Spring 2001
Volume 14

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

A Publication of the
Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California

"The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows."

- Sydney J. Harris

In this issue...

JCCASAC

Serving as a Committee to the
California County Superintendents
Educational Services Association

CCSESA

JOIN IN!

An Invitation for Membership

Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC) is an organization that provides leadership, inservice, direction, and information to administrative personnel involved in juvenile court, community, and alternative school education programs. JCCASAC functions as a support system to those professionals by providing activities, projects, and services in the following areas: instructional programs, staff development, evaluation, legislation, special funding, personnel procedures, communications, networking, intra-agency coordination, pupil personnel service research, and management development.

As a member, you will receive:

- Directory of JCCASAC Members
- Newsletter
- Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools
- Material exchange
- Northern and southern section meeting notices
- Information regarding state conference
- Professional growth and support activities
- Networking
- Administrative Resource Manual (available for a small printing fee)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____ **County:** _____ **Position:** _____

North/South Member: _____ **Business Address:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Fax:** _____ **E-mail Address:** _____

Contact Person (if different then above): _____

I am applying for membership in the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California as an: *(Please check one)*

☐ **ACTIVE MEMBER:** Active membership shall be restricted to certificated personnel who are County Office of Education Superintendent of Schools employees and who supervise or administer programs within the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative Schools of the various counties, or who exercise supervisory or administrative authority over the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative Schools of various counties.

☐ **ASSOCIATE MEMBER:** Associate (non-voting) membership shall be open to all others who wish to assist the Juvenile Court, Community and Alternative School Administrators of California reach its goals.

☐ **HONORARY MEMBER:** Honorary (non-voting) membership shall be open to retired personnel who previously held active memberships.

DUES: $50.00 for 2001-02

Note: **If you attending the annual conference in May, 2001-02 dues are included in the registration fees.**

Please mail or fax this form to:
Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office
Attn: Jeanne Hughes, JCCASAC Secretary
1300 - 17th Street, Bakersfield, CA 93301-4533
Phone: (661) 636-4714 Fax: (661) 636-4135

CCSESA

Spring 2001
Volume 14

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

A Publication of the
Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California

DEPARTMENTS

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS IN A HIGH STAKES CLIMATE

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

BOOK REVIEW

STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

INNOVATIVE PROGRAM

Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California

Executive Board

Janet Addo, *President*
Los Angeles County
(310) 217-1611 ext 203;
FAX: (310 217-1889

Michael Watkins, *President-Elect*
Santa Cruz County
(831) 479-5330;
FAX (831) 479-5243

Vic Trucco, *Past-President*
Sonoma County
(707) 524-2800;
FAX: (707) 524-2889

Jeanne Hughes, *Secretary*
Kern County
(661) 636-4714;
FAX: (661) 636-4135

Mary Lou Vachet, *Treasurer*
Orange County
(714) 826-5019;
FAX: (714) 826-4097

Tom Anspach, *Member-at-Large*
Kern County
(661) 873-2360;
FAX: (661) 873-2368

Northern Section

Bianca Bloom, *Chair*
Contra Costa County
(925) 942-3408;
FAX: (925) 942-3353

Mary Bell, *Vice Chair*
Sacramento County
(916) 228-2707;
FAX (916) 228-3989

Bob Michels, *Secretary*
Santa Clara County
(408) 453-6661;
FAX: (408) 453-6973

Jackie Flowers, *Member-at-Large*
San Joaquin County
(209) 468-9107;
FAX: (209) 468-4984

Southern Section

Janice Arnold, *Chair*
Riverside County
(909) 826-6529;
FAX (909) 826-6906

Kathy Greaves, *Vice Chair*
Ventura County
(805) 388-4436;
FAX (805) 388-4440

Jeanne Dukes, *Secretary*
San Luis Obispo County
(805) 542-0106;
FAX: (805) 652-5702

JCCASAC

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Thoughts from the President

by Janet Addo, Los Angeles County Office of Education

This has been a fast paced, challenging year. Issues with restructuring a program, personnel matters, getting prepared for CCR and WASC, and preparing for an audit have created anxiety and tension in my own county. I have spent time listening to the stories of other counties who have gone through adversity -- I'm sure you could share an experience or two. This year has been a year of transition to higher stakes in program accountability. The challenge before us is to be the light, not the judge; to be a model, not a critic.

