SES students, deficit mindset (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015), poor teacher quality, lack of role models (Campos et al., 2018), and overall ineffective school climate (Shindler et.al, 2016).

A significant factor influencing American school students is food insecurity, defined as a household having "limited or uncertain availability of food or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways" as a result of inadequate financial resources (Skalicky et al., 2005).  Families living in impoverished conditions are often unable to purchase foods to support a well-balanced, nutritious diet for their children; thus, they consume insufficient and/or inadequate food at home (Eicher-Miller & Zhao, Y 2018; Raine et al., 2003). This phenomenon is more common in Black and Latinx families (Omi & Winant, 2015) when

compared to White families and is directly linked to living in poverty. Iceland (2019) indicates that in 1959, nearly 50% of Blacks were living in poverty. By 2015, this percentage decreased to 24%, which is moving in the right direction, however not quickly enough.

The impacts of low SES correlates to a child's inability to access basic social services including health care, clean water, proper diet, and safety. Deficiencies in all of these factors hinder child development (Alkon & Agyeman, 2011). Michelmore and Dynarski (2016) noted children who spend all their school years eligible for federal meal programs score the lowest on measures of academic achievement, while never eligible students score the highest. Achievement of those students eligible for subsidized meals for intermittent periods of time fall between these two groups. By grade eight the achievement score gap between students receiving subsidized meals and those who do not increases to nearly one standard deviation; indicating a negative, nearly linear relationship between the number of years a child spends in an economically disadvantaged environment or status and standardized achievement (p. 3-5).

Existing research establishes "parents, educators, and health professionals have long touted the association between what our children eat and their school performance" (Taras, 2005, p.199; Wurtman, 1978) proposed the brain does not function autonomously or independently of other metabolic process but continuously interacts with other functions including nutrition and nutrient absorption (p. 6-7).  Additionally, amino acids, choline, and iron (Kretsch & Wood, 2001) are fundamental to normal brain functioning. Students chronically exposed to improper diets suffer more health problems including anemia, weight loss, colds, and infections (Maxwell, 1985; Shah et al., 1987; Fierman et al., 1993; Miller & Korenman, 1994). These children are also easily distracted, suffer from delayed physical growth, slowed mental development, poor

problem-solving skills, and social interactions (Brown & Pollitt, 1996; Conners & Blouin, 1983; Murphy, J. et al., 1998; Pollitt et al., 1982–83; Raine et al., 2003).

Since the Great Depression, concerns about child nutrition and the impact of improper diet and low nutritional value of foods on academic growth have been prevalent (Taras, 2005; Brown et al., 2008; Murphy, 2007; Murphy, et al, 1998a; Pollitt et al., 1998). Maslow (1943) stated, "We also know that food insecurity encompasses a wide range of harmful effects associated with hunger and are negatively associated with physical and mental health, resulting in poor educational outcomes." In fact, the 1989 Convention on Rights of Children states all have the right to food, however one out of every five children in America is living in a household without continual access to a consistent amount of food (UN General Assembly, 1989).

Though decades of research supports the negative impact of improper nutrition on student growth, health, and academic achievement, federal, state, and local systems are using the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or breakfast grants to meet this most basic need. The current structures of schools along with limited resources have contributed to the continued disparity related to lack of proper nutrition and food concerns for a growing population of children from low SES families. One cause may be the crossings of race and class in our society that results in higher percentages of racial minorities experiencing food deserts due to residing in poor areas (Cho et al., 2013). In addition, state sponsored nutrition programs and policies, such as individual schools instituting rules against teachers supplying food to students, monetary policies, and documentation requirements for food distribution perpetuate the problem for families in need. This power struggle between teachers who recognize the needs of their students and the hierarchy in public education is paramount to understanding the need for decentralized

power and common sense. Systemic organizations with long-standing political and cultural ties such as closing schools for extended periods during summer months, put additional strain on free and reduced lunch students as many no longer receive two meals each day (Hinsley, 2018). Changes to how schools address food insecurity are imperative because, "no matter how well teachers are prepared to teach, no matter what accountability measures are put in place, no matter what governing structures are established for schools, educational progress will be profoundly limited if students are not motivated and able to learn" (Basch, 2010, p. 71).

Most studies into the effects of poverty or low SES utilize student participation in subsidized school meal programs to define financial need, however Michelmore and Dynarski (2016) noted, based on current national qualifications for school meal programs, nearly half of American students are eligible for meal programs, but only one-quarter truly live in poverty. They suggest researchers turn away from this identification method and begin utilizing longitudinal data and focus on student populations who have participated in meal programs long-term.

Evidence supporting effective school based nutritional programs that focus on providing proper nutrition to all students, regardless of socioeconomic status and family income is found in *A School Based Intervention for Combating Food Insecurity and Promoting Healthy Nutrition in a Developed Country Undergoing Economic Crisis: A Qualitative Study*. The study conducted by Dalma, Veloudaki, Petralias, Mitraka, Zota, Kastorini, and Linos during Greece's 2015 economic crisis included 136 junior high and high school teachers and principals from schools participating in the Program on Food Aid and Promotion of Healthy Nutrition (DIATROFI). DIATROFI provided a health lunch designed by nutritionists to all students, curriculum

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providing information and games about the benefits of proper nutrition to parents and children, and presentations from health professionals. Meal boxes provided 25%-30% of the daily requirements for children in terms of energy (caloric intake). The respondents reported increased attendance, decreased behavioral issues, and removal of the stigma of receiving a free school lunch. One teacher explained, "before the program began, we very often had incidents of fainting children, who of course didn't admit they were hungry, from the moment the program began and children were eating, fainting incidents ceased to exist" (Dalma et al., p. 5).

**Deficit Thinking and School Discipline Policies**

Deficit thinking and inadvertent racism caused by implicit biases are prevalent in America's schools. Studies have shown teachers have lower behavioral expectations for Black males than any other population (Ross & Jackson, 1991; Gregory & Mosely, 2004; ) and these perceptions lead to lower academic achievement (Kenyatta, 2012; Seyfried, 1998). Discipline data recorded and researched since 1975 shows Black students, especially males, are continually overrepresented in sanctions after accounting for their achievement, socioeconomic status, teacher, and self-reported behavior (Finn & Servoss, 2015; Gregory et.al. 2016; Witt, 2007). Each suspension from school lowers the student's likelihood of graduating high school by an additional 14-20% (Balfanz et al., 2015) and contributes toward lower numbers of Black males enrolled in college following high school (Campos et al., 2018).

Discussions surrounding school discipline guidelines including zero tolerance policies and the increased presence of law enforcement officers in schools are salient and lead to heightened suspensions, expulsions, and arrests for minor infractions among our most vulnerable populations. According to the 2011 report Education Interrupted: The Growing Use of

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Suspensions in New York City's Public Schools, New York City students, collectively, experienced 16 million suspension hours between 1999 and 2008 (Miller, et al., 2011). A 2004 NCES report of school year 1999- 2000 discipline data showed United States Schools combined had over three million school suspensions and 97,000 expulsions: with the number of suspensions and expulsions in several states exceeding 10% of the enrolled student population. Further investigation of suspension data shows over- representation of Black children are correlated to studies indicating teachers perceive them as "more defiant, rule breaking, or disruptive that other racial or ethnic groups" (Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Newcomb et al., 2002; Wentzel, 2002). More specifically, Black males are suspended or expelled at higher rates than any other demographic group of students (Gordon et al., 2000).

Demographic analysis of total expulsions and suspensions show Black males, who make up 8% of the total national school population, comprise 22% of expulsions and 23% of suspensions (Ladson-Billings 2011, Polite and Davis 1999). These data points do not correlate to higher rates of violent offenses among the young Black male population considering disaggregation of suspension and expulsion data indicate Black students are expelled 3.5% more frequently, for the exact or minor offenses than White students (Adams et al. 2012).

Concerns related to the school policies targeting, what many equate to typical school-aged behaviors, are exacerbated by statistics indicating twice as many suspended students were likely to repeat a grade and three times as many were prone to be involved with the juvenile justice system. Once kids enter that system, they are more likely to fail in school, which sequentially raises their odds for arrest in the future. It is important for school leaders and school-based police officers assigning consequences for behaviors to recognize children

suspended from school are predisposed to retention, dropping out of school, committing crimes, and/or experiencing incarceration in adulthood (Advancement Project, 2013).

This phenomenon and over-reaction of schools to modify student behaviors increased to the point where academic leaders, advocates for children's rights, community leaders, and civic organizations named it the school-to-prison pipeline. Other common terms are the schoolhouse to jailhouse track, or even the cradle to prison track as students as young as pre-kindergarten age are targeted by these harsh consequences (Wald and Losen 2003; NAACP 2005; Advancement Project 2006; Children's Defense Fund 2007). In fact, many of these entities consider the school-to-prison pipeline "more than an education crisis; it is a racial justice crisis because the students pushed out through harsh discipline are disproportionately students of color" (Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline, 2012, p.2). According to a call to action by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, "the school-to-prison pipeline is one of the most urgent challenges in education today" (2005).

Recent studies have shown even minor changes to disciplinary practices by teachers and administrators can disrupt the pipeline: briefly training school personnel to adopt a more empathetic and restorative mindset when disciplining students cut suspensions by 50% (Okonofua et.al, 2016; Cook et.al, 2018). Similarly, training students in expectations where racial disparities exist lowered office referrals and suspensions by comparable amounts (McIntosh et.al, 2017).

**Lack of Educational Opportunities**

In 1981, Jean Anyon's groundbreaking research brought attention to the disparity in educational programs among schools in varying social class neighborhoods.  The population of the schools studied were between 85% and 100% White students- the major differences between the schools was in what Anyon defined as "working class, middle class, affluent professional, and executive elite schools" (p. 5) measured by family income levels.  Her findings indicated children in school with lower income populations received instruction at lower levels of rigor with a higher focus on the basics. One teacher said, "What these children need is the basics…The three Rs-simple skills…they're lazy, I hate to categorize them, but they're lazy" (p. 7). In contrast, teachers at the higher income schools (affluent professionals) were quoted as saying, "they'll go to the best schools, and we have to prepare them…not just academics; they need to learn to think. They will have important jobs, and they need to be able to think things through…I try to get them to create an environment where they can solve problems- they manipulate variables and solve a problem (p. 24). Nearly forty years later, much is the same.

Many teachers, leaders, and school policies perpetuate inequalities between White and Black students as children of color receive, not only higher instances of discipline, but fewer educational opportunities than their White counterparts. The lack of educational and enrichment opportunities further exacerbates the achievement gap as they manifest in many ways, including "inexperienced teachers, teachers with little or no ongoing professional development, less school funding, students who lack access to good healthcare or nutritional diets, and lower expectations as evidenced by unchallenging curriculums" (Basch, 2011; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). Over fifty years ago, the publication of Equality of Educational Opportunity, more commonly

known as the Coleman Report, first scrutinized Teacher quality. The report's findings still permeate educational research and policies today, as teacher quality continues to be the center of the debate over closing the achievement gap. This may be justified as increasingly more studies link teacher quality to increased student achievement. For example, "the median finding across ten studies of teacher effectiveness estimates that a teacher who is one standard deviation above the average in terms of quality produces additional learning gains for students of 0.12 standard deviations in reading and 0.14 standard deviations in math" (Goldhaber, 2016, p. 60).

One commonly accepted indicator linked to teacher quality is access to academically rigorous classes, including Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB), since assignment of the best teachers to the most academically rigorous courses is commonplace practice in our schools. These advanced and more rigorous courses traditionally have lower enrollment of students of color and from low SES. A review of Advanced Placement data and American College Test (ACT) results by Colgran and Sappington (2015) showed of the 24,550 Illinois students who completed the ACT, those who took an Advanced Placement course in English, Math, Science or Social Studies scored between six and nine percentage points higher than students in regular level course (p. 28). When data was further disaggregated by race and socio-economic status, results showed students of color and from low SES backgrounds taking AP courses scored higher on the ACT; however, the benefits of enrollment in AP courses was much higher for White students.

Findings such as these suggest closing the achievement gap may, in part, be obtained by increasing minority access to higher-level academic courses. However, deeper analyses of the data suggest inequity in educational opportunities appears to be more closely linked to the

construct of traditional schooling, including course design, and may be a disadvantage to diverse students (Colgren & Sappington, 2015). Comparisons of ACT mean scores of populations placed at-risk to the performance of White students not participating in Advanced Placement Courses (m=20.32) show the mean score is comparable to Black students who did participate in the Advanced Placement courses (m=20.93). Equally concerning is data indicating the mean score for White students who participate in AP English (27.93) is seven points higher than the mean for Black students taking the same course of study. Comparisons of Latinx to White students and low SES students to non-low SES students showed similar trends (Colgran & Sappington, 2015, p. 28-30).

**School Culture and Teacher Perceptions**

Another barrier facing our students of promise is school climate and culture. Many schools approach school climate and achievement as separate entities; however, studies have indicated, approaching these components on the contextual level and not as independent factors positively influences teaching and learning pedagogy, student achievement, curriculum programs and policies, and teacher development. The link between the culture and climate of learning environments and change is one that has persisted for centuries. Van Houtte's (2005) critically analyzed decades of research on school achievement and concluded that school culture/climate was the better lens from which to identify and evaluate a school's effectiveness and improvement.  Other researchers agree, "the quality of the climate appears to be the single most predictive factor in any school's capacity to promote student achievement" and that much of the variance in mean school achievement was due to variables associated with school climate.

(Schindler et.al, 2016; Brookover et al., 1978). Teddlie and Stringfield's (1993) definition of school climate included environmental as factors:

> student sense of academic futility, student perception of teacher push, student academic norms, teacher ability, teacher expectations for students, teacher-student efforts to improve, perceptions of the principal's expectations, parental concern for quality of education, perceptions of present school quality, and efforts of the principal to improve. (p. 18-21)

To address this achievement gap epidemic rampant in our schools, leaders must analyze the culture and climate of their school to identify successes among the population of students of promise. They must also institute training and policies to address institutional racism and implicit biases among those they lead.

**Systemic Racism**

Institutional or systemic racism, more subtle and covert than commonly recognized forms of racism, is defined as the shared failure of an organization or institution to deliver a suitable, equitable, or professional service to any person due to their skin color, culture, or ethnic origin. Systemic racism is embedded in the norms of an organization or society and not as outwardly visible as the racism of the past (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1967; Harmon et al., 2020). Systemic racism often manifests itself in the attitudes, behavior, ignorance, microaggressions, and stereotypes of minorities by others outside the group and is inherently covert or hidden (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Cross, 2005; Fiske, 1993, Kohli et al, 2017).

Practices and long standing traditions such as zero tolerance policies, harsh discipline guidelines, arbitrary criteria for admission into rigorous courses, deficit thinking (Valencia, 2012), ignoring of race through ideals in the form of colorblindness (Bonilla-Silva, 2006), limited resources, blaming families for struggles in schools (Brown, K. & Brown, 2012), standardized assessments, and meritocracy (Au, 2016) are considered by some to be among the causes and predictors that perpetuate systemic racism in America's schools. In her 2013 essay, "*I See Trayvon Martin: What Teachers Can Learn from the Tragic Death of a Young Black Male,*" University of Georgia scholar, Bettina Love, challenges "teachers of all backgrounds, in the fact of total honesty with oneself, have prejudged black males" (p. 294). She also urges teachers to unpack and face their underlying and implicit views and perceptions of Black males as a critical step toward "reforming education and lifting the dark cloud over Black males in schools" (p. 294).

## Changing School Culture and Teacher Perceptions

The problems and challenges facing students of color and traditionally placed at risk (students of promise) due to low SES are great, yet educators across the country are seeking solutions. Adopting a school culture in which teachers and leaders view students as family members in need of proper support and empowerment is crucial if we are to build capacity in our students of promise and effect true change in our organizations. Teachers need to have proper training to recognize systemic racism, implicit biases, and limitations of existing policies to develop cultural awareness and trauma sensitivity if we are to minimize and eliminate the impact they have on children. A challenge of leaders is to align the needs of teachers and students to the needs of the organization.

The Opportunity Myth illuminated the problem by casting blame on teachers. This blame may be warranted in some cases, however as Basch (2011) and Mayfield and Garrison-Wade (2015) remind us, low SES students are often given the least experienced teachers and those teachers are given fewer opportunities for professional development. This perpetuates the problems associated with inadvertent racism, which often results in disproportionality of school discipline and suspensions among students of color. Though data highlighting this disparity is prevalent, experimental studies to examine the impact of teacher professional learning and coaching related to discipline measures have been sparse.

One notable exception is a study of the teacher-coaching program My Teaching Partner Secondary (MTP-S) in 2011 which revealed students with teachers assigned a mentor have higher achievement gains, increased behavioral engagement in learning, and stronger peer interactions. This first experimental study, replicated by Gregory et al. (2016), resulted in reduction of the racial discipline gap between Black students and other groups after teachers participated in the mentoring/coaching professional learning group. Control groups in the same school had twice the discipline referrals. Discipline referrals in the experimental group classrooms continued to reduce significantly over the three-year study (p. 184). We can attribute these results to changes in teacher perception, increased rigor of instruction, improved levels of student engagement, and more culturally responsive and positive classroom climate. Maslow's hierarchy of needs illustrates the basic desires humans need to thrive- physiological needs in the form of food, water, shelter, etc. are the foundation of Maslow's theory. However, Wahba & Bridwell (1976) indicate the order of need fulfillment is not succinct; yet varies based on the individual. For example, those with eating disorders will forego the basic physical needs for their desire for belonging. Recognizing our students come to school with varying levels of need

fulfillment, schools are beginning to develop student centered programs to provide support in these areas.

