Motivational Case: An Introduction to Zach

I met Zach the first day of kindergarten as I was dropping my daughter off at school. My eyes were immediately drawn to this little boy sitting in the front of the line in the hallway waiting to go into the classroom. He had black hair and dark brown eyes that seemed to be casing out each student as they sat down. I watched his mysterious eyes shift back and forth among the students sitting in his line.

His face was expressionless. His lips were tightly pressed together and his mind appeared to be racing with thoughts as he carefully measured up his classmates. I was curious to know what he was thinking.

As the first morning bell of the year rang, the students anxiously stood up to enter their new classroom. Zach immediately announced he was the “leader” with a loud and confident roar. There was an edge to his tone and demeanor that indicated he was dominantly establishing more than just his place in line. Upon entering the classroom, the children were instructed to find their cubby (locker) and put their backpacks away. It was at this point my ears almost feel off my head as I heard a young familiar voice roar, “Put your f----- backpack on the other side of the locker!” As I whipped around to see which innocent 5 year-old spewed those words with such force and anger, there stood the little dark haired boy with the piercing stare who had self-proclaimed his leader status on the way into the classroom just minutes prior. Eventually I came to...
know this little boy, who had such a tough exterior, as “Zach”.

Zach’s behavior in the classroom and on the playground tends to be aggressive and violent. He is a bully and makes frequent trips to the principal’s office for fighting and misbehaving in class. I believe Zach’s home environment contains violence and is parallel to the aggressive behavior he displays at school. On the way in to school one morning, I witnessed a physical altercation between Zach and his mother. My daughter and I were walking right behind them and I could tell they were involved in a heated and tense discussion. Her eyes were staring intensely at him with her lips pierced tightly together and his face was a mirror image glaring back at her. All of the sudden she smacked him across the face…right in the hallway of the school! The sound echoed in my ears and I felt his stinging pain on my own skin. While I try not to pass judgment on the actions of others, I found it impossible not to make a connection between Zach’s aggressive behavior in school and what probably occurs daily for him at home. I suspect his violence and aggression he exhibits at school is a learned behavior. His behavior challenges need to be addressed and he must be given the appropriate social skills to help him deal with frustrating situations, both in the classroom and on the playground.

In the classroom Zach is usually rebellious or withdrawn. He rarely participates in class. When he does attempt to participate, he often responds with sarcastic and irrelevant comments. Zach displays a disregard for authority and frequently refuses to do work.

**Motivational Assessment**

The teacher has tried to establish a positive environment for the children. The expectations and guidelines are clear, understood and followed. This helps
create and support an organized classroom, as well as a warm and nurturing environment where the students feel welcome. The teacher made every attempt to consistently offer Zach positive feedback on a daily basis. The phrase she used most was, “I believe in you Zach”. I feel this was a powerful choice of words for a student struggling with his own issues surrounding self-esteem and self-efficacy. I don’t believe Zach experiences support or feelings of belief in his personal life. Breaking down the barriers and getting Zach to believe those words would prove to be a challenge throughout the year.

The kindergarten teacher was very diligent about incorporating material that was interesting to the children. She would choose topics of interest to the children and then incorporate relevant books, projects, activities, and field trips for enrichment. There was an effort to incorporate learning and make connections with their life experiences. The teacher had kind positive words for everyone on a daily basis and she encouraged the children to treat each other with respect and kindness as well. She taught and modeled this behavior consistently. Any type of hurtful words or behavior was completely unacceptable and the children were very aware and usually compliant of these expectations. A safe, nurturing and productive learning environment was created for the majority of the students. For Zach, however, trust was difficult to internally grasp and believe in. He struggled throughout most of the year, but his teacher never gave up on him.