The key issues within education reform emerging at the beginning of this century, from my viewpoint, are complex, wide in scope, and extremely political. Both state and national education reform initiatives will directly impact our programs. There is an urgent need for intervention for middle and high school students performing below the 30th percentile on SAT9 in reading and language arts. Unless these students achieve fluency in reading, they will not only fail to pass the High School Exit Examination, they will have little chance to succeed in life. [1]

In addition to academic needs, attitude and physical well-being are fundamental conditions that are frequently left out or devalued as essential components of student achievement. Without attention to the affective domain, students have little chance of academic success. We must be vigilant to ensure that the affective domain is not eliminated or minimized.

The educational community must be committed to the enormous challenge of training teachers and para-educators. This training must be linked to the curriculum standards. Initial and ongoing professional development, and in-class coaching for teachers is key. JCCASAC should explore partnerships with higher education to offer staff development training opportunities to our teachers, who have unique needs. The task also demands coordination of resources across all levels of educational and community-based organizations.

Toward this end, the JCCASAC Executive Board and standing committees (2000-2001) have focused on actualizing the Strategic Plan (1999-2000). Our accomplishments to date are as follows:

- participated in the CDE Alternative Accountability Pilot (1999);
- participated in the PSAA subcommittee for Alternative Accountability (1999-present)
- participated in panel discussions of the PSAA and exemplary programs at Student Programs/ Services Steering Committee (SPCCS Symposium, a subcommittee of CCSESA, San Diego (2000)
- enhanced scope and development of JCCASAC web page (2000)
- developed Small County Committee (2000)
- advised the SPSSC (ongoing)

We will continue to inform, to maintain legislative relationships, and to influence educational policy, because it is our charge to ensure that our students have a level playing field and continue to have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma. The political slogan, "leave no child behind," is the basis of our beliefs. It is our reality. We are the advocates for those children who are at risk of being left behind.

---

1. CCSESA EMERGING PRIORITY CONCEPT PAPER (draft-November 13,2000), Focus on Struggling Readers: A Systemic Approach to Secondary Reading/Language Arts Intervention, A University of California Office of the President (UCOP)—County Office Partnership

J The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Thoughts from the President-Elect

by Michael Watkins,
Santa Cruz County
Office of Education

I am deeply honored to have served as the President-Elect of the Juvenile Court Community Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCASAC) this past year, and I look forward to representing you as President in the years 2001-2002. JCCASAC has played a significant role in the creation and maintenance of exemplary school programs throughout the state that serve students for whom others have long since given up hope. This legacy is unlike any other in the field of education.

As a result, JCCASAC has attracted school administrators with a dedication and passion that is unparalleled. However, the obstacles and challenges don't begin and end with the student.

The new millennium has ushered in dynamic changes: high stakes standardized testing (SAT 9), Public School Accountability Act (PSAA), High School Exit Exam (HSEE), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Special Education Funding (AB602), community day schools, countywide expulsion plans, charter schools, audits and teacher shortages.

These changes are so profound that they would have left many other organizations reeling in defeat. The resiliency that JCCASAC has demonstrated in adapting to these major ideological shifts has been no less than astounding. It is a true testament to the commitment JCCASAC has made to the "not-so-invisible student."

Alternative education, specifically designed for the at-risk youth, is a relatively new field; thus, it is still a work in progress. Our ability to confront the demands of the new mandates will define our importance to education. Research has shown that smaller schools (where teachers can develop positive relationships with students) are effective. This is a great opportunity for JCCASAC to demonstrate to naysayers the critical role it plays in redirecting the lives of troubled youth. It's still about the student and it's up to each and every one of us to maintain that advocacy and voice for the less fortunate. Indeed, to envision a school system in California without court, community or alternative schools seems appalling.

JCCASAC must continue to create partnerships and collaborations that assist each county. This can be accomplished, thanks in part to the outstanding work of my predecessors. Our successes will be magnified as we continue to support one another.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Message from the Editorial Board

Two approaches to improvement to avoid: systems without passion and passion without systems.

--Tom Peters

by Jeannie Griffith, Jeanne Dukes, Hedy Kirsh, Cathie Poochigian, and Mary Lou Vachet

Fortunately, our system of court, community and alternative schools, with all its diverse needs and challenges, is bound together by a solid common interest: a passion for serving those students for whom other schools have failed. JCCASAC cannot be accused of being a system without passion. The challenge confronting the organization now, however, is how to maintain that passion and the energy that it requires, while modifying the system to help our students achieve success in this high-stakes climate.