**Providing Non-traditional Supports**

Research around nontraditional supports is marginal and the impact of these supports for students of promise has not been extensively studied. Morgan, Sinatra, Eschenauer (2015) found that high school seniors who participated in GEAR-UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) for economically disadvantaged students and their families commonly reported that the program was significant in assisting them with completion of high school. In addition, they commonly believed that this program prepared them for post-high school studies and helped them realize that adults were interested in their future. Services provided by GEAR-UP are regulated by the US Department of Education, which awards grants to systems to provide early college awareness and support to low income, minority, and would-be first-generation college students. These services include tutoring, mentoring, academic and financial preparation, and assistance with financial aid and college scholarships (Gaining early awareness and readiness for Undergraduate Programs (USDOE, 2022).

Boston College researchers, Sibley, et al., investigated the impact of support on student success and found that social and emotional learning "which provides a foundation for a safe and positive learning environment" improves student learning and academic success (Weissberg et al., 2015). Providing teachers with job imbedded, relevant professional learning to understand how to better engage with students of promise from differing backgrounds, reimagining educational programs within public high schools to provide more career and technical courses to

prepare all students for post-secondary options, and creative programs to support student needs outside of the school are some actions to address this problem.

**Wraparound Service Models**

Systems of care often referred to as wraparound, service models exist in nearly all 50 states. There are close to 700 wraparound programs in the U.S. serving 75,000 youth and families (Walker et al., 2017, p. 2090). Wraparound is a family-centered, strengths-based delivery model (Stroul & Friedman, 1996) with community-embedded support and services including community-based support and services such as mental and occupational health counseling and treatments. These services work collaboratively to meet the needs of youth with serious mental health disorders and their families (Graves & Shelton, 2007) and exist with the assumption youth and families are equal partners with equal input to the professionals on their team. Since its commencement, government directives have mandated the involvement of families in developing, implementing, and evaluating the delivery of mental health services (Jivanjee & Robinson, 2007).  A review of wraparound model studies revealed encouraging evidence of the benefits (Burns et al., 1999) however most of the studies were fraught with internal validity issues due to low-level designs (Burns et al., 2000). A 2011 study, Families' Experiences in Wraparound: A Qualitative Study (Painter, Allen, & Perry) interviewed wraparound participants and found 75% felt better able to advocate for their child and had obtained more knowledge of their rights when participating in the service model from its inception (p. 162).

The key to effective wraparound mental health services is to assure youth and families complete the prescribed program. Among those who do complete a model of service, student

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self-awareness and parent comfort as an advocate for their child are direct indicators of higher student self-image and academic achievement. Thus, the achievement gap may narrow. Unfortunately, many minority and low SES families exit programs prior to completion. Early exit from mental health treatment leads to reduction of the benefits (Brand & Jungmann, 2014) and often contributes to negative consequences for young participants (Mendenhall et al, 2014). This is particularly accurate when participation in wraparound services because connections of all systems of support need to meet the specific needs of the youth and family. In Suter and Bruns' (2009) meta-analysis of wraparound studies, attrition from services occurred for 15% to 35% of those served. Similarly, Clarke and colleagues (1992) reported attrition at 33% for wraparound participants. Most of such studies focus on Caucasians, thus a need to investigate impacts of "sustainable evidence based" interventions on diverse groups is necessary. External analysis of our current system suggests we must begin looking for alternatives to current school and community programs.

*Exploring Attrition, Fidelity, and Effectiveness of Wraparound Services Among Low-Income Youth of Different Racial Backgrounds* (2017) examined reasons for ending services, attrition vs. completion, and found a significant difference, p=.015, by racial background. Attrition rates were statistically different between African American and Caucasian participants (p=.004). Low SES African American youth had the highest rate of attrition with 63%. Over half the participants did not complete services (Yohannan et al., p. 434).  It is notable that White and Black participants from higher SES homes had comparable completion rates.  This study also suggests, "physicians, school personnel, and other health care providers should strive to be a part of wraparound teams to decrease the likelihood of service gaps and improve youth outcomes" (p.

437). Tailoring service and intervention plans in a collaborative community-based model based on level of income has the potential to improve outcomes and minimize gaps in services.

**Student Voice**

The importance of school and community involvement in successful wraparound service plans is important, however youth involvement and voice in team-based treatment is imperative. Walker, Siebel, and Jackson's study analyzed video-recordings of wraparound team meetings in a high school setting and found on average, youth spoke continuously without adult interruption in only 2% of the segments that were recorded" (p. 2091). This is especially disturbing because adolescents tend to be disinclined to share private information with caregivers or other adults (Daddis & Randolph 2010; Hawk et al. 2009) and is even more significant for youth who struggle with behavior disorders and adjustment difficulties (Daddis & Randolph 2010; Soenens et al. 2006).

The Achieve My Plan (AMP) model focuses on youth voice by involving them in the development of their processes and service plans. Exit surveys (Walker et al., 2017) indicated AMP participants had higher scores on a Youth Empowerment Scale than non-participants (p.2097). Although the findings were not statistically significant, the increased measurement of youth perception of their involvement was significant, thus establishing credibility to involving youth in their wraparound service team without significant financial burden to the system (p. 2098). Painter, Allen, and Perry (2011) found continual family and student participation in the wraparound process increases the likelihood of program completion and successful outcomes.

**Successful Mentoring Programs**

Regardless of the program, the evidence is clear, for achievement and graduation rates to increase, schools must begin to adopt support models to reach the needs of all students. To address this epidemic, schools must look at the cultural environment to analyze ways to improve success among this population. Partnerships between institutions have led to extensions of wraparound services and social emotional support. One symbol of a collaborative, caring culture is establishment of mentoring programs within public schools. This shows a lasting commitment between schools, community mentors and student success. Mentoring has a long history, dating back to the Ancient Greeks, and is nothing new in education. However, interest in providing mentoring programs gained attention in 2003 when President Bush pledged hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding to support such efforts in America's public schools (Dappen & Iserhagen, 2005).

In 1995, Benard found that contact with at least one caring, compassionate person who focuses on resiliency and understands a child's behavior was directly linked to their experiences outside of school could be a major contributor to her success (p.1). A study conducted for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Silent Epidemic - Perspectives of High School Dropouts, (Bridgeland et al., 2006) revealed that 41% of students who had left high school believed they had someone in school to talk to about personal problems. Additionally, 62% said their school needed to do more to help students with problems outside of class (p.5).

Supporters for mentoring programs assert they may be essential in changing the life course for at-risk youth. However, meta-analysis of 71 youth mentoring program evaluations by DuBois and colleagues (2002), found only a modest short-term benefit of mentoring and

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substantial discrepancies across programs (Lakind et. al, 2014). In their 2014 semi-structured interviews, Lakind, Eddy and Zell focused on the role of professional mentors serving youth of promise. After transcribing, coding, and analyzing transcripts using a thematic approach these interviews revealed that mentors described "professionalism" as a priority and serving multiple children full-time allowed them to quickly build efficacy and credibility among their mentees (p. 713-714). Other studies indicate the effectiveness of mentoring programs was tied to recruiting mentors with work experience in helping professions, clear communication of expectations for meeting times, hosting activities for mentors and youth, and providing ongoing training for mentors that was systematically implemented (DuBois et al., 2002). Though the majority of findings suggest professional mentors or recruiting those with a background working with youth are beneficial to the success of a program, it may be possible to provide mentors with training that prepares them for such roles (Wyman, et al., 2010).

Project MALES, a mentoring program for Latino young men, was launched in 2008 to address the growing achievement gap between Latinx students and their peers. At this time Latinas were entering and graduating from postsecondary institutions at much higher rates than Latinos. In fact, "six out of ten college degrees earned by all Latinx students are earned by Latinas (Campos, 2018, p. 54). A 2008 study commissioned by the University of Texas focused attention away from deficit-based thinking of the time toward larger socio-cultural, structural factors that perpetuated the gap in Latino college enrollment and degree attainment. Among these factors was lack of role models for high-school males of color. As a result, the University of Texas in partnership with the Austin Unified School District's Travis Early College High School (TECHS) collaborated to provide these young men mentors utilizing the MALES mentoring model and program. The goal was to improve high school performance, college

entrance, and sustainability of this group beyond high school by addressing the social, economic, and cultural obstacles impeding their success. The results have gone far beyond that.

The program has been extremely successful by providing strategic and systemic supports for Latinos and has spawned additional MALES programs and research for the Latinx and Black Male populations to address needed change in narrative away from hopeless, criminalized and deficit misrepresentations of boys and men of color, and implementation of culturally relevant and inclusive systemic practices (Campos, 2018, p.58). Practice-based research programs like Project MALES in collaboration and cooperation between K-12 and higher education institutions, government and private initiatives have provided some of the answers needed to sustain structural and systemic change for the futures of young men of color.

**The On-campus Systems of Care Center**

The studies SOC center was the vision of former principal Leigh Colburn. In her ten-year tenure, she witnessed a heart-breaking number of students with potential drop out due to circumstances beyond the reach of the school. Leigh envisioned a program providing non-traditional support to students and their families necessary to eliminate social, legal, emotional, and financial issues hindering students from focusing on their schoolwork. The foundation of the center rests upon the following tenants:

(1) We believe in the power and truth of the student voice.

(2) We believe academic and life success begins by understanding "the why and the who" of the whole child.

(3) We believe every student deserves the opportunity to fulfill his or her potential, and

we believe our students and families can overcome negative life circumstances to create a

better future.

(4) We believe in the power of community collaboration to transform lives. (SLC Vision

Statement 2015).

After leaving her position with the school system Ms. Colburn founded The Centergy Project

(TCP) and consults with districts interested in providing embedded wraparound services within

their schools. Currently TCP is working with schools across the country including Georgia,

Illinois, Alabama, and Virginia to launch student and family support centers customized to the

barriers and assets of each community. A recent Georgia DOE press release video includes

Deputy Superintendent for School Improvement, Dr. Stephanie S. Johnson's reference to TCP,

Leigh Colburn, and research supporting school interventions in all things affecting student

achievement. Dr. Johnson discussed her visit to the school's center and the inspiration for a

Georgia initiative to provide funds for extended service directors to each Georgia Regional

Educational Service Association (RESA).

**Summary**

Despite continual efforts to close the racial and socio-economic gaps in graduation rates

for America's students and over 50 years of implementation, school leaders still struggle to find

a solution. It is clear that legislating change at the federal level, tracking data utilizing methods

established by individual states, and traditional support are not enough to solve this systemic

problem.

# Chapter 3: Methods

## Introduction

Former secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, in a 2010 speech, discussed two obstacles or barriers to obtaining a high school diploma through graduating with their four-year cohort for many of America's students: "the belief poverty is a destiny...and the blame game," from all levels of the educational system that eventually lands with parents. We do not need to end systemic poverty to provide a rigorous and equitable education to all students. As former President Obama famously said in his 2010 State of the Union Address, "a good school is the best anti-poverty program of all."

Since the 1960s, when graduation from high school became a societal norm, governmental programs have sought to increase graduation rates among marginalized groups: often identified as those from impoverished familial backgrounds. Unfortunately, this created the paradigm of dropouts as delinquents and intransigence among educational leaders who seek to place blame for the dropout crisis on others (Dorn, 1993). Individuals without a high school diploma often face debilitating economic problems that pale in comparison to societal beliefs that they are "misfits" who struggle with poor social adjustment, ineffective personal skills, and antisocial behaviors (McDill & Pallas, 1986, McCaul et al., 1992; Dorn, 1993).

As our economy continues to grow, a high school diploma is the minimal requirement needed for workers to obtain stable employment, earn a living wage, and begin to increase community standard of living (Dupere, et. al., 2018; Autor, 2014; Goldin & Katz, 2009). Choosing to leave high school before graduation potentially leads to perpetual economic hardships, infrequent access to healthcare, and difficult familial relationships (Dupere, et. al., 2018; Iceland, 2013, Campbell, 2015). In an Education Week inquiry of teachers and school

leaders, "three-quarters of teachers and principals named the students themselves, and nearly that many named parents" as responsible for a student's decision to drop out of high school (Gewirtz, 2009). Rather than place blame on families, systemic racism, federal accountability measures, or a myriad of other scapegoats, school leadership must identify cogent, sustainable interventions aimed at supporting the needs of students if we intend to assure every student entering our buildings exits with their diploma.

An in-depth investigation of literature for this study, conducted over a five-year period, focused on high school graduation rates and the intersectionality of race and socioeconomic status leading to gaps between student populations. Research focused on the history of dropout prevention programs, funding by public and private groups to address lower graduation rates among students of color and those participating in the National School Lunch Program, and initiatives aimed at closing the gaps among marginalized groups and students served through at-risk programs. Findings indicate that, though the graduation gap has narrowed in 35 states as students of color are achieving graduation at higher rates, an average of 10.8 percentage points between Black and White students and 8.6 percentage points between Latinx and White students still remains (Atwell et al., 2020). In response to these statistics and increasing pressures to improve four-year cohort graduation rates, school leaders continually seek new and improved programs and resources to meet the needs of their students, both inside and outside the school building. Many believe if we can effectively address these needs, students considering leaving school to support their families will remain and meet their four-year cohort graduation deadline.

This qualitative explanatory case study investigated the perceptions of young adults who graduated from high school with their 2018 or 2019 four-year graduation cohort and frequently participated in extended wrap around services provided by an on-campus systems of care center

at a semi-urban Georgia high school. Frequent participation, specified as having attended and

actively engaged in a minimum of three programs and services offered by the center throughout

their high school career, was imperative to the study. Case studies provide the researcher the

opportunity to "delve into the essence of a topic…seek to discover and understand meaning of

experiences…select small and purposeful samples…study real-world situations… and

authentically depict the voices of participants while remaining reflexive and politically aware

(Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019, p. 40-41). Case study outcomes allow for more comprehensive

understanding of a bounded unit, in this case a small group of SOC participants, and leads to

transferability as others examine the case and learn from it (Burkholder, 2020).   A qualitative

explanatory case design was used as this study aims to answer how participation in an on-

campus SOC impacted on-time graduation. An explanatory approach is also warranted as the

researcher possesses little control over the occurrence of the events and allows study of the

phenomena within the contexts of real-life situations where little has been written. Further, the

explanatory approach examines data at a deeper level to explain the phenomenon in the data in

complex, multivariate cases (Zanial, 2007).

Considering the researcher had little control over the relationships between participation

in services, student perceptions, and the impact of participating in those services toward meeting

graduation, a more in-depth investigation into the" how and why questions" associated with any

educational program evaluation is warranted (Yin, 2002; Yazan, 2015).  As I attempted to gain

understanding of how the extended systems of care programs affected participants from

traditionally marginalized groups, conducting an explanatory case study allowed for deeper

investigation into the lived experiences of the participants.

School and district data shows the four-year graduation rates in the studied high school for all students have improved; however, no information exists to identify if participation in the extended systems of care services was a contributing factor toward reaching on-time graduation. This study is of particular importance considering the founding goal of the on-campus systems of care center was to increase four-year cohort graduation rates among the most marginalized student groups.

For this study, a qualitative approach was chosen considering International Review Board policies, district constraints, and the inability to manipulate the statistical relationship between the independent variable, participation in services, and dependent variable, on-time graduation, makes any form of experimentation impossible and impractical (Jhangiani & Chiang, 2016).

**Research Design, Methodology, and Source of Date**

Invitations to participate in this study were sent via text or E-mail to randomly selected individuals of the population of 2019 and 2020 graduates who frequently participated in offered services and events. Operationalization of frequent participation included attending and engaging in a minimum of three extended systems of care services or programs while a student at the school. Potential participants were chosen utilizing an existing database of former students maintained by the center staff. Selected graduates, contacted via E-mail, telephone, or text message, had the option to participate in the open ended, semi-structured interview research study. Utilizing open ended interview questions are often used to gather data in explanatory research and can lead to rich, descriptive data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019). Purposive or judgment sampling was necessary to assure participants possessed the knowledge and experiences to provide quality information to answer the research questions.

A semi-structured interview process consisting of open-ended questions was chosen to provide participants with the time and freedom to share their unique views and experiences and to allow for follow-up questioning on emerging patterns, ideas, and events (Baumgartner & Pahl-Wostl, 2013). Furthermore, this design allowed participants to voice their stories and experiences while a student attending this high school and participating openly and freely in extended systems of care programs (Creswell 2004). Consequently, giving the opportunity for participant voice to provide information rich in details and descriptions.

