ABSTRACT

This study focused on the implementation of learning centers on sixth grade general music students and the effects on engagement and student achievement. Fourteen sixth grade general music students participated in this study. The school was a suburban intermediate building (grades four through six) of approximately 1,050 students located in eastern Pennsylvania.

The study found that learning centers had a positive effect on both student engagement and student achievement. In analyzing the data, four main themes presented themselves. First, students were able to gain a sense of responsibility toward their own learning during centers. When students displayed self-responsibility for learning, levels of student interaction as well as achievement rose. Next, learning centers provided motivation for learning. This not only enhanced the students’ interest level, but also enhanced engagement in all aspects of the classroom. Third, when students were interacting in a positive manner with one another, the possibility for achievement grew dramatically. As a result, the discourse occurring in the classroom was conducive to further academic growth. Lastly, the flexible social structure of each group demonstrated that students were comfortable assuming different roles in their group. However, students tended to be less engaged with tasks when there was no determined leader present in the group.