This year we have witnessed a dizzying number of modifications in the state's accountability system. JCCASAC was given a voice in the development of the Alternative Accountability System. However, the number of indicators (those measures we will use to show growth in our students) were reduced to a handful; it turns out that, although the state recognizes the work we do to get students to change attitudes and behaviors, there's no adequate way to measure and quantify this work.

The state's exit exam, as well, has seen changes. The content and length of both the Language Arts and Mathematics sections were changed. Additionally, legislation that attempted to postpone the implementation year to 2005 (and make this year's exam a practice run) failed unexpectedly at the last minute. It's been a roller coaster ride for anxious freshmen as well as administrators trying to sort out the logistics of administering the test.

These changes have implications beyond alternative education. With the assessment thrust of the state, the whole concept of at-risk is changing before our eyes. With the advent of the California High School Exit Exam, many more students are at risk of not graduating. Soon, general education may be looking to us for answers.

Accountability needs the continued attention of JCCASAC as an organization. The students we represent and for whom we advocate need the passion and energy we bring to the task of education. The Journal will continue to strive to be the voice of the field and the practitioner – those who are responsible for implementing the legislation. The articles in this volume reflect the issues and challenges we currently face, and a few project where we fit in the greater educational milieu. We hope you enjoy this issue.

J
The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools
Alternative Education in a High Stakes Climate

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry*

by Dr. Ted Price, Debbie Van Hook and Lynne Robertson

One hundred travelers are gathered in an airport terminal on a stopover. They are all at-risk students...at risk of academic failure, of dropping out of school, of unsuccessful socialization, and/or unrewarding interpersonal relationships. These passengers are only in the airport for a short period of time, and then they will catch a plane to another destination. They all have a future. With the help of alternative education opportunities and educators who have been trained to "think exit on entry," these travelers can develop the skills and attitudes that will prepare them for productive lives as they leave the terminal and go on to their next destination.

It is the responsibility of instructors and staff to ensure that, while in the terminal, the stopover (participation in alternative education programs) is valuable, productive, and beneficial. Each part of the journey – the arrival (landing at the terminal), the stopover (mapping out a new destination, which includes developing required skills), and the departure (ensuring a safe arrival in a promising place) – requires a particular program focus that can lead to exciting results. To help these travelers become prepared, equipped, and ready to meet future challenges in life, it is necessary to serve them appropriately – from landing to takeoff, from beginning to end – to constantly "think exit on entry." So questions need to be asked:

- If we took a snapshot of these travelers as they landed and dispersed at the airport terminal, how would they look? Who, in fact, are these students?
- While our students are in the terminal, how can we help them plan and realize a "better" destination suited to their needs and desires? How can we help them secure the skills they will need to thrive in the future?
- As they board the plane for departure, what can we do to ensure that their trip and their destination into the larger society is a successful one?

Landing at the Terminal

If we took a snapshot of these travelers, how would they look?

Actual maintenance complaint submitted by a US Air Force pilot and the reply from the maintenance crew.
Problem: "Test flight OK, except autoland very rough."
Solution: "Autoland not installed on this aircraft."

When passengers (our students) first appear at the terminal, the facial expressions, verbalization, and body language often convey a past filled with rough traveling experiences. Whether it is difficulty at home, repeated academic failures, or a history of illegal activities, the effects are evident in behavior,

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

schoolwork, and social relationships. If we took a "snapshot" of a similar group of 100 student travelers in Orange County, California, it would look much like this:

- 71 are male, 29 are female
- 24 are White, 54 are Latino, and 22 are Asian, African-American and other
- 82 of them are between 15 and 17 years old
- 16 have carried a gun on school property
- 23 have carried a knife on school property
- 25 have smoked marijuana over 10 times
- 32 have been very drunk at least 3 times
- 38 have had some gang involvement in their lifetime
- 51 have been drunk or high on school property
- at age 7, minor delinquency began
- at ages 9 to 13, minor delinquency peaks
- minor delinquency rises steadily to age 17 for boys, 15 for girls, then drops (Stone, S.)
- younger children and more females are joining the ranks of juvenile delinquency
- the group also includes teen parents, abused children, the academically deficient (average reading level below 5th grade, with math even lower), the homeless, and the non-English speaking.