Additionally, synthesized Member Checking (SMC) was employed in the study to assure participant stories were interpreted and reported with fidelity and to integrate their interpretations of the data in the findings. SMC utilizes the input of the research participants throughout the process to evaluate the emerging themes throughout the data review process related to their input and to provide the researcher with clarification of their intentions if necessary. This form of member checking emerges and engages the participants at a deeper level by integrating their interpretations of the data into the final reporting of results (Birt, et. al, 2016). For this study, SMC allowed participants to review the compilation of the interview data and the opportunity to provide additional information or to clarify misconceptions. As an explanatory case study seeks to identify the why and how related to a phenomenon, SMC proved important to assure accurate interpretation and reporting of the participants' experiences.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this case study was to identify student perceptions of services provided by their on campus extended systems of care center related to their on-time graduation from high school and to inform educational leaders of best practices for supporting student needs in an on-campus extended wraparound service model. Specifically, the research questions included

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1. To what extent does participation in full-service community school wrap around service model programs impact the social-emotional wellbeing of students of promise and support meeting their graduation goals?

    a. What are the perceptions of graduates from 2019 and 2020 who were placed at risk and participated in full-service community schools wraparound services model programs in a Title-I high school student life center?

    b. What services best met the needs of this group while in school?

    c. What additional services would have been helpful to support graduating on time?

    d. What connections did the services they participated in have to achieving on-time graduation?

2. What do administrators interested in creating an on-campus systems of care model need to know from participants to best address the social, emotional, economic, and academic needs of students when considering an onsite extended wraparound service delivery model?

## Context/Setting

Much research exists in the area of closing the graduation gap between demographic groups and equitable access to educational opportunities, however there is a gap in the research related to programs like the on campus model these individuals attended and perceptions of participants engaging in on-campus extended systems of care models. Specifically, does frequent participation in extended systems of care services influence the decision to remain in school and subsequently graduate with their four-year cohort and what services were the most influential to them in regard to meeting that goal? Considering school leaders are under increasing pressure to improve graduation rates for historically marginalized groups, suggestions and advice of former

student participants may be invaluable toward building a culture of mutual respect and understanding of what these students truly need from school leaders.

Due to Covid-19 protocols in place at the time of IRB approval for this study, the interviews were conducted via Auburn Zoom, rather than in-person.

**Participants**

Potential participants (n=16), selected from the provided database in collaboration with the center's staff to assure they meet the sample criteria, were sent an E-mail or text message invitation to participate in the case study by completing an Auburn Qualtrics questionnaire to determine if they met the frequent participation criteria. Survey data yielded seven individuals willing to further contribute based on personal interest in participating in the interview process. From this population of interested candidates, five met all the operational definition of frequent participants and were invited to participate in the interview process. Because one was a close associate, four continued on with the study. All survey respondents were entered into a drawing for a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card.

Participation in the study was voluntary and all identities were protected with pseudonyms of their choice. The small sample size supports in-depth understanding that is essential for analysis (Sandelowski, 1996) in qualitative case study design. Considering this was a purposive sample, the goal was to select individuals who were able to provide information that is relevant to the investigation to select "information rich" participants (Luvorsky, 1995; Marshall, 1996; Vasileiou et al., 2018).

The final four participants were chosen because they met all study requirements. Finally, all four participants were given the opportunity to engage deeper in the interpretation and

reporting of results through the SMC process (Birt, et. al, 2016). The input of the research participants supported the evaluation of the emerging themes related to their contributions and provided clarifications as needed.

The four study participants included two males and two females of the 2018 and 2019 graduating classes. Table 1 provides information about the four participants.

Table 1:

*Overview of Study Participants*

| Demographic Information | SOC Services Utilized in High School | Family and Educational Background |
|---|---|---|
| Anna, Latinx female, who graduated with the class of 2018. She described herself while in high school as "primarily lower middle class. And that was just because I did have a job. I was working." Anna also shared that she had "a lot of things going on" and visited a therapist to assist with anxiety. Throughout the interview, Anna discussed anxiety and stress (seven times). **Interview length= 28:48** | Anna first visited the center when the school nurse suggested she go there to get feminine hygiene products since she frequently needed them.  She then continued to participate in services including tutoring, food/supply pantries, help with printing school projects, and mental health support. | Currently Anna is working on her bachelor's degree and plans to become a pharmacist. She participated in the IB program and graduated with her IB Diploma. Anna took a gap year and said, "It's just not a lot of stress that I had in high school," about her college experience. |
| Dee, Latinx male, graduate of the class of 2019. Dee identified himself as lower middle class while in high school. He said, "it's just lunch money… I didn't have a car, so I would Uber a lot… I felt bad for my mom because she was struggling," to explain why he worked through high school. Though Dee did not specifically mention a mental health disorder, he did talk about stress (two instances) and therapy (four times) during | Dee first visited the center because his grades were slipping, and several teachers recommended that he seek academic support. While there he saw other students engaging in various services, which increased his comfort and allowed him to share with the center's staff and teachers who supported tutoring. Mentoring by these adults and counseling to overcome some of life's stresses were also | Dee experienced the death of two important people in his life early in high school: his 27-year-old brother and mother were both lost to cancer. During this time his father, who had left the family, was involved in a new relationship, and had a young child. Dee mentioned "it always bugged me" when he wasn't around to help him and his mother. He also reported a more solid |

| his interview.<br>**Interview length= 34:16** | utilized. He was a football player and full IB student and reported the importance of these supports with helping him finish school. | relationship with his father as he grew to understand him better. Dee completed the courses for the IB Diploma but was not successful on the exams. He currently works full time and attends a local university. |
|---|---|---|
| Ashley, White female, class of 2019. Ashley reports being upper middle class while in high school. During her freshman year, her parents were divorcing, and she was left fearful of what might happen next. This impacted her mental health and academic performance. Ashley discussed anxiety and stress as being major concerns and general mental health needs (eight times) during her interview.<br>**Interview length= 30:18** | Ashley is very open about her mental health status and the need for support she received from the center. She participated in group and one-on-one therapy sessions at school. Additionally, she was involved in tutoring programs and was mentored by a member of the center's staff. | Ashley started high school as an IB Diploma candidate but decided to pursue a college preparation program instead. Today she lives with her mother. She also continues to see a therapist to support her mental health. Ashley took some time between high school and college and is attending university this fall. |
| Tyrone, African American or Black male, class of 2019. Tyrone reports being lower middle class during high school. Tyrone experienced the trauma of losing both of his parents within a short period of time. He mentioned "anxiety and depression" and general mental health needs or services (five times) during his interview.<br>**Interview length= 27:29** | Tyrone said, "when I lost my second parent, I knew someone at the Student Life Center." This was when he was "truly introduced to the center." He also reported using the food pantry, mental health services, guest speakers, and "all kinds of different things" provided by the center. The center "helped me boost my confidence and made me process a lot of feelings." | Tyrone was an IB Career Pathway student and graduated with his full IB Diploma. He says the center was instrumental in helping him obtain this goal. He is currently living with his Godparents and attends a local university as an art illustration and creative writing student. |

**Role of the Researcher**

I am a content coordinator in the district the school is located in and have access to all

student graduation data to conduct a demographic analysis for the seven years the center has

been open.  I am also frequently in the buildings across the district, however, have little contact with students in a supervisory role. Two of my children also attended the school during the time the intended participants were there and graduated in 2019 and 2020. Considering it was probable that some of the former students may have had more than a causal association with my children who attended and graduated from the school within the timeline of the study, any potential participants who were close associates with my children were excluded from the interview portion. To further operationalize, "close associate" was defined as someone who had a more than casual knowledge, including spending time outside of class or school with them. Those who took a class with them but did not engage with them outside of class were not excluded. This process was intentional to minimize conflict of interest, undue influence, or coercion as much as possible. Additionally, the former director, a personal and professional acquaintance, agreed to support this study by collaborating in the purposeful sampling process to  minimize the potential conflict of interest.

**Researcher Positionality**

As a life-long social studies educator whose philosophy is rooted in the works of Dewey and Freire, I recognize my biases toward social justice, equitable access, and education as a vehicle for social change. To assure reflectivity, I utilized a thematic approach to analyzing the interview transcripts and shared the findings with interview participants through Synthesized Member Checking (SMC)  prior to publication to assure accurate representation of their stories.

**Data Collection Methods**

The study initiated with an E-mail containing a letter of introduction and invitation to participate in a brief survey seeking information about graduate perceptions of the center .

Embedded within the survey were questions related to service participation, socio-economic status, current educational and economic activities, and the opportunity to participate further through a future interview. In December of 2021, thirty graduates of the classes of 2019 and 2020 were randomly chosen from a database provided by the center's staff. These individuals were sent an E-mail outlining the study and giving them the opportunity to participate in the research. After two weeks, no participants responded, so a second E-mail was sent. At that time, two individuals completed the survey with just one expressing interest in participating further. On January 29, 2022, a request to adjust the participant recruitment method for the study was submitted and approved by the IRB. (Appendix B) thus, allowing recruitment and contact of participants via text messaging. This adjustment produced more interested participants and the study sample was chosen.

The initial survey was intended to determine participants interested in sharing their experiences and continuing with the case study. Analysis of the survey data provided evidence to determine the level of participation in extended systems of care services and to generate a list of services the interview participants engaged in or with while a student at the school. The data was also used to select participants who utilized the most services to assure knowledge and understanding of the center and that they possessed the knowledge and level of participation necessary to contribute robust conversations and data toward the study

Selected participants for interviews were contacted via text message to select a time to meet with the researcher that was convenient for them. Interviews with four graduates who frequently participated in systems of care services were conducted in May and June of 2022 via Auburn Zoom. The semi-structured interview questions were designed to gather perception data related to the information discussed in the interest survey and literature review: systems of care

services, impact of poverty, teacher expectations, discipline, school culture and climate, mentoring, etc. Conducting the interviews remotely adhered to Auburn University Covid-19 mitigation and protection policies at the time of IRB approval. Participants selected a time convenient for them and were encouraged to follow privacy protocols which included using a pseudonym, disabling cookies, and meeting in a private location during the semi-structured interview process. Additionally, participants were informed that using Auburn Zoom allowed for greater security measures and all data collected would be stored in Auburn Box considering these resources require dual authentication for access.

Permission to conduct the study was requested by the district as required by the School Board policy indicating all research conducted utilizing existing data and school system resources, names, etc. within one week of securing approval for Auburn University's International Review Board.

**Data Generation**

Data was gathered in three parts (1) Auburn Qualtrics survey data from the invited group beginning in February 2022  (2) transcripts from interviews conducted during May and June of2022 and (3) Synthesized Member Checking from August to September 2022. Analysis of Qualtrics survey data included review of participants (n=7) who were interested in continuing with the study. All survey data remains stored with Auburn Qualtrics to assure protection of participant identifiers and answers. Transcriptions of the Zoom interviews were initially done using Otter.ai, then uploaded to Auburn Box for secure storage to assure protection of participant's anonymity. The interview transcriptions were only accessible by the researcher and dissertation chair.

From those seven initially interested students, two were eliminated since they did not meet the operational definition of frequent participation: attending and engaging in a minimum of three services or programs while a student at the school. The remaining five interested participants were given several dates and times to meet for the interview using Auburn Zoom through invitation via E-mail or text. All five potential participants wished to continue with the process.

Prior to beginning the Zoom meeting, participants had the opportunity to talk briefly about their experiences at the school which included inquiring about their familiarity with my children. One participant, Dee, reported being a classmate with one of my children during their sophomore year. Another potential participant, Jesse, was on the lacrosse team with my other child. Dee continued with the study due to his minimal contact with one of my children. Jesse, however, was considered a close associate of my son due to the extent of contact he had playing on the team with my son to avoid any potential conflict of interest or coercion.

Additionally, during the preliminary conversation we chose their pseudonym to assure anonymity and discussed protective protocols employed to secure data such as using Auburn Zoom due to the security features including dual authentication and storage of all transcripts, videos, and data on Auburn Box. I also suggested they disable cookies and work in a secluded location to better protect their privacy.

The results of the completed interest surveys were reviewed using quantitative analysis via Qualtrics. Specifically, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine which systems of care services graduates most often engaged with to support and guide the interview process and assure selection of participants who met the operationalized definition of frequent participation in systems of care services and programs.

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Though initial data for this study focused on quantitative statistics, "the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon" which is best achieved by using purposeful sampling strategies (Creswell, 2004, p. 203). Thus, the participants chosen from the survey respondents were based on specific criteria: participated in services throughout their four years in high school, participated in at least three different services and/or programs, graduated on time with their four-year cohort, and expressed willingness to share their stories. Predetermined questions to organize and structure the interviews and guide the participant responses toward the experiences that are central to this study were used following the semi-structured interview process. The questions employed were not intended to standardize data collection; rather to supply a framework for understanding and to elicit and guide the participants' narratives.

This  study employed a structured and explicit analysis protocol that involved the following steps:

(1)  Became familiar with the data by transcribing the recorded interviews and developing preliminary codes for emerging themes.

(2) Assigned preliminary codes to describe the content on the transcripts.

(3) Identified themes among the interview transcripts utilizing color-coded sticky notes for each theme identified in step two.

(4) Reviewed and refined themes by rereading multiple times. This iterative process is designed to identify contradictions within data coded for a theme or large themes that should be broken into multiple parts.

(5) Name and describe the themes in detail and synthesize the data to report the

themes (Mortenson, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2008).

**Chapter 4: Results**

**Introduction:**

This chapter contains the results of this qualitative explanatory case study designed to answer the research questions:

(1) To what extent does participation in full-service community school wrap around service model programs impact the social-emotional wellbeing of students of promise and support meeting their graduation goals?

(2) What do administrators interested in creating an on-campus systems of care service center need to know from participants to best address the social, emotional, economic, and academic needs of students when considering an onsite extended wraparound service delivery model?

This chapter also shares the methods used to gather, store, and analyze the data obtained through semi-structured interviews with individuals who frequently engaged with service and met their graduation goals. A comprehensive description of the Braun and Clarke thematic analysis processes, which was applied across a data set is also included. This process supports data description by identifying, analyzing, and reporting repeated patterns. It also contains detailed processes for interpreting and selecting codes and constructing themes from the data set. Tables to present participant information, detailed codes, and quotes from individual participants are utilized to emphasize key information, themes, and trends.

School leaders are under immense pressure to assure the safety and security of their students while responding to political pressures to increase high school graduation rates. Institutional closures due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, social concerns related to perceived systemic racism and inequitable access to educational opportunities, and growing attending on a

national mental health crisis are among additional barriers to student and school success. Though much information showing low socioeconomic status (SES) is directly linked to student academic success, it is clear that other factors contribute to the dropout crisis and struggles our students experience while in school. Many school leaders are considering the on-campus extended systems of care model to support student needs and to assure every student has equitable access to education by attempting to eliminate economic and social barriers by providing food pantries, housing support, supplies, in-house counseling, family therapy, legal aid, etc. This study was designed to elicit information from participants in such a model by allowing them to share their personal experiences. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to contribute to the research by checking and contributing further to the data.

**Data Reflexivity**

Although anonymous interviews are the most immune to researcher bias and the most trustworthy, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions minimize the influence of the researcher's attitudes and previous findings (Cresswell, 2004). Within this study, the researcher was the collector and analyzer of data, which can lead to potential biases. Such biases may be reduced by the active engagement and involvement of participants in checking and confirming the results and accuracy by which they reflect their experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Birt, et.al, 2016). Member checking, also known as respondent or participant validation, helps assure truthfulness in reporting of data and is particularly useful in qualitative case studies involving interviews.

Since the goal of the study was to describe participant perceptions of the impact of participating in systems of care services in meeting their graduation goals and garnering their suggestions and advice for administrators considering similar support, the participants are the

final judge of validity. For this reason, synthesized member checking was employed to assure their stories were told accurately and completely.  Synthesized Member Checking (SMC) "provides a novel approach to consider and mitigate for epistemological and ethical concerns" (Birt, et. al, 2016). In their *Member Checking: A Tool to Enhance Trustworthiness or Merely a Nod to Validation?* Linda Birt, Suzanne Scott, Debbie Cavers, Christine Campbell, and Fiona Walter explain that SMC studies provide "synthesized data from the final stages of analysis...alongside illustrative quotes and interpreted data" to participants (p. 1806). The five step SMC process allows a researcher to (1) prepare the synthesized summary from interview data and emerging themes along with quotes from interviews that represent the themes; (2) check participant eligibility to receive information with gatekeepers and others, when necessary (not relevant in this study); (3) Send participants data and request comments; and (4) gather, analyze and add data to the findings and (5) integrate findings from both stages  (Birt, et. al, 2016).

At the end of the interviews, each participant was introduced to the concept of SMC and informed of the opportunity to participate in the process when the results were finalized. On August 26, 2022, each participant was sent an E-mail with a link to a personal copy of the results, offering them the opportunity to review the information. A subsequent text message reminding them of the opportunity to participate in the member checking stage was sent on September 3, 2022. Participants were encouraged to schedule an Auburn Zoom interview to further discuss their perceptions and comment on whether the results accurately echo their experiences. They were also provided opportunities to add further clarifications to their own interview following time to reflect.  This differs from traditional forms of member checking as additional data was gathered after the members had the opportunity to interpret the interview

analysis and encouraged them to make further comments. Those findings were then integrated into the final reporting of results.

**Findings**

As the interview was designed using a semi-structured process, the researcher was able to dive deeper into some of the issues and experiences the participants shared. For example, the school offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB), which came up in the first interview as a source of stress for Anna. Considering this, asking each student to describe their program of study and diploma choice was added to the interview questions if they did not naturally share it as a source of stress or reason for seeking support from the center.

