AN INVESTIGATION OF ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRANSITION FROM EIGHTH TO NINTH GRADE IN A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Dissertation
by
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ABSTRACT

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(August 2009)

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The purpose of this study was to investigate transition from eighth to ninth grade in a rural school district by identifying issues. The cross-sectional design included surveys administered to eighth and ninth-grade students and interviews with six current ninth-grade students who experienced various levels of academic success during the first semester of their first year in high school. Research questions explored concerns of eighth graders regarding the move to high school, issues facing current ninth graders as they entered high school, and areas of congruence of eighth graders' perspectives and ninth graders' realities related to transitioning to high school.

Results indicated that eighth-grade students worried about the unknown areas of high school: finding their classes, having a lot of homework, having hard or unfriendly teachers, getting to class on time, getting good grades, feeling pressure to do well, and
being around new students and more students. Ninth-grade students worried about finding their classes, having hard classes, having a lot of homework, having hard or unfriendly teachers, and getting to class on time. Areas of congruence, designated by results of statistical tests, existed between eighth-grade perceptions and ninth-grade realities in the following areas: feeling pressure to do well, having hard or unfriendly teachers, having new rules and expectations, having a lot of homework, being made fun of, riding the bus, getting to class on time, and getting good grades.