Improving Academic Skills Within A School-Wide System of Positive Behavior Support

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JoAnn Munk
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“Without question, the link between academic and social behavior appears to be reciprocal, with failure in one leading to failure in the other.”

- Jolivette, Stichter, Nelson, Scott, & Liapusin, 2000
Funding

- U.S. Department of Education Field Initiated Research Projects OSEP Grant #H324CO30124B

- Written by Brigham Young University in collaboration with Nebo School District
  - K. Richard Young, Darlene Anderson, Ellie Young, Roxanna Johnson

- Funded for 5 years starting September 2003
“Given that (both) learning and emotional/behavioral problems are progressive in nature, early identification and intervention tends to be more effective than remediation…”

-Lane et al., 2002
Our Peaceable Schools Model

- Preventative Approach to School-wide Discipline
- Building Protective Factors
  - Self-Management
  - Social Skills
  - Emotional Resiliency
  - Academic Survival Skills
Conducting research to improve social and academic outcomes for students with high risk profiles before they are identified for special education services is consistent with a preventative emphasis.

(Smith & Daunic, 2004; Sugai, Horner, & Gresham, 2002)
Organization fuels achievement in school, success in the workplace, and happiness at home. It touches on quality of life by reducing stress and by increasing self-confidence. Organization is fundamental to problem solving.

(Dion and Fennick, 2004)
Need for Instruction

- Explicit instruction in academic strategies, including organizational skills is needed to

- Help secondary students at risk for ED achieve academically and work toward successful high school graduation.
Pilot Study

- Study I - February - April 2005
- PURPOSE
  - To test the use of an Organizational Skills form designed to help students improve their grades by tracking and turning in assignments

- RESULTS
  - Although some students’ grades improved, assignment completion and turn-in in the core academic class did not improve
Follow-Up

- Study II - October 2005 - March 2006 (ongoing)

- PURPOSE
  - To enhance generalization of Organizational Skills to a “selected” core academic class
  - To demonstrate experimental control over extraneous variables and infer a functional relationship between the Organizational Skills Intervention and student performance

- RESULTS
  - Generalization of skills to the core academic class has increased
Research Questions

1. What are the effects of Organizational Skills Instruction (OSI) on assignment completion and assignment turn-in?
   - Measure - % of assignments completed and turned in

2. What are the effects of OSI on Grades?
   - Measure - % accuracy
3. What are the effects of OSI on the % of components participants completed on the OSF?
   - Measure - Student’s written record

4. What are the effects of OSI on participants’ and tracker’s agreement in filling out the OSF?
   - Measure - Student’s and tracker’s written records
Target Population

- 8th and 9th grade students
- At risk for Emotional Disturbance (ED)
- Screening Instrument: Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (Walker & Severson, 1990)
- Experimental Group in a five year study
- Targeted for Secondary Level Intervention
- Students who are described by their teachers as being apathetic & unmotivated
Participant Selection Criteria

- No special services
- Limited number of absences
- Average or above average academic skill
- D or F in math, science or English
Participants

- 9th graders at risk for internalizing/externalizing behavior

1st period
- Kyle - grade 9 (externalizing)
- Mike - grade 9

2nd period
- Mitch - grade 9 (externalizing)
- Harry - grade 9

3rd period
- Todd - grade 9 (internalizing)
- Tim - grade 9
School Setting

- Junior High - 1261 Students
- Grades 8 & 9
Training and Generalization Settings

- For students needing secondary level intervention:
  - Skill acquisition - Achievement Plus Class
  - Skill generalization - English or Science Class
A+ Class

- A general education elective class providing secondary level intervention
- 8th and 9th graders identified
  - Teacher nomination
  - SSBD Stages I and II Screening
- Curriculum
  - Specialized
  - Research validated practices, i.e., emotional resiliency, social skills instruction, learning strategies
  - Self-management is a common thread
Aim of the A+ Class

- **Goal:** Academic success in core classes
- **Prerequisites:**
  - Self-management
  - Emotional resiliency
  - Fundamental social skills
  - Foundational academic skills
OSI Components