Participant answers obtained through the semi-structured interviews were initially transcribed using Otter.ai then reviewed and modified by hand while simultaneously listening to the recorded interview and reading the transcripts. The transcripts were compared using a thematic approach which "involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analyzing, and the analysis of the data that you are producing" (Braun & Clarke, 2008). To further organize the information, each participant's transcription was printed on an assigned paper color: Anna (pink), Ashley (yellow), Dee (green), and Tyrone (blue). During the hand-coding process, paper copies of transcripts were secured in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. Upon completion of coding and analysis, photos of the documents were uploaded to the secured Auburn Box and destroyed by shredding.

To analyze the interview data, a structured and explicit analysis protocol following processes described by Mortenson (2016) and Braun & Clarke (2006, 2016) was utilized. This process focused on in vivo coding by assuring emphasis on the actual spoken words of the participant was the primary identifier of the coding themes.

First, the recorded interview transcriptions, transcribed using Otter.ai and then by hand to assure accuracy, were printed for analysis. The transcripts were read without coding or marking three times to assure familiarity with the shared experiences of the four participants. From this process some preliminary codes emerged. After becoming familiar with the data, the content was described and assigned corresponding preliminary codes. In this phase, coding was done directly on the transcriptions by hand highlighting and underlining information. This process was repeated three times for each transcript using different colored ink and in vivo coding which yielded several trends and themes.

The initially identified trends and themes included mental health, people, trauma, actions, feelings, and support. Each theme was assigned a colored post-it flag which was placed on the transcripts every time the theme was represented by the participant's word or actions. During this process, the four transcripts were read six times, with focus on one initial theme per read.

This study sought to gather information from former on-campus systems of care service participants to determine if participation in services provided by this wrap-around service model program increased and contributed toward meeting the goal of on time graduation. All four study participants reported experiencing some form of trauma and/or significant experience early in their high school career. Trauma, defined as "a sudden and unexpected occurrence that causes intense fear and may involve a threat of psychological harm or actual physical harm" takes on many forms (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2017).

Dee and Tyrone both experienced the deaths of family members, including parents, which impacted their early years in high school. For Tyrone, the death of his mother was the

initial reason for visiting the SLC. "It was mainly because of that, because when I lost my second parent, when I lost my second parent, I knew someone at the Student Life Center. You know, talking to her really helped me process. So that was the first time I was truly introduced to the Student Life Center." (Tyrone, personal communication, June 5, 2022). When asked what prompted his initial visit to the SLC, Dee said, "I don't remember per se. And then in high school, it kind of wrapped back around when my mom and brother both had cancer. And that really drove me over to the guidance counselors and they accepted me with open arms." He said, "I was like a sick puppy, and I didn't want to, I didn't want to feel like that. I don't want to feel like everybody had to, you know, look out for me every day, or cheer me like I was, you know, about to die. I was like, I'm not the one" (Dee, Personal communication, June 4, 2022).

Ashley reported her initial visit to the center during her freshman year was prompted by learning that a trusted adult she had known since kindergarten was working in the center. "And when I got into the high school and saw her, I was like, oh my gosh, I can't believe she's here. And so, I would mostly just within my ninth-grade year, I would just mostly go there and visit with her." Following this information, Ashley revealed that while visiting her mentor, she noticed other students receiving supports and said, "But I kind of already knew that like, I would have to go there within probably my future years because my family life is starting to get a little stressful" During her sophomore year, her grades were slipping and she was officially recommended by a teacher for tutoring and mental health supports because of "falling behind due to some family things and my family couldn't quite support me"

One of the foundations of this particular center and similarly wraparound service models was to provide support including food, supplies, and other needs to assure low SES students were cared for. Anna was the only participant in the study who first visited for support related to

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economic pressures. Anna participated in many services ``their like, therapy sessions, their counseling. I also did after school tutoring. I also did get a few supplies from the area that they have, you know, feminine products, shampoos, so stuff like that." Like the others, subsequent visits showed her additional options that could work for her, "I would see students come in and out of this area. And then if they needed help with, like family issues, they will try to help them in that way. Because I understand that family issues; they can cause a lot of stress at school". Later in the interview, Anna revealed a possible trauma related to failed familial support structures, "You know, because people don't realize how crucial it is for some students to have that source of support in their lives because they don't get it from home."

The need for educational leaders to understand the traumatic experiences students face is clear for this group. Mental health concerns including specific disorders and the need for treatment was a recurring theme. Personal experiences with anxiety, depression, stress, and mental health needs including therapy were shared by each participant multiple times as shown in Table 2. The purpose of this information is not to quantify the data, but to bring attention to the need for school leaders to understand the severity of mental health concerns for our students.

**Table 2**

*Participant Mental Health Concerns*

| Participant | Anxiety/Depression | Stress | Therapy or General |
|---|---|---|---|
| Anna | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Dee | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| Ashley | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Tyrone | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Totals | 6 | 10 | 10 |

For Dee, stress came in many forms during high school and included school workload related to his IB Diploma course of study, playing football, and familial pressures. When asked what prompted his initial visit to the SLC, Dee said, "I always knew since I was in sixth grade. I went to counseling and various, you know, people will have you know, I had some issues regarding mental health prematurely." Similarly, when asked what advice he would give leaders interested in developing an on-campus extended systems of care center for their school he reiterated a focus on "giving these kids a good pathway to success and, you know, mental-mental stability." Additionally, Dee shared pressures to "be that man, I gotta be the best. I got to be the best at everything I do, and when I didn't it just made me miserable." Being scared of failure and his belief that students are often afraid to go to school due to getting bullied or failing was also a stressor for Dee. At one point he shared, "I was really scared because I was failing classes. And I was like, I don't really want to go to school, like, but I mean it because you know, when you start going to school, it just makes the pit deeper and deeper."

Similarly, Anna shared her experiences with stress related to school work and being an IB diploma student as "Yeah, I already went through a lot of the hard stuff. So, I kind of am exposed to that already. So, at the same time, it did cause a lot of stress at that time. And a lot of you know, mental breakdowns and whatnot. But it did end up helping me in the end." Ashley, who started working on her IB Diploma did not finish due to the stress it placed on her. "I did try to do IB in my junior year. However, that's part of the stress that came with this. So, I got out of IB and specifically I did complete my junior year of IB."

For Dee, Tyrone, and Ashley the center was a place to be welcomed without judgment and receive support they were not getting at home. Anna, who did not share personal experience with family issues, also mentioned seeing how the center staff was helpful to other students.

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Table 3 summarizes their reflections related to their family and outside stressors impacting their

participation in mental health supports.

**Table 3:**

*Participant Reflections of the Impact of Family on Mental Health Needs*

| | |
|---|---|
| Ashley | "So, I remember when I was in there was because I was also, falling behind due to some family things and my family couldn't quite support me that way they could. "I had a sleeping pill addiction due to divorce that I was, and my parents were going through. And I struggle with that really badly. And luckily, I got some help within there. That really threw me forward." |
| Dee | "He's [Dad] been there for me, I would say like, as best as he can. I respect him for that. And, you know, I can, I can only ask that he'd be there as best he can, you know, he has, he has a new life now. And a job. Like I understand how starting a new family would be frustrating as well as trying to you know, so I really respect my father for that. And it took a long time for me to really accept that for him. Because at the time, in high school, I, I didn't really-I didn't take it that way. I took it as long as you're not around all the time, you know, to help out around the house if you're helping my mom, and, you know, it always bugged me. And then I realized how hard it is to actually like, bounce around all these things at once. |
| Tyrone | "Students need places where they can just feel really comfortable to express how they're truly feeling, if they can't feel like they can do that at home. And trust me, I've dealt with that a lot of times. Like there have been many times where I felt like I couldn't really speak to someone at home about what I'm dealing with, whether it be through my grievance with my parents, my depression, my anxiety." |
| Anna | "Yeah, other various times where I would see students come in and out of this area, and then they would ask questions to the people or the assistants there. And then they would guide them like, oh, this is what you'd have to do. And then if they needed help with like family issues, they will try to help them in that way. Because I understand that family issues can cause a lot of stress on your school." |

For this group of students, it is very clear that having a safe place at school to receive

support with mental health concerns impacted their success in school. Connections to a trusted

and caring adult was another common theme among the group. Every participant mentioned

school staff as being instrumental in prompting them to participate in the extended systems of

care services. Whether it was the school nurse encouraging Anna to go to the supply closet to

receive complimentary feminine hygiene products, Tyrone and Ashley having a previous

connection to a center staff member, or Dee's teachers recommending tutoring services, these

adults showed their students they were important, and their needs mattered. The participants

remembered the staff being caring, trusting, accepting, and having no judgments related to their

needs. Table 4 summarizes these reflections and the importance of connections to adults.

Table 4:

*Participant Reflections on Connections to Adults*

| Tyrone | "I always knew that I could go to someone in the Student Life Center, whether it be through [counselor] or the leader of the Student Life Center, when I was there and just talk to them about what I'm feeling. And they wouldn't bring any pressure. They wouldn't bring it. They wouldn't bring any pressure, they wouldn't do any judgment, they would just sit there, listen, give their own feedback, and truly be a friend." |
|---|---|
| Anna | "But then on top of it, you have these really great teachers that are able to provide and help you, like, guide you through the services." |
| Dee | "I feel like they try their hardest to, like, get them comfortable, at least at the very least get them comfortable, make them feel like you know, at home. Make them feel as if they, you know, were loved, you know, and I think that's something I appreciate it too is that, you know, when I wasn't feeling loved, I felt loved there. And I felt better getting out and talking my feelings out." |
| Ashley | "I would at least encourage them to at least give it a shot. See what you can always find in there to help you. Because that's what it's there for. It's to help you. I had that paranoia with a ninth grader, I was like, oh my gosh, you're just gonna report it to the school system. And I'm not really gonna do anything. But oh, they really did something. So, that kind of changed my mind and realized all those paranoid thoughts that I might have had about it." |

These shared experiences support previous findings that contact with at least one caring,

compassionate staff member who focuses on resiliency could be a major contributor to a

student's success (Bernard, 1995). This was also a recurring theme when asked what

administrators interested in creating an on-site extended wraparound service model need to

know. As more schools are moving toward creating similar programs to support students with

meeting their graduation goals, these former participants stressed the need to assure "getting some very trusted people to go in the… Center" (Ashley, personal communication, May 29, 2022) and assuring that students are comfortable and want to go to school. Dee said, " I think that's a really big thing is making your kids at school comfortable, so that they want to go to school" and "So, I think it's really important for kids to like an age- at a young age that it's important just to care, just to show that you care. That's really important. And that's a big highlight." Tyrone also talked about the importance of leaders listening to the needs of the students, " I will say this: truly, truly trying to listen to your students and what they deal with. Because I feel like that's the first thing that they need to do, instead of making assumptions. I mean, it has the name students in them. So, it means that they come first. They need to, they need to know what the students are dealing with, what they struggle through, and how they can best help them."

When their experiences were combined, the contributors participated in every service offered throughout their high school careers with tutoring and mental health support ranking the highest when asked what services most benefited them. Additional services, tailored to their individual needs, were also utilized.  For example, Anna mentioned, "and then at some point, I didn't have a computer, or anything, or like a printer at some point. So,  I would stay after school and if I needed things to print off, they would help me with that sort of aid."

When asked about additional services they felt could benefit students in the future, Dee provided additional insight into the stresses that impact many high school students. "I knew kids that were like, outcasted, or something like that, and kids that were popular and stuff. I knew all of them. But I felt really bad, because I felt like it shouldn't be so- like, the Rift, I felt like in high school was a lot between different groups of people." To address this rift between students,

offered this suggestion, "maybe, you know, I don't know, like a diversity class or something or a group activity type of program. I'm not sure, but I didn't see much of that going around…I kind of wish I had that, because I kind of wanted, like, you know, different people to get along. And honestly, there are differences, but and obviously, kids are mean, kids, 16-year-old 15-year-olds, they can get mean, but I think it would have helped a lot of kids, like, be comfortable in their school."

The other participants struggled to identify other areas of need. They did not, however, struggle with giving advice to leaders on the need for programs and, in some cases, tailoring those programs to the demographics and concerns of the community they serve. Table 5 provides participant perceptions on the need for on-campus extend SOC services.

**Table 5:**

*Participants' Perceptions on the Need for On-campus Extended Systems of Care*

| Anna | "But I think at some point, students will be able to benefit from the resources that they offer there. Whether it's tutoring or whether it's financial issues, due to demographics in the area. But I think it is a very good program for schools all around." |
|---|---|
| Dee | "And I feel like every community should, but again, I don't live in those communities. I don't know much about these other schools. It might be a little different, it might be quiet. But I feel like it is important for them to invest in that." |
| Ashley | "And I think that was always what's wrong with the, specifically the United States', education system, was because they didn't have the support systems for the students in there. Especially if you look at their student demographics, some schools might need it better than others, some schools might not but in the end, I think it's a really good benefit for them to start popping up all over the state." |
| Tyrone | "I do feel like it's tough for many people to find that- to find that program outside of a realm like that. And even if they do, I really do feel like it may cost them some money. I was blessed to find that and for them to help me find ways to continue that without spending pretty much any money. So, if schools do provide that it would really benefit them, and they wouldn't have to spend a lot of money. They could already go to school and get all the resources that they need to better themselves." |

Through the SMC process and follow-up questions during the SMC phase of the study, Ashley and Tyrone connected to Dee's suggestion for a class or additional focus on cultural and/or diversity training, with emphasis of staff perceptions included. Tyrone agreed that there is a need for cultural training because "students come from different cultural backgrounds and their way of life can vastly be different from each other. Knowing that difference can help the staff be more equipped to helping out the students as well as knowing what is appropriate, what is inappropriate, what can be changed, etc." Ashley echoed his beliefs with "I believe cultural diversity training is crucial. Our world is incredibly diverse and [school] does pride themselves on being diverse (IB for example). Building trust and respect is built through cultural diversity because if you respect, understand, and trust then you can help more. If a staff member cannot help you, then a student certainly can too."

To assure valid reporting of their contributions to the SMC process and study findings, both were asked if they had heard of or witnessed specific examples they would characterize or identify as lack of understanding diversity amongst the school population by teachers and if they noticed students being punished or targeted based on their race or cultural identity. Tyrone and Ashley did not indicate direct or indirect knowledge of such experiences while attending the school. Ashley, however, shared that though she had not personally witnessed such actions, "I wouldn't doubt it has happened though- there are a few insensitive people no matter how the community is." Ashley elaborated with "I'm sure it happened though. I didn't know what to look for at the time and if I did, I think I'd better recognize. I think the only thing I can remember is the police being more inclined to search students of color than white students if they did

have something (like drugs)." These findings indicate that Dee's suggestion is warranted.

## Description of Themes

Through the iterative process of multiple readings and coding of the themes and trends, the data was reviewed and refined further. This process repeated until a coherent, substantive, and complete set of themes emerged that were supported with data. For example, actions and support were combined to better represent the data provided by participants as were people and feelings, which morphed into connections. This process also identified recurring characteristics of the larger theme, mental health, including anxiety and stress. The final coding themes for the study include the following:

1. Trauma- defined as pressures, in or out of school, that placed stress or concern on the student. Traumas for this study include death of family members, familial issues, expectation, and outside pressures including economic instability. In this case, trauma was not explicitly identified by participants as a mental health concern rather events that prompted them to seek support from the SOC, thus was not identified as part of the mental health theme

2. Mental health- this code encompasses  several sub-categories including anxiety, stress, and general mentions or discussion of mental health issues and therapy.

3. Connections- participants revealed either specific individuals or groups of individuals (teachers) who were instrumental in supporting their graduation journey. This code also includes characteristics of those individuals and consists of feelings like care, trust, and acceptance.

4. Actions and supports- included specific actions or support processes that students reported were instrumental in their initial visit to the extended systems of care center and continued access to support in place and common words of advice, suggestions, and insights to support administrators in developing their own wraparound service model.

**Assumptions**

An underlying assumption with survey and interview data is truthfulness; it is assumed that respondents are honest when answering questions. Several studies suggest that people often misreport facts when completing on-line surveys. This is especially common when they feel it is socially desirable to do so (Chesney & Penney, 2013). Similarly, a 2007 study revealed that two thirds of respondents utilizing an on-line platform lied about their weight (Hancock et. al). One would assume that if survey respondents are likely to lie about behaviors and status to appear more socially desirable, that participants in this study were prone to possible mistruths related to services utilized or socioeconomic status asked in the initial interest survey. To address this phenomenon, prior to the semi-structured interviews the participants and I reviewed their survey responses. Through those conversations, it was revealed that two participants utilized additional support including the food and supply pantries but did not report those on the survey. Additionally, their socioeconomic status was revealed to be lower than originally reported. This is consistent with existing research in that it may be considered socially desirable to be of a higher social class and undesirable to admit to needing support  related to lower SES.

