ABSTRACT

This teacher action research study investigated the experiences of the classroom teacher and students when holding weekly class meetings within a middle-level social studies classroom. Fifteen eighth grade students participated in the study conducted in an urban 6th – 12th grade school containing 318 students in the northeastern United States. Methods of gathering data included teacher observation, student surveys, student open-ended responses, and behavior and academic checklists. Methods of data analysis included coding of field log, surveys, and open-ended questions, development of theme statements, and the writing of reflective memos. The students participated in weekly thirty minute class meetings throughout the study. Findings suggest that during a class meeting students were able to share their feelings and perceptions about a variety of issues, examine their behaviors and relationships with others, and felt like they were solving problems important to them. Students also believe class meetings are beneficial to their behavior and academic achievement. Finally, class meetings provided the teacher with the opportunity to share his or her feelings and perceptions with the students.