ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study examines the effects of goal setting on the academic self-efficacy of ninth grade at-risk students. The study was completed in a large urban high school in eastern Pennsylvania with ninth grade students who were identified as being at-risk.

Methods of data collection included teacher research, surveys, field notes and student work. The study suggests that goal setting was ineffective as a means for increasing perceived academic self-efficacy. The study also suggests that students’ actual experiences, vicarious experiences, affective experiences and persuasions played roles in the students’ lack of growth in terms of their perceived academic self-efficacy.