Lying about information during interviews, whether done in person or electronically, is also a concern. When the researcher is present, whether in person or by phone, more socially desirable and positive answers were given by participants than on-line only respondents (de

Leeuwu, 2005; Christian, Dillman, and Smyth, 2008).  Though the risk of dishonesty is inherent in research, it is believed that the participants' open discussions about their lived experiences with mental health issues indicates they were vulnerable, thus trustworthy. Although mental health awareness has increased in recent years, the stigmas and biases associated with mental illness remain in the form of lasting subconscious beliefs that those suffering from mental illness possess negative character traits (Young, et.al, 2019; Gangi, 2021). These participants were willing to share their experiences with mental health professionals, diagnoses, and symptoms despite the risk of judgment and the stigmas associated with mental illness in our society.

Due to Covid-19 protocols in place at the time of IRB approval for this study, the interviews were conducted via Auburn Zoom. Assumptions related to the electronic platform vs. an in-person approach include the inability to read the participants' body language, building camaraderie with them, and maintaining the conversation long enough to gather sufficient data. Johnson et. al (2021) evaluated over 300 remote, in-person, and telephone interview transcripts and found remote interviews "do not significantly differ from the other two modes in interview length in minutes, subjective interviewer ratings, and substantive coding". However, the findings of a study that analyzed word count, length, and interviewer ratings indicated "significantly fewer conversational turns relative to in-person interviews" (Johnson, Scheitle, & Ecklund, 2021). Considering much of the robust information shared by participants was linked to conversations rather than the direct questions, it is possible that conducting the interviews in person would have yielded superior information for school leaders.

**Summary**

Though the sample size for this study was small (n=4), the explanatory case study method allowed for investigation into the contemporary phenomenon, utilizing extended

wraparound supports to achieve on-time graduation from high school, and for participants to provide empirical evidence to support the work of the on-campus extended systems of care center. The sample for this study included four graduates from the 2018 and 2019 cohorts who had frequently participated in extended wraparound services. These participants adequately represented the diverse population of the school in terms of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status: Anna, Latinx female, lower middle class; Ashley, White female, middle class; Dee, Latinx male, lower middle class; and Tyrone, Black male, lower middle class. These individuals were able to provide an in-depth analysis of their experiences and their perceptions of the relationship between participation in on-campus systems of care services and graduating from high school.

The participants continually showed appreciation for the extended services offered in the canter. "I would say, like, there's a lot of kids that went there, you know, and I'm not sure, like how they took it. But for me, personally, it meant a lot to me. You know, I had… I had a lot of fun times there. Sad times, but they're always, you know, I've never left without like, learning something new or feeling better about certain things going on" (Tyrone, personal communication, June 5, 2022). Ashley's experiences in the center left a lasting impact on her life: "I think if I didn't have the…center, I wouldn't be where I am now." Dee added, " I think that's something I appreciate too is that, you know, when I wasn't feeling loved, I felt loved there."

Through the SMC process, additional findings related to diversity or cultural awareness training for staff and students were included in the study. Utilizing the SMC process in this explanatory case study further emerged and engaged the participants at a deeper level by integrating their interpretations of the data into the final reporting of results (Birt, et. al, 2016).

Anna's final comment sums up the advice of the participants and the on-going need for extended supports and services staffed with knowledgeable and caring adults on school campuses: "Um, I think it's a little bit of both if I'm being honest, because at the same time those programs they are to benefit students and that you are being so successful. But then on top of it, you have these really great teachers that are able to provide and help you, like, guide you through the services. So, I would say it's honestly a little bit of both."

## Chapter 5: Discussion

**Introduction**

The purpose of this qualitative explanatory case study was to determine effectiveness of programs offered to students in a Title-1 southeastern high school through an on campus extended wraparound service model to support graduating on time with their four-year cohort. Additionally, the study sought to garner the perceptions of participants and advice for school leaders considering the extended wraparound service model in their schools. This chapter contains a summary of the findings related to participation in extended wraparound services and the impact of such services offered through the on-campus systems of care model. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and areas for future research to further investigate the research questions. Interviews were conducted with four graduates front the 2018 and 2019 cohorts who participated in the services offered by an on campus extended wraparound model to answer the research questions:

(1) To what extent does participation in full-service community school wrap

around service model programs impact the social-emotional wellbeing of students

of promise and support meeting their graduation goals?

(2) What do administrators interested in creating an on-campus extended systems

of care service model need to know from participants to best address the social,

emotional, economic, and academic needs of students when considering an onsite

extended wraparound service delivery model?

The data from their stories indicate the need for extended wraparound services to support the social-emotional wellbeing of students and ensure equitable access to educational programs and meeting their graduation goals. Specifically, these participants urge school leaders considering

an on-campus extended systems of care model to listen to their population, understand and respond to their community needs, provide mental health supports, and assure that the staff for their centers is caring, responsive, and trustworthy.

**Recommendations for Practice**

*I will say this: truly, truly trying to listen to your students and what they deal with. Because I feel like that's the first thing that they need to do, instead of making assumptions. They need to, they need to know what the students are dealing with, what they struggle through, and how they can best help them* (Tyrone, personal communication, June 5, 2022).

Tyrone's assertion that school leaders must know their communities and listen to the voice of students to meet their needs was echoed by the other participants. The idea that student voice is important aligns with the foundation of the successful Achieve My Plan (AMP) model and the first statement in the studied program's mission statement: *We believe in the power and truth of the student voice*. The importance and significance of student voice from this group supports youth voice in development of their service plans and yields higher scores on youth empowerment scales (Walker et al., 2017). School leaders should take care and seek to listen to the needs of those they serve when developing systems of care and support. Similarly, school leaders must make efforts to understand and support the needs of all students, not simply those who we assume need assistance. For example, students like Ashley who, socioeconomically, come to school with their basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter met, still benefit from inclusion in other services. In this case, mental health support and the connection to a caring, trusting adult mentor greatly impacted her high school experience and beyond. This also aligns to the findings of Dalma, et al. in their study, *A School Based Intervention for Combating Food Insecurity and Promoting Healthy Nutrition in a Developed Country Undergoing Economic*

*Crisis: A Qualitative Study*, which showed that providing supports to all students is more beneficial than focusing on those with socioeconomic needs.

School leaders who want to integrate wraparound service centers, full-service community schools, or systems of care must assure school personnel and service providers possess the traits needed to assure students are comfortable and feel safe to share their needs, stressors, and concerns. The participants in this study all mentioned adults who were caring, trustworthy, and reliable. Assuring student access to quality role models for support has the potential to combat the negative impacts lack of role models at home causes on our students (Campos et al., 2018). Further, Dee, Ashley, and Tyrone all support diversity or cultural training or opportunities to engage in activities to increase and promote cultural understanding among the staff and students.

**Recommendations for Research**

Conducting surveys with students is common practice for SOC programs to measure participation rates and inquire about their needs and concerns. The subject on-campus extended service model center for this study has supported hundreds of students through their vast and intentional programs and conducts annual needs assessment surveys to determine relevance of services and to garner and respond to suggestions for additional needs. For example, the end of year survey for 2022 revealed a growing need for a quiet space to relax and reflect due to increased stress among students. In August 2022 a quiet room for individuals who simply need a place to rest and reflect based on student responses related to stress they experience at school was created in acknowledgment to the expressed needs of their population.

School graduation rate data shows that the graduation rate has increased since the inception of the center in 2015. However, according to the former and current directors, the link to the systems of care services provided by the center and on-time graduation has not been directly measured (Sarah Barbour, personal communication, August 19, 2022).

Figure 2 displays data from the four-year graduation cohorts for 2017-2021. The information provided includes 2017, since this is the first class who would have had the opportunity to participate in services for more than one year. Graduation rates for 2022 were not finalized at the time this paper was published.

**Figure 2:**

*Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate Trends 2017-2021*



| | All Students | Black | Hispanic | White | Students With Disability | English Learners | Economically Disadvantaged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2017 Graduation Rate | 78.54% | 81.13% | 66.23% | 92.86% | 56.10% | 33.33% | 73.66% |
| 2018 Graduation Rate | 76.16% | 78.95% | 65.96% | 87.50% | 63.16% | 40.00% | 76.64% |
| 2019 Graduation Rate | 75.73% | 77.82% | 64.63% | 88.03% | 60.00% | 41.03% | 71.52% |
| 2020 Graduation Rate | 83.68% | 89.04% | 72.00% | 95.93% | 66.67% | 47.73% | 82.99% |
| 2021 Graduation Rate | 86.70% | 88.66% | 78.05% | 98.18% | 69.84% | 63.64% | 84.71% |

I recommend that all models of SOC delivery conduct exit interviews with students who frequently participated in services prior to their graduation. This practice will elicit data that is

more descriptive, rich, and actionable than surveys provide and can be used to measure the impact of specific services more directly toward supporting students with on-time graduation.

On-campus SOC programs have been in existence for many years, with varying degrees of success. In my research I discovered schools who tried this model and were not successful. Therefore, I recommend additional research into the characteristics of successful SOC models, like the on Anna, Ashley, Dee, and Tyrone frequented. As on-campus SOC programs are growing in popularity across the nation, this additional research can determine cornerstones to success and assure school leaders have the foundation needed to implement a viable and long-lasting program tailored to the needs of their communities.

Further, though SOC models including full-service community schools have been present for nearly 50 years, the long-term impact of the services they provide has not been researched. I propose further case studies modeled after this to focus on the lasting impact of participating in SOC services. This need was revealed in a personal conversation with the director of an on-campus extended systems of care center who attended the annual community schools conference in 2022. "The lasting impact was a huge focus of conversation among directors and the need is there" (Sarah Barbour, personal communication, August 19).   Participants in the study shared some insight into this as well. For example, Ashly said, "*And they give some pretty good advice, like I think I think it's- my fear during high school was that when I got out of high school, I wouldn't know what to do. I wouldn't know how to go into life, I wouldn't know how to get a job, I wouldn't know how to do that, especially with my disorder, I don't know how I would be able to manage that. And so, until I started going to the Student Life Center.*"

**Recommendations for Action**

Building collective efficacy among the staff has the potential to increase student achievement, and thus graduation with the four-year cohort exponentially. Eliminating deficit mindset among staff has the potential to improve school climate and thus, student achievement (Shindler et.al, 2016). I encourage leaders to eliminate deficit thinking when it comes to our Students of Color, those from lower socioeconomic status, and frankly ALL students by providing on-going professional learning centered and opportunities for students to engage in activities centered around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. The potential to reduce or eliminate barriers to success that promote systemic inequities in programs of study, discipline, and teacher quality lies in assuring staff recognize their implicit biases and learn strategies for overcoming such deficit thinking.

Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion training for staff not only provides a safe platform for identifying and combating systemic and intrinsic beliefs and actions based on race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, it also forms the foundational step toward building collective teacher efficacy (CTE). Collective teacher efficacy is defined as "*a group's shared belief in the conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainment*" (Bandura, 1994,1997). CTE is not simply the belief that students can achieve, it involves collaborating to identify areas of need or concern, developing a plan of action with detailed expectations and steps for improvement.  Additionally, CTE requires all participants to take specific actions to assure equitable access to education and is instrumental in assuring positive outcomes. "The connections between collective efficacy beliefs and student outcomes depend in part on the reciprocal relationships among these collective efficacy beliefs, teachers' personal sense of efficacy, teachers' professional practice, and teachers' influence over instructionally relevant school decisions" (Goddard, et.al., 2004).

Building CTE begins with an intentional assurance that all stakeholders have authentic and equally valued input toward a co-constructed goal, opportunities to collaborate in developing and implementing the proposed solutions, examining the impact collaboratively with all stakeholders. Finally, built into the action plan must be opportunities to collectively refine the ideas, actions and implementation and develop additional solutions if the data collected show lack of success of the original plan or the  impact is not successful  (Hattie, 2012; Dewitt, 2019). Figure 3 identifies the cycle suggested by Dewitt (2018, 2019) to build CTE in any organization.

**Figure 3:**

*The Collective Teacher Efficacy Cycle*



(Dewitt, 2019)

 Similarly, a study conducted by Goddard, Hoy, and Woolfolk-Hoy (2000) demonstrates that collective teacher efficacy is more important in explaining and impacting student achievement than a student's socioeconomic status. Most recently, John Hattie's meta-analysis of over 50,000 existing research studies relating to the effect of educational programs, outside factors, school

climate, teacher training, etc. identified teacher collective efficacy as having one of the highest

impacts on our students. His team's analysis of CTE revealed a hinge point of 1.57 and was the

number one action that schools can take to improve student achievement (Hattie, 2016).

Considering an effect size of zero (0) indicates no impact on students' achievement and anything

above 0.4 elicits a year's growth for a year's input, CTE is nearly three times more powerful and

predictive of student success in educational programs than socio-economic status, which

measures at .57.  Figure 4 provides leaders with additional information related to factors that

enable CTE within their organization and supports the findings of this study.

**Figure 4:**

*Proposed Factor Structure for Preliminary Enabling Conditions of CTE*



(Donohoo, et al., 2020).
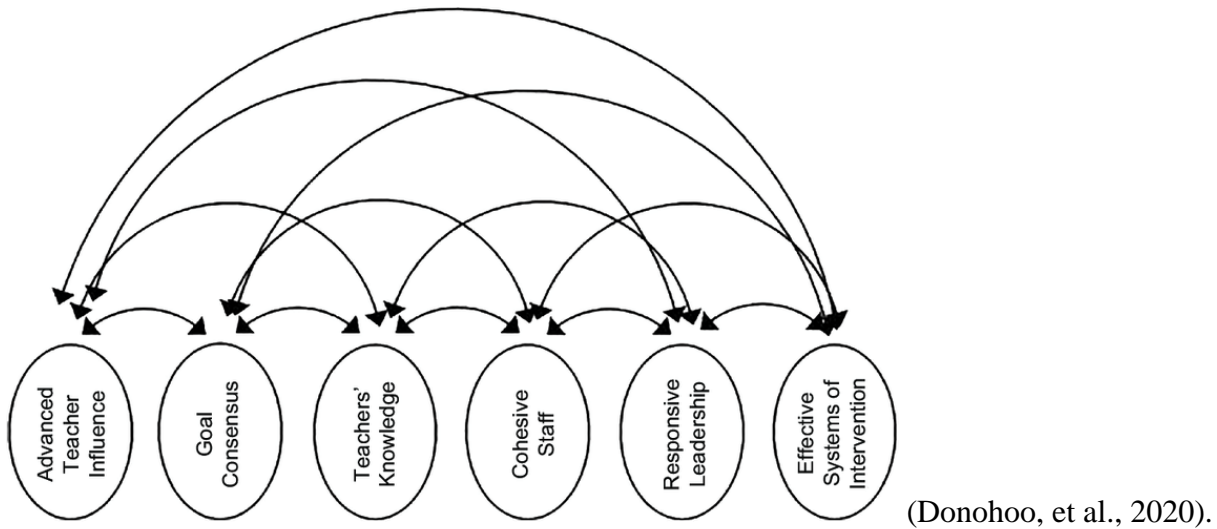
To further support CTE and assure a successful SOC model, staff development and

building collective belief in the tenets of Ben Agger's Critical Social Theory (CST) can support

focusing school staff with reaching the collective goal. Specifically, fostering belief and

movement toward tenets 2, we can move toward a better tomorrow; 4, we have the power to

move beyond innate and systemic consciousness to transform society; 5, we can effect change at

the local level; 6, we can change structures through knowledge  (Agger, 2013; Bates, 2016). I

argue that his knowledge comes from listening and responding to the needs of the community and our primary stakeholders, students.

**Transferability**

It cannot be assumed that the experiences of this sample can be generalized to the population, however the detailed narratives and results allow for transferability for readers in similar experiences. For leaders considering extended wraparound services through an on-campus systems of care model, these shared experiences and the advice of former participants may inform best practices, program development, and successful implementation.

**Reflection**

My passion for equitable access to one of the most basic human rights to an education guided my choice of dissertation topics. The review of research provided insight on the progression of the inequities present in our system including historical, social, and economic causes. Most surprising was the link between educator treatment of young men of color and the increased incidence of incarceration among those who's first experience with law enforcement was at school, often for minor infractions. I also, as a White woman of privilege, assumed the primary purpose of the center was to provide basic needs such as support with shelter, food, clothing, job search, etc. The majority of individuals who responded to the survey, and the four interviewees, all mentioned mental health needs and supports as a cornerstone of their center and a necessity for any SOC program in the future. Our most precious resource, or children, are suffering due to stresses related to systemic inequalities inherent to our society, familial pressures, and school expectations. We must do better by all children and work collectively to

assure we believe in their ability to succeed by eliminating the barriers that have for far too long impeded their growth.

**Conclusion**

This research has reinforced the importance and necessity for school leaders to continually strive for equitable access to education for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status. This research also illustrated the need for school systems to provide extended services to students on campus to address basic needs like access to feminine hygiene products, clothing, and food. Additionally, the experiences shared by the research participants indicate a growing need for mental health services in our schools to assure successful outcomes for our students and for quality staff who genuinely care for them. It is our duty as educators to disrupt the system and meet Freire's goals to build school programs that challenge oppression, injustice, and disproportionate power in schools by providing quality educational experiences (Shor & Freire, 1987) and recognizing each student's expertise to explain their own life experiences. Designing SOC programs aligned with the needs of the community as expressed by our students is the first step.