- Organizational Skills Form
- Instruction
- Reinforcement
- Mentoring
- Goal Setting
- Behavioral Contracting
- School-wide PBS
# Organizational Skills Form (OSF)

**Student Copy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Term</th>
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<th>Day/Date</th>
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<th>*Prepared</th>
<th>**Tests and/or Assignments</th>
<th>*** “Completed” and Turned in</th>
<th>% correct (teacher)</th>
<th>Components complete</th>
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*Prepared
1. Binder
2. Pencil daily in-class
3. Form for the week
4. Divider labels for each subject
5. Paper, 5 sheets behind each label
6. Papers in correct sections
7. Pencil pouch

**Tests and Assignments**
- *Prepared*: assignments listed
- Tests listed:
  - V=video
  - L=lecture

***Turned In
- N/A= nothing due
- Check mark (+) = assignment handed to teacher

*Estimated grade for this term__________________________
* I could improve my grade by:________________________________________________________________________
Behaviors Leading to Academic Success

- Self monitored:
  - Come to class on time
  - Come to class prepared with materials
  - Write down assignments and due dates
  - Mark when assignments are completed
  - Mark when assignments are turned-in
  - Record assignment scores
Structure for Teaching the OSF

- Key skills task analyzed into 3 lessons
- 15 minute lessons across 3 days
- Explicit, direct instruction approach
- Hands on & interactive
- Effective teaching cycle format
Effective Teaching Cycle

- Explicit instruction
  - Modeling – teacher
  - Guided Practice – teacher and student
  - Independent practice – student
Lesson One

- Purpose: Why organize a notebook?

- Student Responses:
  - Find things fast
  - Turn homework in on time-since you can find it!
  - Get better grades - because the teacher receives your assignments!
OSF and Notebook Organization

- Notebook organization
  - Receive specific instruction
  - Daily notebook check in A+ class
- On-time/attendance
- Materials - prepared for class
  - Pencil, planner, notebook. . . .
- Planner usage
  - List the assignments and due dates
Organizing Your Notebook

1. Place pencils, pens, and other small items in your plastic pouch.

2. Place the pouch in the front of the binder.

3. Make a divider tabs for each school subject

4. Place the tabs in the binder.

5. Place blank OSF forms behind each tab.

6. Place blank lined paper behind the OSF forms.
Lesson Two

- **Purpose**: How to fill out the form
  - Discuss each column
  - Emphasize 2 critical components
    - Tests/Assignments - allow practice writing on the form using scenarios
    - Completed/Turned In
  - Students are told, “After you do your best on an assignment you need to hand it to the teacher to receive credit!”
### Organizational Skills Form

**Student Name** __________________________      **Subject**_______________________________  **Week** ________________  **Term** ___________

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- **Tests and Assignments**: assignments listed tests listed
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- **Turned In**: N/A= nothing due
  Check mark (✓) = assignment handed to teacher

**Estimated grade for this term** _______________________  
**I could improve my grade by** ________________________
Lesson Three

- **Purpose:** Review & practice form use
- **Record future assignments**
- **Use of codes:**
  - V=video
  - L=lecture
  - N/A= no assignment given
- **Scenarios to test understanding**
Scenario Example:

“Today is Tuesday, March 15. You are on time, you found your pencil pouch, and remembered your pencil. You also have your notebook and the OS form. You are assigned five review questions from a book you have been studying in class. You complete your assignment and turn it in to your teacher. How many components did you complete?”
## Organizational Skills Form

### Organizational Skills Form (OSF)

**Student Copy**  
Student Name: Todd  
Subject: English  
Week: 3/14 to 3/18  
Term: Winter

<table>
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<th>Day/Date</th>
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</table>
| MON 3/14  
A | OT | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | 5 review questions from text | √ CS | /11 |
| 3/15  
A | OT | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | 5 review questions from text | √ CS | 8/11 |
| WED 3/15  
A | OT | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | 5 review questions from text | √ CS | /11 |
| THU 3/15  
A | OT | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | 5 review questions from text | √ CS | /11 |
| FRI 3/15  
A | OT | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | 5 review questions from text | √ CS | /11 |
Daily Follow-Up Procedures