Most of the time intrinsic motivation was the approach implemented. The children were constantly challenged and encouraged to do better. “Better” was a broad and relaxed term. Since every student is individual and unique, “better” was whatever each
student thought “their better” should be. Consultations between the students and the teacher occurred often to discuss and decide upon what each idea of “better” was going to be for a particular assignment. This was very effective for the majority of the students. However, Zach seemed to struggle in this area as well. It was difficult for him to set a “higher standard” for himself considering his initial expectations for success were low as were his feelings of value regarding his educational experience. As Brophy states, “The expectancy x value model of motivation holds that the effort that people are willing to expend on a task is the product of (a) the degree to which they expect to be able to perform the task successfully if they apply themselves (and thus the degree to which they expect to get whatever rewards that successful task performance will bring), and (b) the degree to which they value those rewards as well as the opportunity to engage in the processes involved in performing the task itself.” (page 18)

While motivation within the classroom was high, Zach’s motivation, both intrinsically and extrinsically, was low. Class goals that occasionally included rewards (such as extra recess time for appropriate and on task behavior) at times were implemented. Personal goals, which did not involve external rewards, were also incorporated. Despite establishing numerous preconditions for learning, Zach would spend the majority of the year struggling to build trust with his teacher, his peers, and his belief in the importance and relevance of education. I suspect Zach has low expectations regarding his success and doesn’t value the educational experience. Zach exhibits work avoidance tendencies and I believe him to be a performance-oriented student. According to Brophy, “Students who approach academic activities with performance goals (also called ego-involvement goals) treat these activities as tests of their ability to perform
rather than as opportunities to learn.” (page 91) Zach fits the definition of a student with performance goals who is more concerned with appearing competent rather than with learning goals that involve risk-taking. Students who are performance goal oriented may exhibit the following characteristics:

- the use of surface-level learning strategies instead of deeper level knowledge construction strategies (Brophy, page 91)
- avoid challenging tasks and give up easily when frustrated because the believe their abilities are limited (Brophy, page 91)
- rather than asking for help, they prefer to conceal their difficulties by leaving items blank, taking wild guesses or copying from neighbors (Brophy, 91)

With this determination, learning activities need to be made meaningful and given a purpose. “Students do not need to enjoy school activities in order to be motivated to learn from them, but they do need to perceive these activities as meaningful and worthwhile,” (Brophy, page 256). Zach’s situation requires a multi-faceted approach involving (but not limited to)

the following:

1. Developing social skills to provide him with the means to cope appropriately with frustration, conflicts with peers, and difficult tasks.
2. Reducing behavior problems
3. Developing self-confidence
4. Developing self-regulation
5. Developing a joy for learning

Implementing appropriate cognitive strategies as well as intrinsic motivation strategies will hopefully prove successful in achieving the desired outcome for Zach to reach his highest learning potential.

As I reflect and reassess the original TARGET framework for Zach, I realize there are elements that could be altered to better accommodate his needs and provide greater
opportunity for progress and success. The following contains both the original assessments and updated ideas for the question responses involving the *Guidelines for the Assessment of Motivational Dimensions of Learning Environments* (based on the TARGET framework):

**Task:** Typically the task expectations were for the students to follow directions and complete an assignment within a certain timeframe. Occasionally assignment modifications were made. If assignments were incomplete at the end of a given time period, students were either given additional time during school (if available) or the work was sent home to be completed and returned the next day. Because of Zach’s lack of support at home, I believe it would be more beneficial to make other arrangements rather than sending his work home.

A clear presentation of material and assignment expectations was given during instruction before tasks began. Typically, there were four different stations of varying materials, which the students would be working on in their groups of 4 or 5 students. After a specified amount of time, the groups would rotate to the next designated station. Students were always aware and informed of the timeframe within each station so they were able to pace themselves accordingly. This format functioned effectively in this class. Zach transitioned with his group fairly well to each station, however, work completion was minimal. This is an area of concern for me. Sending the work home would not be an optimal choice in my opinion. Therefore, other modifications need to be made. Adjusting tasks to accommodate Zach’s developing skills would help promote progress and success.