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For Information or help contact **THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE (ORC)**
**Phone:** 334-844-5966    **e-mail:** IRBAdmin@auburn.edu  **Web Address:** http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/index.htm

Revised 04.01.2021               Submit completed form to **IRBsubmit@auburn.edu**

*Complete this form using Adobe Acrobat Writer* **(versions 5.0 and greater).**  *Hand written copies not accepted.*

1. **PROPOSED START DATE of STUDY:** October 15, 2021        **Today's Date:** 7/24/2021

**PROPOSED REVIEW CATEGORY (Check one):**  ☐ FULL BOARD    ☑ EXPEDITED

**SUBMISSION STATUS (Check one):**  ☐ NEW    ☑ REVISIONS (to address IRB Review Comments)

2. **PROJECT TITLE:** How Does Engaging with In-school Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time ⊞

3. _____
   Catherine Anne Barco Paige | PhD Candidate | EFLT | cap0077@auburn.edu
   **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR** | **TITLE** | **DEPT** | **AU E-MAIL**

   1806 Lily Pond Way Kennesaw, GA 30152 | 678-736-3320 | cathybarcopaige@gmail.com
   **MAILING ADDRESS** | **PHONE** | **ALTERNATE E-MAIL**

4. **FUNDING SUPPORT:**  ☑ N/A  ☐ Internal  ☐ External Agency: _____     ☐ Pending ☐ Received

For federal funding, list agency and grant number (if available). _____

5a. List any contractors, sub-contractors, other entities associated with this project:

_____

b. List any other IRBs associated with this project (including Reviewed, Deferred, Determination, etc.):

_____

## PROTOCOL PACKET CHECKLIST

**All protocols must include the following items:**

☐ **Research Protocol Review Form** (All signatures included and all sections completed)
(Examples of appended documents are found on the OHSR website: http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm)

☐ **CITI Training Certificates** for all Key Personnel.

☐ **Consent Form or Information Letter** and any Releases (audio, video or photo) that the participant will sign.

☐ **Appendix A**, "Reference List"

☐ **Appendix B** if e-mails, flyers, advertisements, generalized announcements or scripts, etc., are used to recruit participants.

☐ **Appendix C** if data collection sheets, surveys, tests, other recording instruments, interview scripts, etc. will be used for data collection. Be sure to attach them in the order in which they are listed in # 13c.

☐ **Appendix D** if you will be using a debriefing form or include emergency plans/procedures and medical referral lists (A referral list may be attached to the consent document).

☐ **Appendix E** if research is being conducted at sites other than Auburn University or in cooperation with other entities.  A **permission letter** from the site / program director must be included indicating their cooperation or involvement in the project. NOTE: If the proposed research is a multi-site project, involving investigators or participants at other academic institutions, hospitals or private research organizations, a letter of **IRB approval** from each entity is required prior to initiating the project.

☐ **Appendix F** - Written evidence of acceptance by the host country if research is conducted outside the United States.

> **The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from**
> __11/09/2021__ to __---------------__
> **Protocol #** __21-332 EP 2111__

Version Date (date document created): 9/4/2021                    page _1_ of 10

**6.** **GENERAL RESEARCH PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS**

## 6A. Research Methodology

Please check all descriptors that best apply to the research methodology.

**Data Source(s):** ☒ New Data     ☐ Existing Data

**Will recorded data directly or indirectly identify participants?**
☐ Yes     ☐ No

**Data collection will involve the use of:**

☐ Educational Tests (cognitive diagnostic, aptitude, etc.)
☑ Interview
☐ Observation
☐ Location or Tracking Measures
☐ Physical / Physiological Measures or Specimens  (see Section 6E.)
☑ Surveys / Questionnaires
☐ Other: _____

☑ Internet / Electronic
☑ Audio
☐ Video
☐ Photos
☐ Digital images
☐ Private records or files

## 6B. Participant Information

Please check all descriptors that apply to the target population.
☒ Males     ☒ Females     ☐ AU students

**Vulnerable Populations**
☐ Pregnant Women/Fetuses   ☐ Prisoners   ☐ Institutionalized
☐ Children and/or Adolescents (under age 18 in AL)

**Persons with:**

☐ Economic Disadvantages     ☐ Physical Disabilities

☐ Educational Disadvantages     ☐ Intellectual Disabilities

**Do you plan to compensate your participants?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

## 6C. Risks to Participants

Please identify all risks that participants might encounter in this research.

☒ Breach of Confidentiality*     ☒ Coercion
☐ Deception     ☐ Physical
☐ Psychological     ☐ Social
☐ None
☐ Other:

*Note that if the investigator is using or accessing confidential or identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk.

## 6D. Corresponding Approval/Oversight

- **Do you need IBC Approval for this study?**
  ☐ Yes     ☑ No

  If yes, BUA #_____ Expiration date _____

- **Do you need IACUC Approval for this study?**
  ☐ Yes     ☑ No

  If yes, PRN #_____ Expiration date _____

- **Does this study involve the Auburn University MRI Center?**
  ☐ Yes     ☑ No

  **Which MRI(s) will be used for this project?  (Check all that apply)**
  ☐ 3T     ☑ 7T

  **Does any portion of this project require review by the MRI Safety Advisory Council?**
  ☐ Yes     ☑ No

  **Signature of MRI Center Representative:** _____
  _Required for all projects involving the AU MRI Center_

  **Appropriate MRI Center Representatives:**
  Dr. Thomas S. Denney, Director AU MRI Center
  Dr. Ron Beyers, MR Safety Officer

## 7. PROJECT ASSURANCES

### A.  PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSSURANCES

1.  I certify that all information provided in this application is complete and correct.
2.  I understand that, as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of this study, the ethical performance this project, the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects, and strict adherence to any stipulations imposed by the Auburn University IRB.
3.  I certify that all individuals involved with the conduct of this project are qualified to carry out their specified roles and responsibilities and are in compliance with Auburn University policies regarding the collection and analysis of the research data.
4.  I agree to comply with all Auburn policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of human subjects, including, but not limited to the following:
    a.  Conducting the project by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol
    b.  Implementing no changes in the approved protocol or consent form without prior approval from the Office of Research Compliance
    c.  Obtaining the legally effective informed consent from each participant or their legally responsible representative prior to their participation in this project using only the currently approved, stamped consent form
    d.  Promptly reporting significant adverse events and/or effects to the Office of Research Compliance in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
5.  If I will be unavailable to direct this research personally, I will arrange for a co-investigator to assume direct responsibility in my absence. This person has been named as co-investigator in this application, or I will advise ORC, by letter, in advance of such arrangements.
6.  I agree to conduct this study only during the period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
7.  I will prepare and submit a renewal request and supply all supporting documents to the Office of Research Compliance before the approval period has expired if it is necessary to continue the research project beyond the time period approved by the Auburn University IRB.
8.  I will prepare and submit a final report upon completion of this research project.

My signature indicates that I have read, understand and agree to conduct this research project in accordance with the assurances listed above.

Catherine Anne Barco Paige

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Principal Investigator** | **Principal Investigator's Signature** | **Date** |

### B. FACULTY ADVISOR/SPONSOR'S ASSURANCES

1.  I have read the protocol submitted for this project for content, clarity, and methodology.
2.  By my signature as faculty advisor/sponsor on this research application, I certify that the student or guest investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular study in accord with the approved protocol.
3.  I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor study progress. Should problems arise during the course of the study, I agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
4.  I assure that the investigator will promptly report significant incidents and/or adverse events and/or effects to the ORC in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
5.  If I will be unavailable, I will arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during my absence, and I will advise the ORC by letter of such arrangements.  <u>If the investigator is unable to fulfill requirements for submission of renewals, modifications or the final report, I will assume that responsibility.</u>

Amy Serafini                                                                                                   11/1/2021

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Faculty Advisor / Sponsor** | **Faculty Advisor's Signature** | **Date** |

### C.  DEPARTMENT HEAD'S ASSSURANCE

By my signature as department head, I certify that I will cooperate with the administration in the application and enforcement of all Auburn University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection and ethical treatment of human participants by researchers in my department.

James Satterfield

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Department Head** | **Department Head's Signature** | **Date** |

8. **PROJECT OVERVIEW: Prepare an abstract that includes:**
   **(350** word maximum, in language understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study**):**

   a) **A summary of relevant research findings leading to this research proposal:**
      (*Cite sources; include a "Reference List" as Appendix A.)*
   b) **A brief description of the methodology, including design, population, and variables of interest**

A) Decades of research indicate graduation rate disparities among populations based on race and socioeconomic status despite legislative (ESEA, 1965; NCLB; ESSA, 2015) and accountability efforts by governmental leaders. National graduation rates are 85% (NCES, 2018), however students of color from lower income families rates are 78% (PHSGR-Indicator 2020). This intersectionality of race and poverty is symptomatic of societal and educational inequalities. Thought race gaps have narrowed, the poverty gap has increased (Schott Foundation, 2015; America's Promise, 2017). Traditional supports including the national school lunch and breakfast programs, grant funded wraparound services, and mentoring are not enough to assure equity of access. School leaders facing pressure to increase graduation rates often implement programs with little data indicating success. The Student Life Center, at a semi-urban, diverse, Title-1 high school seeks to close the graduation gap by providing extended on-site supports including mental health counseling, group support meetings, professional mentoring, food pantries, clothing closets, special events, and more. The vision includes student voice, understanding the "why and who" of each child, and "in the power of community collaboration to transform lives" (2015). Little research on participant perceptions on the impact of such programs exists, thus I will the experiences of former participants to provide deeper understanding of the impact (if any) of implementing on-site extended services and to advise future leaders considering an SLC.

B) I will conduct case study utilizing semi-structured interviews with selected 2018-2019 graduates who participated in at least three different Student Life Center services while attending the school. Participants will be randomly invited from an existing data base of 2018-2019 graduates to complete a brief survey to assure they participated in diverse services frequently enough to provide sufficient data to answer the research questions and express interest in participating in the interview process. Following the survey, purposive

⊞

9. **PURPOSE.**
   a. **Clearly state the purpose of this project and all research questions, or aims.**

The purpose of this case study is to identify student perceptions of services provided by an on-site SLC at a semi-urban, diverse southeastern high school and any connections to achieving on-time graduation and their recommendations to school leaders considering an SLC in the future.

(1) Does participation in full-service community school wrap around service model programs increase graduation rates for students of promise in a Title-I high school with an on-campus student life center?
(2) What do administrators interested in creating an SLC need to know from you? Invited participants derived from a database of recent graduates who engaged in the extended wraparound services provided by the Student Life Center (SLC) during their time in school.

   b. **How will the results of this project be used? (e.g., Presentation? Publication? Thesis? Dissertation?)**

The results of this project will be used to fulfill dissertation requirements and possible future conference/professional learning presentations and journal publications.

10. **KEY PERSONNEL.** Describe responsibilities.  Include information on research training or certifications related to this project.  **CITI is required.  Be as specific as possible.**  (Include additional personnel in an attachment.)  *All key personnel must **attach CITI certificates of completion.***

**Principal Investigator** Catherine Anne Barco Pai  **Title:** PhD Candidate  **E-mail address** cap0077@auburn.edu

**Dept / Affiliation:** EFLT, Auburn University

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

The researcher, doctoral student, will randomly recruit participants from the graduating classes of 2018 and 2019 and obtain informed consent of participants utilizing Auburn provided, secure

**Individual:** Dr. Amy Serafini  **Title:** Assistant Professor  **E-mail address** ams0206@auburn.edu

**Dept / Affiliation:** EFLT, Auburn University

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

Dissertation Committee Chair and supervisor of research for dissertation.

**Individual:**  **Title:**  **E-mail address**

**Dept / Affiliation:**

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

**Individual:**  **Title:**  **E-mail address**

**Dept / Affiliation:**

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

**Individual:**  **Title:**  **E-mail address**

**Dept / Affiliation:**

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

**Individual:**  **Title:**  **E-mail address**

**Dept / Affiliation:**

*Roles / Responsibilities***:**

11. **LOCATION OF RESEARCH.  List all locations where data collection will take place.**  (School systems, organizations, businesses, buildings and room numbers, servers for web surveys, etc.)  **Be as specific as possible.  Attach permission letters in Appendix E.**
*(See sample letters at http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm)*

Pr-interview surveys will utilize Auburn's Qualtrics program.
Interviews will take place utilizing Auburn Zoom. Marietta High School (1171 Whitlock Ave NW, Marietta, GA 30064) is the location of the SLC being studied, the school will not be a location for

12. **PARTICIPANTS.**

    a. **Describe the participant population you have chosen for this project including inclusion or exclusion criteria for participant selection.**

        ☐ **Check here if using existing data, describe the population from whom data was collected, & include the # of data files.**

Participants have been chosen utilizing the data base of former students who participated in SLC Service at least three times. The graduating classes of 2018 and 2019 are the focus as the SLC began in 2015- this assures ample opportunity for these graduates to have participated in services while attending the school. Additionally, this guarantees participants will be adults age 19 or older.

The classes of 2020 and 2021 are not included in the population due to (1) their age not guaranteed to be over 18 (2) interruption of their senior year due to Covid-19 (3) the possibility they graduated on-time due to non-traditional grading policies including freezing of grades or grading for completion and (3) to assure they do not confuse community and school-system at large supports (computers, hot-spots, meal delivery) with those provided by the SLC.

    b. **Describe, step-by-step, in layman's terms, all procedures you will use to recruit participants.** *Include in **Appendix B** a copy of all e-mails, flyers, advertisements, recruiting scripts, invitations, etc., that will be used to invite people to participate. (See sample documents at <u>http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm.</u>)*

1. Email or text invitation with a link to the Qualtrics survey containing the consent letter will be sent to random participants from the schools existing data-base. Question 3 on the survey asks if they utilized Student Life Center Services. If they did not utilize services the survey will end. Those who participated in SLC services will have an opportunity to express interest in the interview process and provide additional information. (On or around February 5, 2022)
2. Follow-up Email or text to those who do not respond if additional interview participants are needed. (On or around February 15, 2022)
3. Email, text, or phone call invitation to participate in the semi-structured interview sent to 3-5 interested graduates. (On or around February 28, 2022)

    c. **What is the minimum number of participants you need to validate the study?**    <u>3 (interview)</u>

       **How many participants do you expect to recruit?**    <u>3-10 (survey)</u>

       **Is there a limit on the number of participants you will include in the study?**    ☐ **No**    ■ **Yes – the # is** <u>3 (interview)</u>

    d. **Describe the type, amount and method of compensation and/or incentives for participants.**

       (If no compensation will be given, check here: ☐ )

       Select the type of compensation: ■ Monetary    ■ Incentives
                               ■ Raffle or Drawing incentive (Include the chances of winning.)
                               ☐ Extra Credit (State the value)
                               ☐ Other

       *Description:*

Survey respondents- may choose to enter a drawing for their choice of a $25.00 Visa or Amazon- Lowest chance of winning 1:10
Interview participants- their choice of a $25.00 Visa or Amazon gift card to compensate for their time

13. **PROJECT DESIGN & METHODS.**

   a. Describe, <u>step-by-step</u>, all procedures and methods that will be used to <u>consent</u> participants. If a waiver is being requested, check each waiver you are requesting, describe how the project meets the criteria for the waiver.

   ☐ **Waiver of Consent (including using existing data)**

   ☐ **Waiver of Documentation of Consent (use of Information Letter)**

   ☐ **Waiver of Parental Permission (for college students)**

   The survey/invitation Email or text will include a link to the Qualtrics survey. The introduction to the survey (Question 1) is the letter of informed consent to participate in the study- including the survey and potential interview. Upon choosing " "I have read the description of the study and agree/consent to participate in the study," the survey will begin. Those choosing not to participate will be thanked and exited from the study. Anyone wishing to participate who does not have the means to sign and return electronically will be provided, by US mail, two copies of the form and a stamped envelop for return to the researcher. The researcher's copy will be kept secure in a sealed envelope in a locked desk drawer. Participants will be given the opportunity to engage with me by telephone, text, or email to have questions answered or concerns addressed prior to participating in the survey and the option to opt out. Additionally, prior to beginning the Zoom interview, participants will be given time to ask any
   ~~questions about the study. Participants will use a pseudonym to protect their identity. This~~ ⊞

   b. Describe the research design and methods you will use to address your purpose. Include a <u>clear description</u> of when, where and how you will collect all data for this project. Include specific information about the participants' time and effort commitment. (*NOTE: Use language that would be understandable to someone who is not familiar with your area of study. Without a complete description of all procedures, the Auburn University IRB will not be able to review this protocol. If additional space is needed for this section, save the information as a .PDF file and insert after page 7 of this form.* )

   On or around February 10- Invitations to participate in the study will be sent to randomly selected individuals of the population of 2018 and 2019 graduates. The survey is designed to identify graduates who frequently participated in SLC services and events. This survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete. Though initial data analysis for this study focuses on quantitative statistics, "the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon" which is best achieved by using purposeful sampling strategies (Creswell, 2004, p. 203). Thus, the participants of the study chosen from the survey respondents based on specific criteria: participated in services throughout their four years in high school, participated in at least three different SLC services and/or programs, and express willingness to share their stories. February 15, 2022- Selected graduates will be contacted via Email, text, or telephone and asked to take part in the semi-structured interview research study. Judgment sampling is necessary to assure participants possess the knowledge and experiences to provide data to answer the research questions. The potential participants will be chosen from survey respondents expressing interest in sharing their experiences and contributing to the study.