- Mentor - checked notebook and delivered token reinforcer (white ticket)
- A+ Teacher - modeled form use (wrote daily assignment on overhead transparency and reinforced students’ use of the form)
- Mentor - attended core class, filled out tracker form & compared with student’s form
Antecedent Prompts

- The OSF form - carried by the student
- Presence of the mentor/tracker in the core classroom
- Class assignments written on white board
Reinforcers

- Verbal praise, positive teacher/tracker attention
- Corrective feedback
- Edible (soda, snack)
- Core class teacher’s signature on the OSF verifying assignment turn-in
Reinforcement

- Changing the contingency: Form filled in and assignment handed in, the student received verbal praise and earned a soda.
- Verbal praise only when the student used the form but did not turn in the assignment.
Goal Setting & Behavioral Contracting

- Student selected assignment to work on
- Mapped out a plan for completing the assignment
- Wrote the assignment on a goal-setting sheet
- Committed to filling out the OSF and giving it to the tracker (each day)
- Agreed verbally to terms of the contract
- Signed the written agreement
Goal Setting Form

Name: ___________________________________ Week: ____________________

Individual Weekly Goals
Action Plan

1. Personal Goal: _______________________________________________________
   Steps I need to take to accomplish it:
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. Academic Goal: _____________________________________________________
   Subject: _____________________________
   Steps I need to take to accomplish it:
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. (Other) Goal: _______________________________________________________
   Steps I need to take to accomplish it:
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
Mentoring - A Supportive Relationship

- “Let’s set up a time to practice your vocabulary words.”
- “Remember, you can take pride in your school work when you know you've done your best.”
- “I am happy about the progress you have made in your English class.”
- “I appreciate your honesty.”
School-wide PBS

- Team meets regularly to discuss school-wide interventions/issues
- Teachers deliver school-wide social skills instruction
- Data used to monitor intervention effects.
- Professional development provided to all teachers
- Training for staff and administrators
- Strong district-level leadership and support
Results

What are the effects of OSI on

- Assignment completion and assignment turn-in?
- Grades?
- The % of components participants completed on the OSF?
- Participants’ and Tracker’s agreement in filling out the OSF?
Social Validity

“I see you cooperating in class and volunteering to help out. . . . putting forth the effort it takes to make passing grades."

(Kyle’s Mentor)
Social Validity

“Tim is turning in more work now. “
(Tim’s English Teacher)

“He doesn’t seem so shy, and is interacting more with the other students.”
(K T’s English Teacher)
“If Todd keeps this up, he’ll pass my class by the end of the term!”

(Todd’s Science Teacher)
Social Validity

“You have formed some important habits...bringing your binder to class, being organized, doing the work...studying for tests...giving up free time to study.”

(J’s Mentor)

“You have a C in science now, which is great!”

(Mike’s Mentor)
Social Validity

“I think the form helped the students learn to write down their assignments.”

“Some of the OSI students started to get higher grades in other academic classes.”

(A+ Teacher)
Social Validity

“The OSF helped me keep track of my assignments, stay organized and be more efficient.”

(Kyle)

“I look forward to turning in assignments because of the reward and the more assignments I turn in, the better grades I get.”

(Mitch)
Discussion

- The impact of OSI components on student performance
- Key factors promoting generalization: What did we do differently the second time?
- What would we do differently next time?
- Limitations
  - Case studies
  - Teacher buy-in
  - Component analysis needed
Implications for Future Research

- Self-monitoring form used in all classes
- Use of school planner
- Classroom teacher to initial daily progress
- Parents to initial daily progress
- School-wide implementation
- Darlene_Anderson@byu.edu
- JoAnn_Munk@byu.edu
- Richard_Young@byu.edu
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Improving Academic Skills Within A School-Wide System of Positive Behavior Support

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