The Office of Juvenile Justice reports that an increase in juvenile crime since the mid-1980's reflects several trends in this country: shifts in the economy, the decline in the extended family and increase in single parenthood, access to more lethal weapons, and the growing role of gangs. In addition, the snapshot often overlooks the unique personalities – the hurts, fears, and dreams of each student. Most people in the community would be very uncomfortable with these troubled traveling companions. However, those who *do* want to accompany these youth are teachers, peers, and interagency advocates. Their first encounter with our "travelers" is in the terminal.

In the terminal with these travelers, the activity can seem almost frenetic. The stopover is plagued with an inconceivable number of turnovers. In a matter of 30 days, the movement to, in, and from the terminal is constant. This movement poses problems for the curriculum, teaching strategies, pre-assessment tests, and guidance that must be provided and implemented by teachers to best serve the individual student. These issues can further complicate educational planning. Nevertheless, teachers of the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) Division of Alternative Education submitted reports of witnessing changes in students, almost upon entry, and certainly over time. Changes sometime occur in individual lives that defy hard numbers or general descriptions. The stories were so dramatic that a book, *ACCESS Our STARS - STudents Achieving Remarkable Success,* was published in the summer of 2000 to share the outcomes:

> A girl who "was more interested in applying her make-up, which made her look like a gang member," became one who "works harder than most of the students in the class..."
>
> A teenager who "walked in the door, looked around and stated very defiantly to his probation officer, 'I'm not going to this f---ing school!' and stormed out" became "a positive leader, very respectful to staff, and has gained insight into how

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

to reach his goals."

"...a student who rarely came to school, and when he did, was easily agitated about most everything," became "a student who is focused on school, has personal goals, and chooses to attend daily"...and "smiles and laughs."

"...a teacher's worst nightmare" became a boy who "took control of the group in a positive way...respectful to his classmates and... teachers...and has a wonderful sense of humor."

What happened to these students at the "terminal" – in an OCDE Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) program – that helped them make such drastic changes in their lives? To understand such radical transformations, it is beneficial to examine where these travelers might have been prior to attending the alternative education program where they met success.

Orange County, California, the sixth largest county in the nation in terms of population, has a K-12 population of almost 500,000, and over 8,000 students are daily enrolled in ACCESS programs. Even though Orange County is one of the wealthiest counties in the country, 154 schools out of 551 meet a criterion where many families qualifies for a free or reduced lunch program. The Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population in Santa Ana, one of the largest cities in Orange County, is 70.7 percent: one out of three students in the entire county is not English proficient. In Orange County, even the "regular" education student population poses interesting challenges for educators.

"You can read lengthy articles devoted to sneering at our educational system for 'dumbing down' the curriculum...and find not a single word about what we're supposed to do with the kids who can't measure up to these new standards" (Kohn, 1999).

Across the state, at-risk students are filling alternative education school programs. The population is inundated with students who display socio-economic, linguistic, academic, and/or behavioral hardships just like those in Orange County. These travelers, our students, are uncertain of their destination, seeing their day-to-day life, not to mention their destinations, as bleak – even hopeless – and a large portion of the adult community agrees with them. These students must compete in the same state-level standardized testing as everyone else. "You can read lengthy articles devoted to sneering at our educational system for 'dumbing down' the curriculum...and find not a single word about what we're supposed to do with the kids who can't measure up to these new standards" (Kohn, 1999). The odds against their success often seem insurmountable, to themselves and to others. Nevertheless, they are succeeding here. How is that happening?

The task of those involved with these youth is to help them map out a new and more promising plan, one that will lead to a successful landing. Accompanying the map must be a plan to

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

develop the skills necessary to be successful upon landing. There must also be a resolve on the part of teachers and inter-agency advocates to develop interests that will ensure that upon their arrival at the new destination – a job, a school, a community – they have what it will take to be successful and self-sustaining.

Mapping Out a New Destination

How can we help these travelers plan a better destination suited to their needs and desires?

Actual maintenance complaint submitted by a US Air Force pilot and the reply from the maintenance crew.
Problem: Aircraft handles funny
Solution: Aircraft warned to straighten up, "fly right" and be serious

Helping at-risk students is much more complex than merely commanding them to "straighten up and fly right." The first place to begin mapping out a new destination is with the student's belief in the possibility to succeed. By providing guidance and instruction, delivered by individuals who are dedicated to a student-centered learning process, hope undergoes a quiet revival: thinking success on entry, realizing success on exit.