**Authority:**
Students were informed and well versed with the procedures of their daily routine of station work. Free choice was an option when station work was completed before the time constraint expired. While most students worked diligently on their work toward the goal of free choice, many times Zach would be doing “free choice” items before his station work was complete. When this occurred, he was guided and re-directed by the teacher to return to his respective station. She met with hesitation and resistance, but ultimately he would return to the workspace and sulk. A more effective and productive approach needs to be taken for Zach. Simply returning to his workstation is not fulfilling the goal of reaching Zach’s highest potential. Several steps could be taken to help guide Zach such as; more structured guidance including closer teacher proximity to allow for better monitoring, modifying tasks to accommodate his skill level and incorporating self-regulated learning strategies.

**Recognition:**

The students were praised and received positive reinforcement and feedback frequently. I do feel this was valuable for Zach, but he still struggled daily with his lack of trust and self-confidence. Recognition was made both as a whole group and individually depending on the circumstance. Individually it was done through a conference to set personal achievement goals to do “better” and as a whole group recognition came in the form of praise, stickers or extra recess time.

**Group:**

The grouping structure consisted of students working in small, heterogeneous groups of 4 or 5 students. These groups changed every Monday. While most work was done independently, there were occasions when the students worked on projects with their
group. The atmosphere was set up to be cooperative and collaborative when necessary. Zach struggled when working with other children, but this format encouraged him to work with others. This is an area Zach will need continued exposure to and guidance with. Zach’s social skills will need to be developed and practiced daily.

**Evaluation:**

Evaluation was done through monitored class work, observations, group projects and testing. This allowed for students to demonstrate their understanding and abilities in a variety of ways. I think multiple forms of assessment are valuable for all students, but especially those students like Zach who shut down and tend to not display their full potential in certain situations. Perhaps an option for Zach would be to evaluate based on quality and effort of work rather than quantity of work completed. Also, evaluation could be based on Zach’s progress.

**Time:**

Students were given specified blocks of time to complete each station. If work was incomplete at the end of the given time period, it was to be completed as homework. Occasionally other options were offered, such as recess periods, to finish work. I don’t believe either of these options would optimally offer Zach the success rate he deserves. I suspect there isn’t much parental support at home and selecting recess time would possibly reinforce negative feelings, which are already present, regarding learning. Again, it would be important to make sure tasks are adjusted to accommodate Zach’s developing skills and expectations and evaluation are based on his capability and progress. Time shouldn’t be used as a constraint but rather a guideline.
Conclusion

Even when the class functioned successfully and productively Zach still seemed to struggle, on some level, in each area of the TARGET framework. To me, this indicates his situation needs further attention and implementation of extended strategies. Initially, in my original motivation assessment of Zach, I stated my only suggestion regarding change in the teacher’s approach would be maintaining closer proximity for monitoring his work to allow for quicker guidance and redirection. While I still believe this would prove beneficial for Zach, I now believe his motivational problems and behavior issues require a more in-depth and varied approach. By utilizing the information I have gained through this course, I have updated my previous recommendation in the following motivational intervention plan.

Proposed Motivational Intervention

Zach’s situation necessitates immediate attention. An intervention for Zach needs to explore a varied approach addressing not only his motivational problem but also his weak social skills as well. A plan for Zach needs to implement strategies that continue to:

- Build trusting relationships with teachers
- Develop social skills to provide him with the means to cope appropriately with frustration, conflicts with peers, and difficult tasks
- Develop self-regulation
- Reduce behavior problems
- Develop self-confidence
- Give learning activities more meaning and purpose
- Develop pleasure in learning

Zach does not enjoy class work, has low work completion, requires redirection for task completion, rarely participates, and lacks self-confidence. These motivational problems are compounded by Zach’s disruptive and aggressive classroom behavior. In
addition, I believe Zach has low expectations for his success and doesn’t value his educational experience. In accordance with this conclusion, I believe Zach is a student with performance goals and this is reflected in his work avoidance.

