

# Working with Economically Disadvantaged Students



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# Introduction



Data from the DOE website indicates that students who are included in the Economically Disadvantaged (ECD) Gap Group show lower Mathematics SOL Pass Rates

Virginia Math SOL Pass Rates		
Year	ECD	Highest Group
2010-2011	78%	95%
2011-2012*	54%	87%
2012-2013	57%	88%

\*Implementation of advanced rigor on SOL Test

Virginia Grade Level Pass Rates 2012-2013		
Grade	ECD	Highest Group
3	49%	84%
4	61%	90%
5	56%	86%
6	66%	92%
7	43%	85%
8	48%	85%
Alg 1	63%	92%
Geom	61%	91%
Alg II	63%	89%

# Potential Challenges – Home Life



Parents are concerned about their child's education; however, economic hardship becomes the main focus of the household.

- For example, a girl comes into school hungry because she did not have food the night before or in the morning before she came to school. She was given waffles by the school and was actively engaged in activities for the rest of the day. “The question as to whether the mother should have sought help with social welfare depends on her personality. It could have been that she, like so many others, had too much pride to do so.” (Gassama, 2012, p. 2)

# Potential Challenges – School Life



An economically disadvantaged student's home life can negatively impacts their schooling experience.

- “Attending school for them is far from being a priority. They find it very hard to make friends which should be one reason that entices children to go to school.” (Gassama, 2012, p. 7)
- “Because they move around a lot, they pay less attention to school believing that they will have to move again.” (Gassama, 2012, p. 7)

# Research-based Best Practices - Planning



Teachers in all types of Virginia school divisions must make connections to a student's life outside of school while planning.

- ✦ An eastern Virginia rural division: 44% Free/Reduced Lunch
- ✦ A central Virginia division: 73% Free/Reduced Lunch
- ✦ A northern Virginia Suburban division: 55% Free/Reduced Lunch
- ✦ A central Virginia urban division: 32% Free/Reduced Lunch

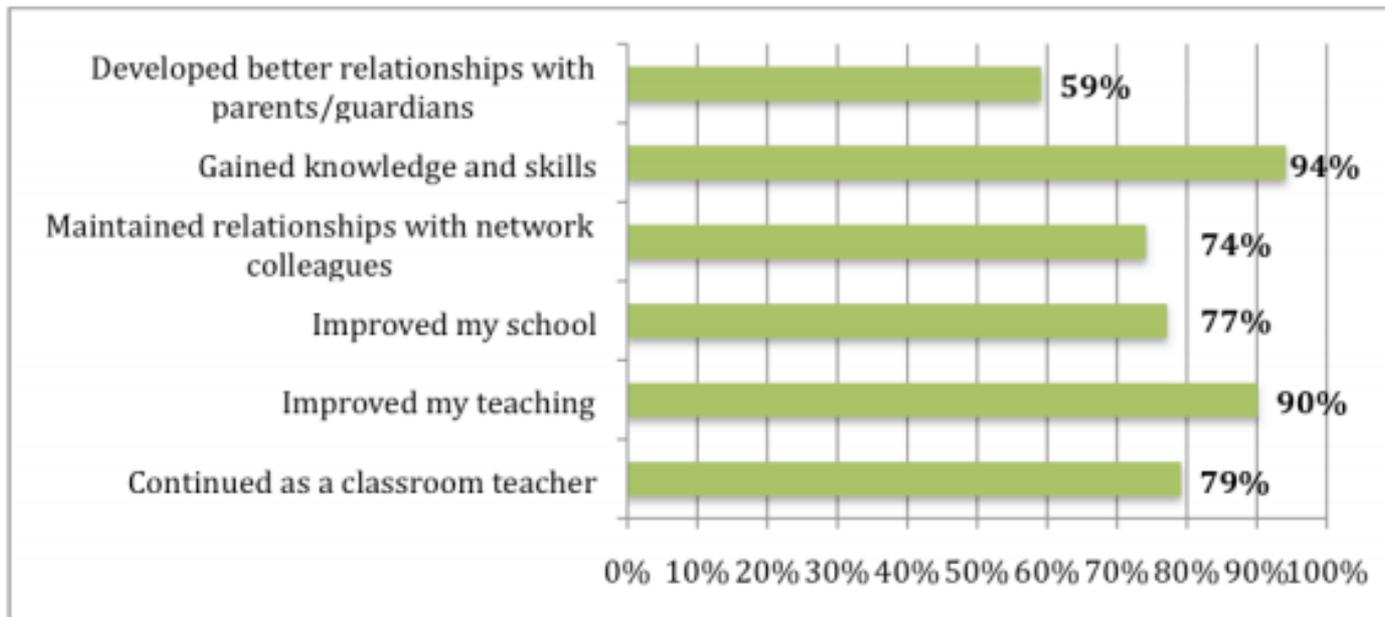
Lesson study is an effective evidenced-based way to collaborate with others and connect students' outside experiences with their school experience.

# Research-based Best Practices – Planning



## Evidence of effective lesson study as told by teachers

*“As a result of network participation, I have...”*



DATA SOURCE: Authors' tabulation of Teachers Network survey data

# Research-based Best Practice - Planning



Formative assessments should be used to determine a student's prior knowledge.

- Successful schools “begin by figuring out what children need to know and be able to do; they assess what their students already know and are able to do; they figure out how to move students from where they are to where they need to be; and then they analyze what students have learned and whether they need further instruction.” (Chenoweth, 2009, p. 39)

# Research-based Best Practices – Implementation Factors



Programs that have proven successful reach students' educational and emotional needs

- Educational needs:

- ✦ 1-on-1 or small group instruction with teachers
- ✦ Access to printed material and technology

- Emotional needs:

- ✦ Physical and psychological safety
- ✦ Supportive relationships
- ✦ Opportunities to belong

# Research-based Best Practices – Implementation Factors



During implementation, students will be more motivated to solve a problem if they have had personal experiences related to the issue.

- In a study of two groups, one with a low poverty rate and the other with a high poverty rate, those in the high poverty school were more inclined to answer a question related to changes in their school's budget after analyzing data.

“The idea that teachers do not care about students played a much larger role in the second group's participation in the analysis of the budget. They often asked how analyzing the budget data was going to help them answer their question.” (McNair, 2000, p. 565)

# Teacher Awareness



Teachers must be sensitive to the hardships that students who live in high-poverty deal with on a daily basis and adapt their instruction accordingly.

“Poverty undoubtedly impacts learning in a negative way. Nevertheless, it should be known that, it will be a colossal error to give up on children from low socio-economic backgrounds.”  
(Gassama, 2012, p. 12)