Case Study 1 Group Assignment

Case Study Summary

Level A \* Case 2

Mr. English, a 4th grade Language Arts teacher, has 23 students. Of those 23 students, 4 students leave halfway through Mr. English’s writing lesson, to receive morning special education Language Arts services. The students return 20 minutes before it is time for lunch and miss portions of the writing activities in his class. The special education teacher attempts to cover as many of the 4th grade writing skills, but Mr. English has noticed the students are falling further behind. Even though the students are receiving Language Arts services, from the special education teacher, when they return to class, Mr. English does not include the 4 students in his daily writing lessons. The students become increasingly disruptive, much to Mr. English’s frustration, which results in him having to spend the last half of each writing lesson attempting to quiet down the 4 disruptive students. Mr. English’s goals for the next 4 weeks are to increase the quantity and quality of writing time and decrease the misbehavior of those 4 students.

Summary of Problem

The case states that there are some special needs students who leave the class during a lesson and the return as the Mr. English is in the middle of the lecture or lesson, to get ready for lunch. As time passes, these students become disruptive as the other students are still completing assignments. As the students become more and more disruptive, Mr. English’s frustration level rises as he begins to realize how far behind the four students are falling behind.

Response

As stated in an article on the Teaching Channel website, “In order for classrooms to run smoothly, we need to have clear expectations for how students should act. When you create classroom norms as a class community, students are more likely to buy into them” (Teaching Channel, 2017), and in stating this the student must have buy in of what their goals for the classroom are. The STAR sheet gives suggestions on how to help students succeed in the classroom (STAR sheet, p. 9). The STAR sheet states the expectations should be stated clearly at all levels of the lesson, and that teachers should give instruction and guidance throughout the assignment (STAR sheet, p. 9). As the students come into class Mr. English should immediately restate what the assignment the other students were working on is, and given each of the four a goal to complete before leaving for lunch. In taking this time to explain what is happening the students are receiving the expectation from Mr. English as soon as they enter the class. The STAR sheet also states about the assignment “In understandable increments, state what the task is, why you are asking the students to complete it, the steps involved, and how the task will be assessed” (p.19). Mr. English could forgo this step, by working with the specialist and letting her know what the class will be doing when the students arrive. She could help the students by going over the expectations for when they arrive back to class, and give instructions for the assignment upon their arrival. The case study did not state if the specialist walks back to class with the students, but this would also be an option. The specialist is then able to model the behavior that is expected of the students when they return to class. The specialist is also, instrumental in helping to monitor the progress of the students, since she is working with them on Language Arts. Mr. English and the specialist should be working together to combat the issues that are occurring. Behavioral expectations must be reiterated often.

Once expectations are set within the classroom, students may begin to expect the Mr. English to be the disciplinarian and work to keep the expectations in place. But, when the students and teacher work together in collaboration, student’s self-esteem will grow and they take ownership over themselves and the consequences of their actions. He should also make sure that he asks for the students and specialist input during and after the expectations are set, so he can adjust when and where needed. In an article by the University of Vermont Center for Disability and Community Inclusion, states “students and instructional team members jointly developing and implementing norms shifts some of the responsibility for supporting and encouraging socially appropriate interactions from the teacher to the students. It also helps to ensure that students indeed understand the classroom community’s expectations and provides the rationale for them to monitor and change their own behaviors” (University of Vermont). Mr. English should continue to encourage his students and work to make sure the collaboration is consistent, and that the goals that the him and the specialist set, with the students, are followed, keeping frustration at a minimum.

Case Study Summary

Level B \* Case 1

Mr. Washington, a 5th grade teacher, discovered, at the end of the grading period, that his student, Shandra, has a low grade in his class. Mr. Washington spoke with Shandra’s Title I math teacher, who informed him that she is doing well in tutoring. Shandra’s tutor also informed Mr. Washington that in tutoring, Shandra talks with her Title I peers about her mathematical thinking. Mr. Washington’s math period consists of lecturing and then independent seat work. Mr. Washington realized that he will need to change his math period to include collaboration so he plans to include partner work in his math instruction. In Mr. Washington’s Science period, he includes partner work with the expectations that student conversations cannot begin until he gives permission, must be on topic, and volume should be low enough that the rest of the class cannot hear. Since this procedure has worked in his Science period, he decides to implement it in Math period. Mr. Washington’s goals for Shandra is to increase her conversation with peers about her mathematical thinking and increase her grade. The goals that he set for himself are to increase his use of partner work in math instruction and his assistance with students vocalizing their mathematical thinking.

Summary of Problem

While doing his grading Mr. Washington discovers that some of his students are having a problem and their grades reflect that. Mr. Washington doesn’t understand the grades falling since some of the students are attending math tutorials. Mr. Washington then begins to assess how he is teaching, mostly lecturing during his class period, and not giving much opportunities for peer work or questions during class. Mr. Washington wants to help the students with accommodations that have been set during tutorial, but haven’t been used much during his class. Wanting his students to succeed is his goal, but he failed keep on top of what was happening with his student.

Response

The STAR sheet starts out by saying “Consistent support of expectation is essential” (STAR sheet, p. 15), and Mr. Washington was not consistent in helping his students succeed in his class. As Mr. Washington changes his approach for the success of his students, the STAR sheet states that he must remember to constantly monitor the progress of the students, as well as be prepared to receive feedback from the students and the tutor (p. 15). Pushing his students to success might not make him popular, but ensures that they know that he is concerned with their progress. When working with Shondra, he is more open to not only changing how she is taught and able to use the accommodations that she may need, but he is also changing the way he conducts his class. In adjusting what he expects from his students he must make sure that he models what he wants to see within the class and explain why the changes are important to classroom community success. When setting personal goals and expectations for a specific student or students, the individual must be taken into consideration. Mr. Washington also did the right thing by breaking up a larger task into smaller ones, to help Shandra understand the assignment. After setting goals and expectations, and changing the classroom community the STAR sheet suggests, “Indicate(ing) to students when they have or have not met expectations…Respond to all students” (p. 16), in doing this the students, themselves, know when they are or are not on task and moving towards success. The most important factor for success for Shondra, would be to communicate with the tutor and her parents, what the expectations, goals, and accommodations are for her to work with, so they also have a part of her success, and keep her accountable for the work that needs to be completed.

Reference

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