   On or around February 28, 2022- Data Collection via a semi-structured interview consisting of open-ended questions to provide participants with the time and freedom to share their unique views and to allow for follow-up questioning on emerging patterns, ideas, and events (Baumgartner & Pahl-Wostl, 2013). Interviews will take place via Auburn Zoom which requires dual authentication for security. The interview process will take 45-60 minutes. Recordings and transcripts will be housed in Auburn Box.

   February - March 2022- Synthesized Member Checking (SMC) utilizes the input of the research participants throughout the process to evaluate the emerging themes throughout the data review process related to their input and to provide the researcher with clarification of

13. **PROJECT DESIGN & METHODS.** *Continued*

    c. **List all data collection instruments used in this project, in the order they appear in Appendix C.**
       (e.g., surveys and questionnaires **in the format that will be presented to participants**, educational tests, data collection sheets, interview questions, audio/video taping methods etc.)

Emailed invitation to participate with a link to the consent and survey housed on Auburn Qualtrics.

Semi-structured interview questions.

Zoom recording and transcripts of interviews.

    d. **Data analysis: Explain how the data will be analyzed.**

Results of the completed initial/interest surveys reviewed using quantitative analysis via Qualtrics. Specifically, the data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine which PLC services graduates most often participated, to support and guide the interview process, and assure selection of participants who meet the operationalized definition of frequent

14. **RISKS & DISCOMFORTS:  List and describe all of the risks that participants might encounter in this research.  *If you are using deception in this study, please justify the use of deception and be sure to attach a copy of the debriefing form you plan to use in Appendix D. (Examples of possible risks are in section #6D on page 2)***

Because survey and interview data will be identifiable when collected, there is risk of breach of confidentiality.

Because the researcher is a school system employee with a child who graduated in 2019, risk of coercion is also present.

15. **PRECAUTIONS.** Identify and describe all precautions you have taken to eliminate or reduce risks as listed in #14. If the participants can be classified as a "vulnerable" population, please describe additional safeguards that you will use to assure the ethical treatment of these individuals. ***Provide a copy of any emergency plans/procedures and medical referral lists in*** <span style="color:green">***Appendix D.***</span> *(Samples can be found online at http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/sample.htm#precautions)*

Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants.

To protect participant confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, Zoom transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box. Auburn Box is encrypted, requires dual authentication, and is only be accessed by research staff.

At the beginning of the interview, participants will be reminded to protect their privacy by completing activities in a private space, to ensure conversations are not overheard and will be encouraged to disable "cookies" and close device browser.

Additionally, all interview participants will choose a pseudonym that will be used for data

**If using the Internet or other electronic means to collect data, what confidentiality or security precautions are in place to protect (or not collect) identifiable data? Include protections used during both the collection and transfer of data.**

The collection of survey data is intended to identify potential research participants and guide interview questions. This data will be secured using Auburn's Qualtrics system. Access to the computer used is password protected to assure further protection of all data.

Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom and transcriptions will identify participants only by pseudonyms. The transcribed files will be created and stored in Auburn Box as it is encrypted and required dual authentication to access. Additionally, any printed or hand analyzed data will be kept in a locked desk drawer accessible only by the researcher and dissertation chair.

16. **BENEFITS.**
   a. **List all realistic direct benefits participants can expect by participating in this specific study.**
      *(Do not include "compensation" listed in #12d.)*    Check here if there are no direct benefits to participants. ☐

Participants will have the opportunity to share their experiences in an effort to provide much needed information to school leaders who may consider opening an on-site extended wraparound services model in their systems or schools. They may potentially help school and governmental leaders understand the needs of high school students and to impact future of Student Life Centers across the United States.

   b. **List all realistic benefits for the general population that may be generated from this study.**

School leaders may gain deeper understanding of students living in poverty and their needs and expectations from school personnel. Leaders of similar programs may gain insight into the programs and services participants found helpful or not and suggestions for additional programs and services to better meet the needs of future students.

17. **PROTECTION OF DATA.**

   a. **Data are collected:**

   ☐ **Anonymously with no direct or indirect coding, link, or awareness of who participated in the study (Skip to e)**

   ☐ **Confidentially, but without a link of participant's data to any identifying information (collected as "confidential" but recorded and analyzed as "anonymous") (Skip to e)**

   ☒ **Confidentially with collection and protection of linkages to identifiable information**

   b. **If data are collected with identifiers or as coded or linked to identifying information, describe the identifiers collected and how they are linked to the participant's data.**

   As the interview data will be obtained through Zoom sessions and is inherently identifiable, it and participants will be accessible only to the researcher and dissertation chair. All information will be stored in Auburn Box to further protect participant identities and data. Zoom safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of ⊞

   c. **Justify your need to code participants' data or link the data with identifying information.**

   All data will be coded and collected using a pseudonym for each participant. The pseudonym will only be known to key personnel. The use of pseudonyms serves two purposes: to assure the participant identities are known only by myself and Dr. Serafini and to match the data from all parts of the study.

   d. **Describe how and where identifying data and/or code lists will be stored.** (Building, room number?) **Describe how the location where data is stored will be secured in your absence. For electronic data, describe security. If applicable, state specifically where any IRB-approved and participant-signed consent documents will be kept on campus for 3 years after the study ends.**

   Pseudonyms will be stored along with and consent letters mailed to the researcher by those unable to do so electronically in a locked drawer located at the researchers home and accessible only by the researcher and in Auburn Box. An additional key will be provided to the committee chair person.

   e. **Describe how and where the data will be stored** (e.g., hard copy, audio cassette, electronic data, etc.)**, and how the location where data is stored is separated from identifying data and will be secured in your absence. For electronic data, describe security**

   All collected data, interview recordings, and transcripts will be stored electronically in Auburn Box and Qualtrics. Auburn box and Qualtrics require dual authentication to access the data.

   Auburn Box is encrypted, requires dual authentication, and is only be accessed by research staff. ⊞

   f. **Who will have access to participants' data?**
   (*The faculty advisor should have full access and be able to produce the data in the case of a federal or institutional audit.*)

   The researcher and faculty advisor will have access to the data.

   g. **When is the latest date that identifying information or links will be retained and how will that information or links be destroyed?**
   (Check here if only anonymous data will be retained ☒ )

   All identifiable information will be shred following acceptance of the dissertation- no later than September 1, 2022.

# CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 16-Oct-2021
Expiration Date 15-Oct-2024
Record ID 45673048

This is to certify that:

**Catherine Paige**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher**
(Curriculum Group)

**IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w51cbce79-de6d-4258-b152-2de88365b577-45673048

# CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 06-Apr-2021
Expiration Date 05-Apr-2026
Record ID 34837932

This is to certify that:

## Catherine Paige

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Responsible Conduct of Research for Social and Behavioral**
(Curriculum Group)

**Social, Behavioral and Education Sciences RCR**
(Course Learner Group)

**2 - RCR Refresher**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

## Auburn University

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

# CITI

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wf878f165-d40f-4f47-a564-621fc4c4aef7-34837932

CITI
PROGRAM

Completion Date 25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date 24-Oct-2024
Record ID 45783345

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w83dccd11-6c8e-4c3a-9902-654e0e25e419-45783345

Completion Date   25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date   24-Oct-2024
Record ID         45783344

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

# CITI PROGRAM

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

## CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w6ee4c4a2-4d35-402b-a3d4-06352668db4e-45783344

Completion Date    25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date    24-Oct-2024
Record ID          45783347

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

CITI
PROGRAM

This is to certify that:

Amy Serafini

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

IRB Additional Modules
(Curriculum Group)

Cultural Competence in Research
(Course Learner Group)

1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Auburn University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

# CITI PROGRAM

This is to certify that:

## Amy Serafini

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

Completion Date   25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date   24-Oct-2024
Record ID         45783349

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

# CITI

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wfb3b817b-f153-41b6-8bca-e493bdf8e422-45783349

# CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date 24-Oct-2024
Record ID 45783348

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**History and Ethical Principles - SBE**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

# CITI

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wd77b0efe-9a39-48f4-b4cf-21b9636ff564-45783348

Completion Date 25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date 24-Oct-2024
Record ID 45783346

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

# CITI PROGRAM

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

This is to certify that:

## Amy Serafini

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**Hot Topics**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

## Auburn University

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w166a95af-d266-477a-ba26-765ac92c8f60-45783346

Completion Date   25-Oct-2021
Expiration Date   24-Oct-2024
Record ID         45783342

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

CITI
PROGRAM

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)
**Internet Research - SBE**
(Course Learner Group)
**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wba61a8d0-301d-41f2-8486-68cc63087798-45783342

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 27-Oct-2021
Expiration Date 26-Oct-2024
Record ID 45783343

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher**
(Curriculum Group)

**IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wfc502716-0010-498f-9580-f84259682a39-45783343

# CITI PROGRAM

**Completion Date** 25-Oct-2021
**Expiration Date** 24-Oct-2024
**Record ID** 45783341

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**IRB Additional Modules**
(Curriculum Group)

**Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE**
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

# CITI

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wddb0146f-351e-4615-9d02-935a61d01fe4-45783341

# CITI PROGRAM

**Completion Date** 19-Sep-2018
**Expiration Date** 18-Sep-2023
**Record ID** 28772436

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Responsible Conduct of Research for Social and Behavioral**
(Curriculum Group)

**Social, Behavioral and Education Sciences RCR**
(Course Learner Group)

**2 - RCR Refresher**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Completion Date  19-Sep-2018
Expiration Date  18-Sep-2023
Record ID        28772436

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

**CITI PROGRAM**

This is to certify that:

**Amy Serafini**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Responsible Conduct of Research for Social and Behavioral**
(Curriculum Group)

**Social, Behavioral and Education Sciences RCR**
(Course Learner Group)

**2 - RCR Refresher**
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Auburn University**

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT for a Research Study titled "How Does Engaging with In-School Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This research study is voluntary, meaning you do not have to take part in it. The procedures, risks, and benefits are fully described further in the consent form. The purpose of this study is to find out how graduates of the Marietta High School classes of 2018 and/or 2019 interacted with and perceived the Student Life Center (SLC).

There will be a brief, 5 – 10-minute, survey that ask about your experiences while a student at MHS. Several survey participants will be invited to participate in a follow-up interview to further share their experiences and discuss the information learned from reviewing the surveys. This interview will take between 45 – 60 minutes. Interview participants potential loss of confidentiality. There are no direct benefits for you if you participate in the study. The benefit to the researcher is to support future Student Life Centers. The alternative is not to participate in the study, as participation is

This study is being conducted by Catherine Barco Paige, a PhD Candidate, under the direction of Dr. Amy Serafini with the Educational Leadership and Foundations Department at Auburn University

You were selected as a potential volunteer participant because you were identified as a member of the MHS graduating class of 2018 or 2019 and are 19-years or older

What will be involved if you participate? If you decide to participate in this research study, you will complete this on-line survey. Several (3-5) survey respondents expressing interest will be chosen to participate in a follow up interview via a secured Zoom conference. Your total time commitment for the survey will be approximately 5- 10 minutes. Interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes of your time. An opportunity to review study findings and contribute further is available, but not required. This process will take approximately 30 - 45 minutes. All interviews and study findings reviews will take place via Auburn Zoom

Are there any risks or discomforts? Interviews inherently carry the risk of breach of confidentiality as participants are identifiable. To limit this risk, the pseudonym will be used during the interview and for all data analysis. All identifiable information will be removed from the data and analysis. Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants.

4036 Haley Center, Auburn, AL 36849-5221; Telephone: 334-844-4460: Fax: 334-844-3072

w w w . a u b u r n . e d u

**EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY**

To protect participant confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box. Auburn Box is encrypted, requires dual authentication, and is only be accessed by research staff. During the interview, you may further protect your privacy by completing activities in a private space, disabling "cookies", and closing your browser.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? There are no direct benefits to you if you participate in this study; however, you may find the process enjoyable as it is a chance to have your story told. You may also help school and governmental leaders understand the needs of high school students and possibly influence future Student Life Centers across the United States. I cannot promise you that you will receive any or all the benefits described

Will you receive compensation for participating? To thank you for your time for completing the survey, you will enter a drawing for a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card. The 45–60-minute interview participants will receive a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card as compensation

Are there any costs? If you decide to participate, the only associated cost is your time as outlined above

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to withdraw from the interview process, your data will not be included in the research findings. Your decision about whether to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations or Auburn University

Your privacy will be protected. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. A pseudonym will be assigned to all interview participants and used to label all analyze and report all data

Information obtained through your participation in this study will be used to fulfill the requirements for a PhD in Educational Supervision. Additionally, the information may be published in professional journals or papers, presented at professional conferences, etc.

If you have questions about this study, contact Catherine Barco Paige at cap0077@auburn.edu or 678-736-3320 or Dr. Amy Serafini at ams@auburn.edu

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. Click below to provide informed consent to participate or exit the survey.

☐      I have read the description of the study and agree/consent to participate in the study.

☐      I do not wish to participate in this study

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

**(NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**
**INFORMED CONSENT for a Research Study titled**
*"How Does Engaging With In-School Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders"*

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This research study is voluntary, meaning you do not have to take part in it. The procedures, risks, and benefits are fully described further in the consent form. The purpose of this study is to find out how graduates of the Marietta High School classes of 2018 and 2019 interacted with and perceived the Student Life Center (SLC). There will be a brief, 5 – 10-minute, survey that ask about your experiences while a student at MHS. Several survey participants will be invited to participate in a follow-up interview to further share their experiences and discuss the information learned from reviewing the surveys. This interview will take between 45 – 60 minutes. Interview participants will be offered to further participate in the research findings by reviewing the data gathered. This process will take approximately 30 – 45 minutes and is not required to participate. The only risk is related is the potential loss of confidentiality. There are no direct benefits for you if you participate in the study. The benefit to the researcher is to support future Student Life Centers. The alternative is not to participate in the study, as participation is voluntary.

This study is being conducted by Catherine Barco Paige, a PhD Candidate, under the direction of Dr. Amy Serafini with the Educational Leadership and Foundations Department at Auburn University. You were selected as a potential volunteer participant because you were identified as a member of the MHS graduating class of 2018 or and are 19-years or older.

**What will be involved if you participate?** If you decide to participate in this research study, you will complete an on-line survey using Auburn Qualtrics. Several (3-5) survey respondents expressing interest will be chosen to participate in a follow up interview via a secured Zoom conference. Your total time commitment for the survey will be approximately 5-10 minutes. Interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes of your time. An opportunity to review study findings and contribute further via Zoom is available, but not required. This process will take approximately 30 - 45 minutes.

**Are there any risks or discomforts** Interviews inherently carry the risk of breach of confidentiality as participants are identifiable. To limit this risk, the pseudonym will be used during the interview and for all data analysis. All identifiable information will be removed from the data and analysis. Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants. To protect participant confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box. Auburn Box is encrypted, requires dual authentication, and is only

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Version Date: 9/4/2021

1 of 2

_____ Initials (if not signing electronically)

be accessed by research staff. During the interview, you may further protect your privacy by completing activities in a private space, disabling "cookies", and closing your browser.

**Are there any benefits to yourself or others?** There are no direct benefits to you if you participate in this study; however, you may find the process enjoyable as it is a chance to have your story told. You may also help school and governmental leaders understand the needs of high school students and possibly influence future Student Life Centers across the United States. I cannot promise you that you will receive any or all the benefits described.

**Will you receive compensation for participating?** To thank you for your time for completing the survey, you will enter a drawing for a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card. The 45–60-minute interview participants will receive a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card as compensation.

**Are there any costs?** If you decide to participate, the only associated cost is your time as outlined above.

**If you change your mind about participating,** you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to withdraw from the interview process, your data will not be included in the research findings. Your decision about whether to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations or Auburn University.

**Your privacy will be protected.** Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. A pseudonym will be assigned to all interview participants and used to label all analyze and report all data. Information obtained through your participation in this study will be used to fulfill the requirements for a PhD in Educational Supervision. Additionally, the information may be published in professional journals or papers, presented at professional conferences, etc.

**If you have questions about this study,** contact Catherine Barco Paige at cap0077@auburn.edu or 678-736-3320 or Dr. Amy Serafini at ams@auburn.edu. A copy of this document will be available for you to keep.

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

_____          _____

Participant's signature            Date            Investigator obtaining consent        Date

_____          _____

Printed Name                                      Printed Name

Version Date: 9/4/2021

2 of 2

_____ Initials (if not signing electronically)

**The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from**
__11/09/2021__ to __---------------__
**Protocol #** ___21-332 EP 2111___

# Appendix A: References

America's Promise Alliance. (2017). U.S. at Risk of Not Reaching 90 Percent Graduation Rate
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   center/

Appendix B

Dear _____,

I am a graduate in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations at Auburn University.  I would like to invite you to participate in my research study to investigate perceptions of graduates of the MHS 2018 and 2019 classes. You may participate if you are over the age of 19 and a graduate of Marietta High School.

Participants will be asked to complete a short survey using Auburn Qualtrics. This survey will take approximately 5 - 10 minutes of your time to complete.

