

TOWARDS A STUDENT - FRIENDLY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Peer tutoring as a strategy to promote success at school

Istituto Istruzione Superiore
Filippo Bottazzi
Casarano (LE) - Italy

“F. BOTTAZZI” SECONDARY VOCATIONAL SCHOOL



MISSION

MAKING THE WORLD A BIG FAMILY by sharing knowledge, technology, innovation and visions;

VISION:

Promoting personal, social and academic development.

BACKGROUND:

-1.190 students attend “F. Bottazzi” Secondary Vocational school. Nearly 35% of them come from a disadvantaged socio-economic and cultural background. The level of drop-out and early school leaving is 30% in average.

-Since 2003 the school has been developing Quality Management approaches. The self-assessment process carried out according to the criteria and sub-criteria of the Caf Model has helped the school to identify strengths and weaknesses and focus on the very root problems at the basis of the education process.

THE PEER TUTORING PROJECT



ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT (about 60% of the whole school staff)

- Self-Assessment Commission and Group for Improvement coordinated by the school Headmaster and supported by the Quality manager;
- The teachers who identified the students at risk;
- Consultants ;
- 20 upper year students acting as tutors and 60 tutees.

METHODOLOGY:

- The Caf Model has helped the school to carry out the project moving from the Plan-do sequence of activity to a full PDCA cycle.

OBJECTIVES

Reducing the number of pupils who drop out during the first two years of Secondary education due to learning difficulties, lack of motivation and emotional problems

By

- Increasing students' positive attitudes toward school and learning in general
- Creating a friendly, nurturing learning environment
- Improving self-esteem as a way of fostering cognitive development
- Strengthening basic life and communication skills

THE FORMAT

- The procedure was based on cross-year small-group/dyadic tutoring: the tutors dealt with one tutee at a time or with a small group simultaneously;
- The tutors were required to attend a training course prior to giving tutorial assistance. Tutors' training mainly focused on advising and facilitating rather than directly addressing the curriculum content ;
- A user-friendly booklet and a smart leaflet about “F. Bottazzi” were provided to support the tutoring

THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



EVALUATION

-Output and outcome measures included pre- and post satisfaction questionnaires, structured interviews, informal group discussions, participant observation and tutoring reports.

- If compared to previous year data, the Project proved successful in increasing the students' level of engagement in activities (+18%) , self-confidence (+22%) and sense of well-being at school (+25%). There was widespread evidence of increased effectiveness across the whole ability range related to social and behavioral skills such as communicating (+ 18%), sharing and cooperating (+21%). The drop-out rate has been considerably reduced (-8%).

FOLLOW UP

CHALLENGES:

- Random allocation may be very dangerous;
- High accountability should be inbuilt;
- Tutoring materials should be highly structured;
- Tutors require strong interpersonal skills, including relationship building, communication and team-building;

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Promoting extracurricular education services for at-risk students and dropouts (introducing peer tutoring in summer training programs);
- Promoting reciprocal peer tutoring.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to offer our special thanks to the Ministry Education, the Public Administration Department and The Caf Resource Centre for the valuable assistance and support provided in the last three years in helping our administration improve quality management techniques and apply more efficient and effective customer-oriented approaches .

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Lithuanian Presidency, the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and the EUPAN members and the EIPA for giving us the opportunity to share our experience in this prestigious international Conference.

Franco Fasano – Headmaster

Rosaria De Marini – Quality Manager