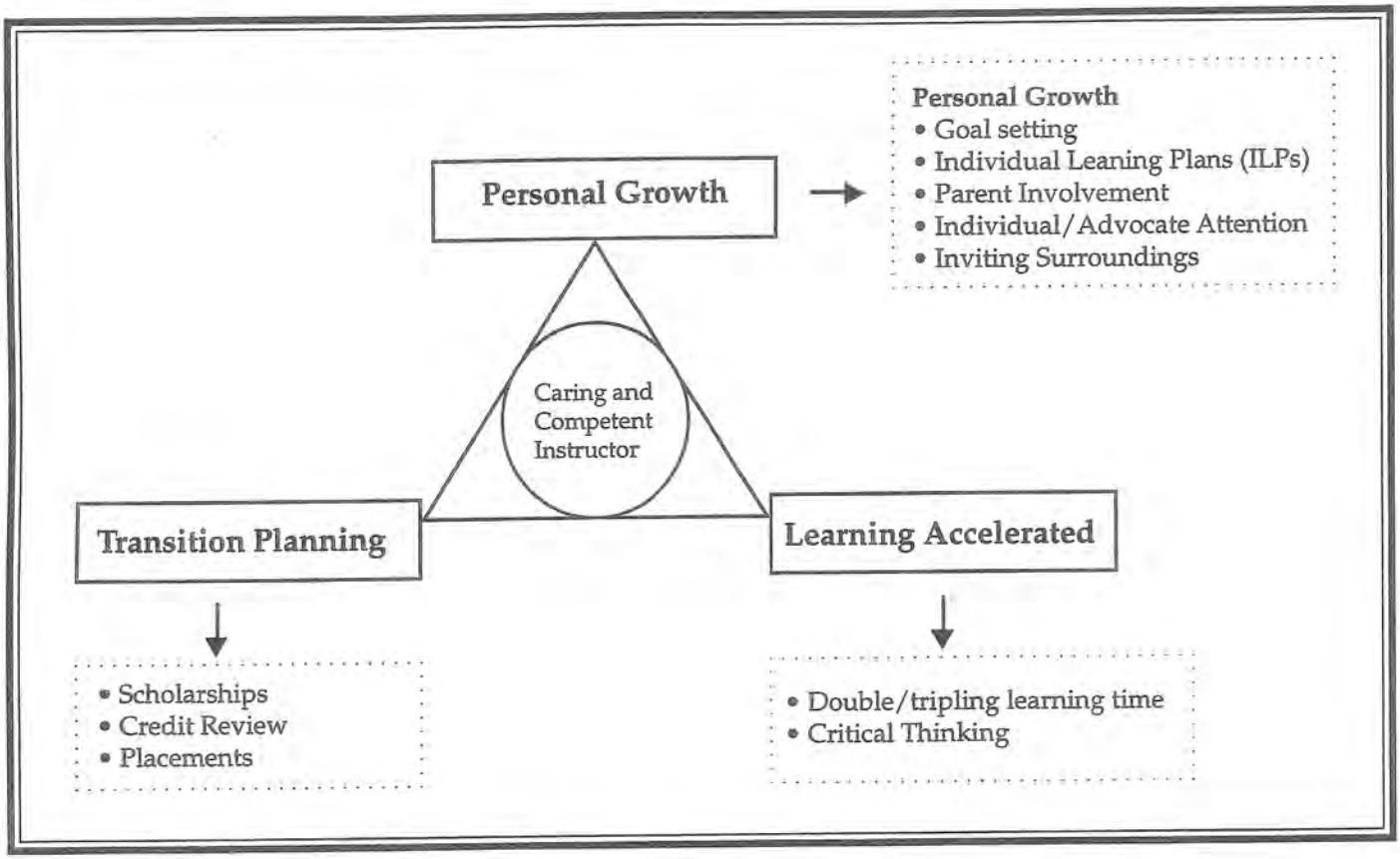
Since our travelers *are* planning for a new destination, it should be planned in the context of society's perceptions of what students need, want, and must have. The recent *Phi Delta Kappa Opinion Poll 2000* on the public's attitudes toward the public schools revealed some very strong beliefs regarding the public school community.