There are no known risks to you if you participate in the survey. Survey participants may be selected, if interested, to participate in an interview, lasting between 45-60 minutes, to share more information about their experiences at MHS and the Student Life Center. All survey participants will be entered into a drawing for their choice of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card. Interview participants will be compensated with an Amazon or Visa gift card valued at $25.00.

If you would like to participate in this study or learn more, click on this link. This link will bring you to the survey, which includes a letter of informed consent. If you decide to participate after reading the letter, simply select the option, *" I have read the description of the study and agree/consent to participate in the study,"* to begin.

If you would like to participate, but don't have access to do so electronically, please email or text me your address and I will mail you two copies of the consent letter, one to sign and return and one to keep for your records. Upon receipt of the informed consent letter, I will mail you a paper version of the survey and a stamped envelope to return it to me.

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary

If you have any questions, please contact me at cap0077@auburn.edu or my advisor, Dr. Amy Serafini, at ams0206@auburn.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Catherine Barco Paige

Catherine Barco Paige, Ed.S

B-2 FOLLOW UP E-MAIL INVITATION FOR ON-LINE SURVEY AND POTENTIAL INTERVIEW (for use if needed to recruit additional interview participants)

Dear _____,

Two weeks ago, you received an email or text message asking for your participation in my research study to investigate perceptions of graduates of the MHS 2018 and 2019 classes. It is not too late to join us and contribute to this study

As a reminder, if you choose to participate, you will complete a short survey using Auburn Qualtrics. This survey will take approximately 5 - 10 minutes of your time to complete. There are no known risks to you if you participate in the survey. After completing the survey, you may be invited to participate in a voluntary interview to share more about your experiences.

As a thank you for your time to complete the survey, you will be entered into a drawing for your choice of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card.

If you would like to know more information about this study, an informed consent letter can be obtained by clicking on this link.. If you decide to participate after reading the letter select the option,*" I have read the description of the study and agree/consent to participate in the study,"* to begin.

If you would like to participate, but don't have access to do so electronically, please email or text me your address and I will mail you two copies of the consent letter, one to sign and return and one to keep for your records. Upon receipt of the informed consent letter, I will mail you a paper version of the survey and a stamped envelope to return it to me.

Participation in this research study is strictly voluntary.

If you have any questions, please contact me at cap0077@auburn.edu or my advisor, Dr. Amy Serafini, at ams0206@auburn.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Catherine Barco Paige

Catherine Barco Paige, Ed.S

B-3 E-MAIL INVITATION FOR INTERVIEW

Dear, _____.

Thank you for responding to the survey of MHS graduates from the classes of 2018 and 2019. I would like to invite you to further participate in my research study to investigate perceptions of graduates of the MHS 2018 and 2019 classes. Specifically, I am seeking additional information beyond your survey responses to inform best practices for the Student Life Center (SLC) and future SLCs in other schools. You may participate if you are over the age of 19 and your survey responses indicated you utilized Student Life Center services while in high school. Please do not participate if you are under the age of 19 or did not participate in services provided by the SLC.

As a participant, you will be asked to join me via Auburn Zoom for an interview. Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have security limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants.

Your total time commitment for interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes. You will be given a pseudonym to keep your identity confidential. This pseudonym will be used for all aspects of the study including data analysis and reporting. All Zoom recordings, Zoom transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box as it is encrypted, requires dual authentication, is can only be accessed by research staff. During the interview, you may further protect your privacy by completing activities in a private space, disabling "cookies", and closing your browser.

Following data analysis, I will contact your for an opportunity to review study findings. This will allow you to verify the analysis is reflective of your experiences and to contribute further. This meeting will also take place via Zoom is available and will take approximately 30 - 45 minutes. You may participate in the interview and decide not to contribute to the data review.

My hope is that your contributions will allow you to tell your story and provide valuable information to inform SLC directors and implementers across the country. There is no cost to you other than your time and you will be compensated with your choice of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card.

If you would like to participate in this research study, please let me know by responding to this email or text within the next 5 business days. Please include three times that are good for you to meet via Zoom to conduct the interview.

If you have questions later, please contact me at cap0077@auburn.edu or 678-736-3320. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Amy Serafini, at ams0206@auburn.edu

Thank you for your consideration,

Catherine Barco Paige
Catherine Barco Paige Ed.S

B-4 PHONE INVITATION FOR INTERVIEW (if needed to recruit desired number of participants)

My name is Catherine Barco Paige, a graduate student from the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations at Auburn University. Recently you participated in a survey of MHS graduates from the classes of 2018 and 2019. Thank you for your valuable input.

I would like to invite you to further participate in my research study. Specifically, I am seeking additional information beyond your survey responses to inform best practices for the Student Life Center or SLC and future SLCs in other schools.

Are you over the age of 19 and a graduate of the MHS classes of 2018-2019? Are you interested in learning more?

As a participant, we will meet via Auburn Zoom for an interview. Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have security limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants.

Your total time commitment for this interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes. As interview participants are inherently identifiable, we will use a pseudonym to keep your identity confidential. This pseudonym will be used for all aspects of the study including data analysis and reporting.

All Zoom recordings, Zoom transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box as it is encrypted, requires dual authentication, is can only be accessed by research staff. During the interview, you may further protect your privacy by completing activities in a private space, disabling "cookies", and closing your browser.

Following data analysis, I will contact you for an opportunity to review study findings. This will allow you to verify the analysis is reflective of your experiences and to contribute further. This meeting will also take place via Zoom is available and will take approximately 20-30 minutes. You may participate in the interview and decide not to contribute to the data review.

My hope is that your contributions will allow you to tell your story and provide valuable information to inform SLC directors and implementers across the country. There is no cost to you other than your time and you will be compensated with your choice of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card.

Do you have any questions now?
Are you interested in continuing and participating in this study?

If you have any questions later or change your mind, feel free to call me back.

**Appendix C:**

**C-1. Survey Invitation and Informed Consent Email or Text (informed consent is embedded in the survey)**

Dear MHS Graduate,

I am seeking participants to contribute to a research study How Does Engaging with In-School Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders. This study seeks to gather and analyze data related to graduates' perceptions on the impact of the extended wraparound services (counseling, food pantry, mentoring, clothing closet, etc.) provided to students by the Student Life Center (SLC) at your former high school campus.

I am asking you to participate in a brief survey located at this link. This link will also provide you with information to allow your informed consent to participate. The survey will provide data for my dissertation research investigating the impact of wraparound delivery models and services provided for students served through wraparound programs while attending school. The survey should take you 5 - 10 minutes to complete.

If you are interested in participating in the interview process to provide additional information or entering a drawing for a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card, please provide your contact information at the end of the survey. All interview participants will choose a pseudonym to protect their privacy and will have the opportunity to review research findings to assure fidelity. Compensation in the form of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card is provided for all interview participants.

Thank you,

Catherine Barco Paige        678-736-3320        cap0077@auburn.edu

**C-2 Informed Consent (Electronic) and Survey (Qualtrics)**

Start of Block: Default Question Block

INFORMED CONSENT for a Research Study titled "How Does Engaging with In-School Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This research study is voluntary, meaning you do not have to take part in it. The procedures, risks, and benefits are fully described further in the consent form. The purpose of this study is to find out how graduates of the Marietta High School classes of 2018 and 2019 interacted with and perceived the Student Life Center (SLC). There will be a brief, 5 – 10-minute, survey that ask about your experiences while a student at MHS. Several survey participants will be invited to participate in a follow-up interview to further share their experiences and discuss the information learned from reviewing the surveys. This interview will take between 45 – 60 minutes. Interview participants will be offered to further participate in the research findings by reviewing the data gathered. This process will take approximately 30 – 45 minutes and is not required to participate. The

only risk is related is the potential loss of confidentiality. There are no direct benefits for you if you participate in the study. The benefit to the researcher is to support future Student Life Centers. The alternative is not to participate in the study, as participation is voluntary.

This study is being conducted by Catherine Barco Paige, a PhD Candidate, under the direction of Dr. Amy Serafini with the Educational Leadership and Foundations Department at Auburn University. You were selected as a potential volunteer participant because you were identified as a member of the MHS graduating class of 2018 or and are 19-years or older.

**What will be involved if you participate?** If you decide to participate in this research study, you will complete an on-line survey using Auburn Qualtrics. Several (3-5) survey respondents expressing interest will be chosen to participate in a follow up interview via a secured Zoom conference. Your total time commitment for the survey will be approximately 5- 10 minutes. Interviews will take approximately 45-60 minutes of your time. An opportunity to review study findings and contribute further via Zoom is available, but not required. This process will take approximately 30 - 45 minutes.

**Are there any risks or discomforts** Interviews inherently carry the risk of breach of confidentiality as participants are identifiable. To limit this risk, the pseudonym will be used during the interview and for all data analysis. All identifiable information will be removed from the data and analysis. Interviews will be conducted using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. Safety features include end-to-end encryption to ensure communication between all meeting participants is encrypted using cryptographic keys known only to the devices of those participants. To protect participant confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box. Auburn Box is encrypted, requires dual authentication, and is only be accessed by research staff. During the interview, you may further protect your privacy by completing activities in a private space, disabling "cookies", and closing your browser.

**Are there any benefits to yourself or others?** There are no direct benefits to you if you participate in this study; however, you may find the process enjoyable as it is a chance to have your story told. You may also help school and governmental leaders understand the needs of high school students and possibly influence future Student Life Centers across the United States. I cannot promise you that you will receive any or all the benefits described.

**Will you receive compensation for participating?** To thank you for your time for completing the survey, you will enter a drawing for a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card. The 45–60-minute interview participants will receive a $25.00 Amazon or Visa gift card as compensation.

**Are there any costs?** If you decide to participate, the only associated cost is your time as outlined above.

**If you change your mind about participating,** you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to withdraw from the interview process, your data will not be included in the research findings. Your decision about whether to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations or Auburn University.

**Your privacy will be protected.** Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. A pseudonym will be assigned to all interview participants and used to label all analyze and report all data. Information obtained through your participation in this study will be used to fulfill the requirements for a PhD in Educational Supervision. Additionally, the information may be published in professional journals or papers, presented at professional conferences, etc.

**If you have questions about this study,** contact Catherine Barco Paige at cap0077@auburn.edu or 678-736-3320 or Dr. Amy Serafini at ams@auburn.edu. A copy of this document will be available for you to keep.

If you have questions about this study, contact Catherine Barco Paige at cap0077@auburn.edu or 678-736-3320 or Dr. Amy Serafini at ams@auburn.edu

☐  "I have read the description of the study and agree/consent to participate in the study."

☐  I do not wish to participate in this study

Q2 In what year did you graduate?

○ 2018

○ 2019

Q3 Did you participate in any Student Life Center services while attending MHS?

○ Yes

○ No

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Q4 In what SLC services did you participate? (Check all that apply.)

- [ ] Academic tutoring
- [ ] Clothing Closet
- [ ] Food Pantry
- [ ] Group mental health counseling
- [ ] One-on-one mental health counseling
- [ ] Guest speakers
- [ ] It's a Girl Thing
- [ ] Job search support
- [ ] Mentoring
- [ ] Mock interviews
- [ ] Post-graduation advisement
- [ ] Special events

Q5 Do you believe the Student Life Center is meeting the mission to support students with graduating on time with their four-year cohort?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other _____

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Q6 How would you best describe yourself?

○ African American or Black

○ American Indian or Native American

○ Asian

○ Biracial

○ Hispanic or Latinx

○ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

○ White

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other _____

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Q7 Which of the following do you most identify with?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Nonbinary

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other _____

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Q8 How would you describe your family's socioeconomic status when you were a high school student?

○ Below the poverty line

○ Lower middle class

○ Middle class

○ Upper middle class

○ Wealthy

○ Prefer not to say

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Q9 Which of the following describe your current employment/economic situation? (Check all that apply)

☐ Employed full time

☐ Employed part time

☐ Unemployed looking for work

☐ Unemployed not looking for work

☐ Serving in the Military

☐ Living on my own

☐ Living with family or friends

☐ Other _____

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Q10 Which of the following BEST describes your current educational situation?

○ Enrolled part time in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)

○ Enrolled full time in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)

○ Not currently enrolled in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)

*Skip To: Q11 If Which of the following BEST describes your current educational situation? = Enrolled part time in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)*

*Skip To: Q11 If Which of the following BEST describes your current educational situation? = Enrolled part time in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)*

*Skip To: Q12 If Which of the following BEST describes your current educational situation? = Not currently enrolled in a post-secondary program (college, university, or trade school)*

Q11 If enrolled in a post-secondary program, which BEST describes your school?

○ I am not enrolled in a post-secondary program

○ Tech or trade school

○ Junior or community college

○ Four-year university

○ Other _____

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Q12 Are you interested in participating in a follow up interview to share more about your experiences with the SLC? (Interviews will take place via Zoom and will take 45 – 60 minutes of your time. You will be compensated with a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card if chosen to participate in the interview portion of this study.)

○ Yes

○ No

*Skip To: Q13 If Are you interested in participating in a follow up interview to share more about your experiences... = Yes*

*Skip To: Q14 If Are you interested in participating in a follow up interview to share more about your experiences... = No*

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Q13 Please provide your phone number and email address to be contacted to participate in the interview portion of this research study. This information will be stored on this secure server, available only to the researchers, and destroyed at the study's conclusion.

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Q14 If you are interested in being entered into the drawing for your choice of a $25.00 Amazon or Visa Gift Card, please provide you phone number and email address below. This information will be used only for the drawing and will be destroyed following award of the gift card.

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**End of Block: Default Question Block**

**C-2. Structured Interview Questions to be conducted via Zoom**

(Reminders for Participant confidentiality)

We are conducting this interview using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. To protect your confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, Zoom transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box as it is encrypted, requires dual authentication, is can only be accessed by research staff.

Please protect your privacy by completing this interview in a private space, to ensure conversations are not overheard. I also encourage you to disable "cookies" and close device browsers.

Additionally, I will refer to you by the chosen pseudonym that will be used for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

1. What brought you to the Student Life Center?
2. Your pre-survey showed that you participated in _____ programs and services. To what extent did participating in these programs and services have on your on-time graduation?
3. Which programs provided by the Student Life Center do you believe MOST supported your graduation on time with your four-year cohort?
4. Your pre-survey showed that you did not participate in _____ programs. Why was that the case?
5. What additional services do you wish the Student Life Center had provided to you and your peers?
6. What is your overall impression of the work the Student Life Center is doing at your former high school?

7. How do you feel about calls for State Departments of Education in communities like your former high school to develop Student Life Centers in more schools?

8. Did you know the Student Life Center in which you participated is a model for others across the state and country? Many school leaders are considering creating their own Student Life Center on their school campus. Do you think this is a good idea? (Why/Why not?)

9. What advice would you give to school leaders who are considering a Student Life Center for their school?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add to this conversation?

**C-3. Participant Review of the data and follow-up meeting (optional for interested participants)**

(Reminders for Participant confidentiality)

We are conducting this discussion using Auburn Zoom which has safety features built within, as other platforms may have limitations. To protect your confidentiality, all Zoom recordings, Zoom transcripts, consent documents and data will be electronically stored in Auburn Box as it is encrypted, requires dual authentication, is can only be accessed by research staff.

Please protect your privacy by completing this interview in a private space, to ensure conversations are not overheard. I also encourage you to disable "cookies" and close device browsers.

Additionally, I will refer to you by the chosen pseudonym that will be used for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

1. After reading the data results, do you believe they represent your story and input?

2. What information do you most feel represented your input?

3. What information do you feel did not represent your input?

4. Is there anything else you would like to add now that you have seen the study results?

August 1, 2021

To:     Auburn University IRB Protocol Review

RE:     Paige Protocol:  *How Does Engaging with In-school Wraparound Services Contribute Toward On-Time Graduation: Perceptions of Recent Graduate Participants and Advice to School Leaders*

To whom it may concern:

Catherine Barco Paige seeks permission to conduct a research study utilizing information provided by Marietta High School (MHS) graduates. Specifically, the proposed study intends to utilize a semi-structured interview method to explore MHS graduates' perceptions of services received through the Marietta Student Life Center (MSLC).

The proposed semi-structured interview process will seek to gain understanding of the
   1. Impact of MSLC services on obtaining on-time graduation,
   2. MSLC services former students believe were beneficial, and
   3. Recommendations for additional MSLC services and programs.

Pending approval from the Auburn IRB and the Marietta City Schools (MCS) Board of Education, we support Ms. Paige's efforts in the following ways:

   1. Authorization to contact potential volunteer participants and access to contact information.
   2. Authorization to recruit potential volunteer participants: 2018 and 2019 MHS graduates.
   3. Authorization to collect data from willing participants utilizing contact information provided by MHS.

As required by the MCS district, Ms. Paige will
   1. Provide a copy of the IRB-approved, stamped consent document to the school district and my office,
   2. Conduct the proposed study between February and August, 2022 and
   3. Share findings and results.

This proposed study will potentially benefit the MSLC, MHS, and MCS by providing information on participant perceptions that will inform future processes and services, as well as essential information for other schools to consider when creating and/or supporting their own Student Life Center.

If there are any questions or additional information needed, please contact me at rroberts@marietta-city.k12.ga.us or 678-919-4506.

Thank you.

Sincerely, I am,

Rona D. Roberts, Ph.D.
Director
Marietta Student Life Center