I will be focusing on cognitive strategies as well as intrinsic motivation strategies to address these issues in this proposed motivational intervention. For this plan, I will use the TARGET model as a framework to organize these proposed strategies to optimize motivation.


**TASK:** select tasks so as to provide an optimal level of challenge and to emphasize activities that students find interesting and intrinsically engaging

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are three differentiating elements present. They are as follows:

1. Increased variety of learning activities vs. all students being exposed to same material

2. Focused on connecting to students’ interests, experiences, and skill level vs. minimal attention given to making material relevant to students’ interests and lives

3. Purpose of learning particular subject-matter is emphasized to promote valuing of material vs. emphasis on content coverage and memorization of material

An important aspect to consider for Zach is presenting tasks that are appropriate for his developmental skill level. Requiring tasks that are too challenging or too simplistic and uninteresting could possibly lead to work avoidance. Accommodations may need to be made to coincide with Zach’s developing skills. Implementing material of interest to Zach in conjunction with modifying tasks will hopefully promote progress in work completion. Brophy (page 104) states it is important to have, “A greater variety of
learning activities, selected to emphasize tasks that students find interesting and intrinsically engaging and to connect to the students; backgrounds and experiences. Activities are introduced with emphasis on their purposes and are developed in ways designed to maximize their intrinsic appeal and help students to appreciate the value of what they are learning.” Bringing value to tasks by giving meaning and purpose to the material will hopefully intrinsically inspire Zach to connect with his learning.

Establishing and modeling clear expectations, accommodating Zach’s developing skills, providing a structured framework that allows for interesting choices, conferencing to establish goals for work completion expectations and providing feedback are all vital elements necessary to promote success in task completion. Accommodating Zach’s needs may require different criteria involving work completion through goal setting. This needs to be determined by Zach and his teacher through conferencing. The main focus should remain on Zach “seeing” his progress and feeling a sense of accomplishment. Hopefully this will build his self-confidence leading to the development of greater self-determination and self-efficacy. As his confidence and sense of self continues to develop and become stronger, task goals and expectations can continue to broaden as well.

**AUTHORITY:** *share authority with students by providing them choice and input on learning activities*

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are two differentiating elements present. They are as follows:

1. Teacher shares authority with students regarding appropriate behavior and learning activities vs. teacher assuming primary authority
2. Students are given considerable choice over what they learn, how they learn it, and how they will be evaluated vs. students having little voice in setting goals and structuring learning activities and evaluations.

As Brophy (page 104) explains, “Authority is shared with students and exercised with consideration of their needs. They frequently have opportunities to make choices in deciding what to do, to exercise autonomy in deciding how to do it, and to participate in decision making about classroom rules, procedures, or learning opportunities.” Initially, for Zach, too much authority and autonomy may not provide him with the structure he needs. In his class, students were given free choice as an option when their work was completed at each station. While this worked well for most children, Zach often left his station early with his work incomplete to begin working on free choice items.

In my original motivational assessment I stated I felt this format would have functioned more effectively and productively for Zach had the teacher maintained closer proximity for quicker guidance and re-direction. While I still think close proximity and monitoring would benefit Zach staying on task, I also think other measures need to be present. I think a healthy balance of choice and autonomy in combination with structure and clearly defined objectives for Zach needs to be present. Brophy (page 192) states, “Lower achievers often need more explicit directions and more structuring and scaffolding of their learning efforts, but they also need opportunities to experience self-determination and self-regulation of their learning.” A primary goal should be to slowly transfer authority to Zach and hopefully he will gradually develop a sense of agency, responsibility and ownership in his learning. Independent choices made by Zach such as; partner selection, reading book selection, station selection and decision making input as
to the desired work completion goals for each day may all help foster his autonomy.