- 79% - Most students achieve only a small part of their academic potential in school.
- 69% - All children have the ability to reach a high level of learning.
- 69% - The primary use of tests should be to determine the kind of instruction that is needed.
- 59% - Public school parents believe that the best promise for improving the public schools is a qualified, competent teacher in every classroom.
- 45% - Portfolios of students' work and other demonstrations of academic competence (classroom work and homework) are the best ways to measure student academic achievement.

The public also holds a strong belief in the potential for each child to succeed with the guidance of a caring, competent instructor. Public opinion seeks excellence in education and the need to provide a battery of means to assess that success. Interestingly, only 10 percent of those polled thought that a standardized test was the best way of measuring student academic achievement. The proposed path of re-routing rather weary and discouraged (and sometimes, discouraging) travelers aligns with the expressed ideals of the community when alternative education teachers and classrooms help to:

- develop personal growth;
- promote learning in an accelerated format; and
- create a transition plan.

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)



Personal Growth

The perception of self-worth is a good barometer of one's expectations for oneself. Student counterparts in traditional and private schools may be making plans to catch the next plane out to attend the local community college or university, and/or get a good job to establish themselves in the community. But the travelers on this stopover do not plan very far into the future. Entering programs with low sense of self-worth, struggling students are then faced with tests far beyond their current capabilities. Many eventually drop out. They are conditioned to experience and to expect failure. To hear it in their own words:

- "I was basically not caring, ditching, never showing up, and obviously not getting the work done."
- "I was fourteen years old and on the verge of committing suicide. I hated myself and everyone else."
- "I was discouraged by many people who saw me as different, even out of control. I felt totally unaccepted."
- "I had so much anger built up with all the problems...at home, I didn't know what to do with myself."

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

"To solve problems creatively, however, you've got to open up new pathways, find new crossover points, discover new linkages. You've got to break the pattern" (*The Learning Revolution*, Dryden et al., 1999). Goal setting is one of the simplest ways to begin redirecting attitude. At the onset of establishing goals, basic questions require a deeper level of thinking:

- What would I like to change in my life that is in my control?
- What are obstacles and resources in my life that hinder or help me to achieve my goals?
- Where do I want to be in five years?

We must ask ourselves whether each student's needs are being met in our diverse student population. If not, we have to creatively find a way to meet those needs through a variety of program options.

Out of this reflective process, the student can develop a personal strategic plan. Such a plan can be incorporated into the more extensive Individual Learning Plan (ILP) which may include:

- a one-sentence vision for life;
- a few basic values and beliefs (i.e., integrity, freedom, responsibility);
- at least three goals;
- strategies (intermediate steps) for achieving those goals; and
- a timetable for reviewing, revising, and completing the plan.

Establishing an ILP as part of the student's portfolio is a powerful means for students to organize and self-evaluate. There is no "one way" to organize a portfolio. Many forms and variations can be found in libraries and on the Internet. With the teacher's guidance and interplay, these tools help the student conduct on-going assessment, re-framing and restructuring, and self-evaluation of progress.

Beyond the school, growth of students is often reflective of home life. Teachers often complain, "The parents don't care." But the real question might be, "What has been done by the teacher and the school to ensure that the parent felt welcomed, included, and respected?" Was there a phone call home? Was there good news to share about the student's talents, gifts, and successes? Were parents greeted with a smile when they arrived at school? Was the tone of voice of the teacher demeaning or understanding? Were parents informed of "good" behavior and improvement for a change, or was it just another "bad news" phone call? When the relationship between the school and the home is encouraging and supportive of each other, according to the State of Iowa Department of Education, teachers and schools profit: teacher morale improves, parents rate teachers higher, teachers rate parents as more helpful, and student

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

achievement improves (Davies, 1988; Epstein, 1992; Liontos, 1992). These travelers need the support of many people to begin to successfully map and implement a plan to reach a new destination.

When these travel-weary passengers arrive, they may be oblivious to their physical surroundings. In all likelihood, they would like to find the nearest bench and take a nap! The first contact must be personal, warm, and inviting. The power of a smile should never be underestimated. While the ILP is being initiated, the student begins to become acclimated to individual attention and the new environment. Individual attention is most productive when it is learner-focused, it incorporates teacher passion and interest, and it is meaningful and relevant. