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Findings

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Introduction

Throughout my semester I have been collecting data at Strawbridge Elementary school. I have worked in the guidance office, and I’ve been looking at key research questions. These questions include do the students have easy access to the guidance office during the school day, are the students aware of the services that the guidance office gives, and when the guidance counselors are out in classrooms is there a way for students having trouble that day to get in touch with them? These questions were answered completely through my evaluation of the school counseling office’s dynamic.

**Results**

 My results came out very well. I first sat down and interviewed Ms. Harrison the lead counselor at Strawbridge Elementary school. I asked her the above questions to see her opinion on what she believes is going on within her department. She responded with great answers. Ms. Harrison said that the students have access to the guidance office for the whole school day. All they have to do is take the guidance pass that is hung up in every classroom, and take it down the hall to the guidance office. Once here the counselor will take the pass and start to discuss how the student is doing, and what their concerns are. She says this happens a lot, and they found that the pass is a great way to regulate when the students come in. She also said that the first week of school she gives a presentation of all the services the guidance office offers to each classroom. Therefore, all the students are aware of what they can get from the guidance office, and which counselor to talk too when coming in.

Ms. Harrison took time to answer my third question. She said that this isn’t something she’s thought of before. In conclusion she found that no there isn’t anything in place that would let the counselor know a student was in need, unless the student went straight to the office and asked for them to page the counselor. We sat on this question for awhile trying to figure out if anything was in place. When she ultimately didn’t come up with anything I knew this was a good starting point for my evaluation. I had to see if there was a need for the guidance counselors to have something that lets them know if a student needs them while they are in the classroom.

With this information that I gathered I then moved on to the student survey. I had two different classes, one third grade and one fifth grade class, take my survey. This means that around 50 kids completed the survey. The survey questions included do you feel as though the guidance counselors are available to you, do you ever need the guidance counselors when they aren’t in their office, and would you like for there to be something to get you in touch with the guidance counselor when they aren’t in their room? The results where astounding. 95% of the students said that the guidance counselors are available to them, 70% of the students said that they needed a guidance counselor when they weren’t in their office, and 96% said that they would like there to be something for them to use to get in touch with the guidance counselor when they aren’t in the room.

**Conclusion**

 Based on my results I have found that there has to be something in place for students to get in touch with the counselor when they are out of the room. With 96% of students saying that was needed, it came to my attention to tell Ms. Harrison. She agreed that this was an important next step for the school as a whole. With mental illness rising within students, it is important for them to be fully and completely available for their students at all times. I found that for the majority this school is excelling in the guidance area. Students seem to be happy when visiting with the counselors, and they seem to be very comfortable telling them what’s wrong. This is the key for the department to be successful.

**Implications**

The implications of my study only helped the school become better at what they do. Since Ms. Harrison heard first hand from students what they were looking for, it will help her put into place an action plan. The school will only better itself from my evaluation. Ms. Harrison commended me on my research and evaluation. She was excited for my recommendations, and wants to present them to their principle at once. It was nice that I thought of something that even the head counselor didn’t think of herself. It made an impact on the school and the counseling program as a whole because it is something that is in desperate need of implementing.

**Recommendations**

I recommended to Ms. Harrison that they do an alert doorbell. This doorbell the student can ring on the door of the office and it will immediately notify the school counselor via text message. This will allow the counselor to know that someone is in dyer need of their attention. This being said, I explained to Ms. Harrison that during her first week of school presentation she needs to explain to the students that this doorbell is when they are in absolute need to talk to her. It needs to be an emergency for her to come out of the classroom to be with the student. I then suggested that another thing in conjunction to that would be to put a mailbox on the outside of the door and have students that missed the counselor write what their issue is and who they are and put it in the mailbox. Then when the counselor gets back to her office she can call down the students that left the notes. This allows the students that don’t have a dyer need to talk to the counselor still feel like they are being heard, and that they will be talked too shortly.

**Goals and Objectives**

My goals for this institution is for the students to feel as though they can always get in contact with the counselor. Nothing is worse then going through a problem, and feeling like there is no one there to talk and listen too. This being said, I think my recommendation to Ms. Harrison will really help in those efforts. Another goal of mine, is for them to find what will work best for them and implicate it. It might not necessarily be my recommendation that they put in place, but there has to be something in order for them to move past this problem. This school has an excellent guidance program, and can only benefit from my findings and recommendations. I hope that Ms. Harrison took my evaluation seriously, and wants to improve in the area that they students suggested was lacking.