Developing and promoting autonomy is important to all students, especially struggling students like Zach. It was noted in Stipek (page 187), “Students are most motivated when they are given choices and have some control over their academic work. Likewise, students who have more autonomy-supportive teachers are more curious, have a greater desire for challenge, a more independent learning style, less anxiety, more confidence and even higher self-worth.” With that idea in place, it must be recognized that it is the teacher’s responsibility to establish an autonomous environment. The teacher must create opportunities for choice and voice while maintaining structure and clear objectives. The goal for Zach should focus on developing autonomy through self-determination and self-regulation. His progress and success need to remain the focal point. Monitoring for his growth (and/or struggles) needs to be done consistently on a daily basis with modifications occurring when appropriate.

RECOGNITION: recognize all students who make progress and show improvement, not just the highest achievers

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are three differentiating elements present. They are as follows:

1. Students are recognized for making noteworthy progress and exhibiting commendable effort vs. limited and competitive recognition

2. Progress, and therefore the conditions of recognition, are individually determined vs. less capable students rarely earn recognition regardless of amount of effort expended for their achievements

3. Under most circumstances, recognition (including praise) is granted privately vs. highest achieving students receive public recognition for their achievements

Zach received praise as well as positive reinforcement and feedback frequently.
Recognition was done both as a whole group and individually depending on the situation. For Zach, I believe “shaping” (Stipek, page 23) could prove beneficial. This strategy is used to shape a child’s behavior through clearly identifying the desired behavior and then reinforcing any behavior that resembles the desired behavior. Praise may be issued verbally, physically by a gentle touch, or simply through an approving smile as reinforcement.

It is important to address recognition for Zach’s progress as well. Noting his improvement and growth is important. Having regular conferences to review progress and recognizing these improvement achievements would be beneficial in helping Zach visually see his growth and development. A one on one conference would offer a personal setting to review and recognize Zach’s progress. Brophy suggests recognition should be done in private, as opposed to public celebrations of the highest achievers.

**GROUPING:** group in ways that promote cooperative learning and minimize interpersonal competition and social comparison

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are two differentiating elements present. They are as follows:

1. Cooperation, rather than competition vs. individual work allowing minimal social interaction and learning, and increased opportunity for social comparison of achievements

2. Grouping is based on interests rather than solely relying on achievement level vs. grouping based on ability/achievement, creating competitive environment based on social comparison

The typical grouping structure in Zach’s class consisted of students working in small, heterogeneous groups of 4 or 5 students. These groups changed every Monday. The atmosphere was set up to be collaborative and cooperative however, most work was done
independently.

With Zach’s weak social skills, working collaboratively and cooperatively in a large group may prove overwhelming. Utilizing self-chosen partners may be an appropriate start for Zach. Finding an individual with whom he can successfully and productively work with will help practice and reinforce his social skills and hopefully lead to building relationships with his peers. Brophy’s (page 105) description of grouping suggests, “Students frequently work in pairs or small groups to engage in the social construction of knowledge. Also, group assignments should be varied and based on friendships, common interests, or other considerations in addition to or instead of achievement level.” Pairing Zach with the appropriate student could reinforce social skills through cooperation, sharing, dividing responsibilities and problem solving. This would also allow Zach to take control and ownership of his own learning.

Grouping, as with the other dimensions of the TARGET framework, should reinforce success and progress for Zach. In this case, it is developing and reinforcing his social skills. In combination with addressing his weak social skill area, grouping should also assist him in building successful and trusting relationships with his peers. Working cooperatively and collaboratively is a life-long skill Zach will be able to utilize in numerous situations for many years to come.

**EVALUATION:** focus on individualized assessment of progress rather than comparisons of individuals or groups

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are three differentiating elements present. They are as follows:
1. Students are encouraged to view learning as a process, with evaluation results indicating their progress toward deeper understanding vs. evaluations based on absolute levels of performance or normative comparisons and all students evaluated on same assessments and in same format, encouraging social comparison and competition.

2. Students are given opportunities to revise their tests and assignments, thus putting the emphasis on improved learning via effort and persistence vs. evaluation is a one-time only event—“either you know it or you don’t.”

In Zach’s class, evaluation is done through monitored class work, observations, group projects and testing to maintain state mandated standards. Brophy (page 105) indicates that, “Evaluation features a variety of assessment instruments and an emphasis on helping students to recognize and appreciate the progress they have made toward individually suited goals.” It is important to offer a variety of assessments for students to demonstrate their understanding and abilities as well as their progress and growth.

I believe utilizing a portfolio for Zach would prove to be a successful assessment tool to help illustrate his progress over time. A portfolio would offer Zach the opportunity to have input in the choice of deciding what to include in his portfolio and also afford him the opportunity to revise and improve the items he has chosen based on feedback from the teacher and/or his peers. Brophy (page 79) states, “The portfolio approach reflects several motivational principles by focusing attention on quality standards rather than just grades or scores, by incorporating the use of assessment data as informative feedback, by encouraging students to become more reflective about their work and more oriented toward self-improvement over time, and by allowing them to assemble a collection of their best work that they can share with parents and other family members.”

In conjunction with the portfolio implementation, routine conferencing with Zach to offer support, guidance and feedback would be necessary. According to Brophy (page 77), “When students are clear about what they are expected to learn and how this learning
will be evaluated, they can guide their learning efforts accordingly.”

A final consideration for evaluation for Zach (as well as all students) is giving the opportunity for him to redo his assignments if necessary. Stipek suggests that part of achieving mastery in one’s learning is making mistakes and learning from them. The main objective for revisiting a skill and/or offering a different perspective or explanation regarding a task or assignment is to ensure the goal of mastery and understanding are obtained. Revision may lead to mastery and every opportunity for Zach’s growth, development and progress needs to be seized.

**TIME:** *use time in creative ways that ease the constraints of rigid scheduling and allow for more use of valuable learning activities that are hard to fit into shorter class periods*

When considering the TARGET approach versus the traditional approach, there are three differentiating elements present. They are as follows:

1. Time is used more flexibly in order to encourage a greater range of activities in the curriculum vs. classes are locked into inflexible schedules providing little opportunity to pursue learning activities that do not fit into time-blocked schedules

2. Given flexible use of time and increased curricular choices, student autonomy is encouraged

3. When needed, students are given additional time to complete assignments, thus emphasizing individual learning over inflexible classroom structure

For Zach, time has previously been a constraint regarding his work completion. Brophy (page 105) suggests, “Time should be scheduled more flexibly so that a greater range of activities can be included.” He continues by adding, “students who need it are given extra time to complete their work.” In Zach’s class, the students work in stations.
Specified blocks of time are allotted to complete each station. Unfinished work is to be taken home, completed and returned to school the following day.

Mastery and quality (versus quantity) need to be the focus for Zach. I have a strong suspicion that Zach receives minimal support at home and therefore, homework is probably unproductive for him. Making sure tasks are developmentally appropriate for Zach’s level is imperative. Hopefully, this helps minimize stress and work avoidance and encourages appropriate use of time for Zach. Also, maintaining the focus on Zach grasping the concepts as well as achieving mastery and success are equally important. The appropriate level and amount of work needs to be chosen for Zach. His work completion success is important for his self-efficacy, as is his mastery.

Zach needs to be given as many opportunities to succeed at learning as possible. Time should not become a constraint limiting his success, but rather a guideline tool. If an assignment requires him to finish; other accommodations need to be considered. Here are a few considerations: additional time in class, during lunch, working with a partner or in a group, etc… The sky is the limit. The goal is to search for and discover ways to promote Zach’s success.

Social Skills Strategies

A final area of concern I would like to address is Zach’s weak social skills. In order to function not only in a classroom, but in society as well, people need social skills. These skills come at different levels with different disguises but, ultimately, possessing productive social skills increase our chances for successful social interactions. These social interactions are a vital part of social integration in the classroom. Learning is not
done in isolation and possessing appropriate social skills would, I believe, increase Zach’s productivity and (hopefully) pleasure in school. In Stipek (page 152) it states, “Students in schools with caring and supportive interpersonal relationships have more positive academic attitudes and values, and are more satisfied with school.”

Building a safe and secure learning environment where trusting relationships can develop begins with the teacher. According to Stipek (page 156), “A goal is to make a classroom a psychologically safe place for students to learn without fearing rejection.” The following suggestions are designed to help teachers make sure that students’ social-emotional needs are met and social relationships support rather than undermine their ability to learn in the classroom (Stipek, page 156). Here are a few ways to foster positive relationships:

- Respect and value students as human beings
- Create a risk-free environment
- Assist students in developing positive relationships with each other

Implementing the above ideas and modeling expected and desired behavior would help develop and foster social skills. Zach’s weak social skills are hindering his learning process. Having the tools to appropriately interact, work and problem solve with his peers would provide him with a great advantage over where he is now socially.

Providing him with social responsibility may provide Zach with pride leading to further social growth. This responsibility could be achieved in numerous ways. For example; trusting him with responsible duties such as office attendant, line leader, partner selection, class monitor, etc… These responsibilities need to be attempted and evaluated to decide what works best for Zach. The ultimate goal is accommodating his need for social skill development.
A final thought I would like to touch on is “relatedness”. Stipeks (page 160) defines relatedness as, “The need to feel securely connected to individuals in the social context and to experience oneself as worthy and capable of love and respect.” It is important for Zach to experience those feelings of relatedness with his teacher as well as his peers. He needs to feel valued and respected. This could be achieved through his teacher listening and responding to him attentively, actively engaging in conversations that are personally relevant to him and interacting with him on a personal level during lunch, free choice time, recess, in the hallway, during conferences, etc… Essentially, the teacher needs to be creative and adjust to meet his situational needs. It is important to keep an open mind and remember the sky is the limit when it comes to reaching our students. Sometimes conventional methods are suitable and other times we need to think “outside of the box” and be creative. As far as peers connections are concerned, those relationships need to be fostered as well. Allowing Zach to choose a partner he is comfortable with may be the first step to building a trusting relationship. It is also important for the classroom structure to be conducive to group work, participation and socialization. Modeling, practicing and reinforcing appropriate and desired behavior on a routine basis is vital. Ultimately, the goal is for Zach to feel a sense of relatedness to his school environment and consider his class a safe place to engage in relationships and participate in activities.

**Expected Outcomes**

In conjunction with building personal agency (through setting goals), self-efficacy (establishing beliefs in his capabilities) and self-regulation (through increasing responsibility) Zach also needs to develop his social skills (through relatedness and building relationships). I have touched upon these areas throughout this motivational
intervention plan. To promote Zach’s success and growth it will be important to consistently and continually address and accommodate his developing academic and social skills. My hope would be to see an increased desire to learn, increased self-worth and self-efficacy, trusting relationships built, academic and social progress made and a joy of learning developed. Are these expectations too high? My answer is you will never know until you try. If one expects failure, chances are it will happen. I anticipate success. I believe in establishing a plan based on the facts available, making changes and accommodations as necessary during implementation and growing from what you have learned and experienced.

It is the teacher’s responsibility to present the tools and learning opportunities for all students to achieve their highest potential. Zach has special needs and requires additional time, consideration and accommodations. He deserves all of these. I believe achieving academic and social growth is possible for Zach with the implementation of strategies mentioned in this plan. The potential is there to create motivation, establish trust, build relationships, develop self-confidence, ignite a desire for and develop the joy of learning, possess skill mastery, witness progress and experience success. What a powerful gift!
References Cited
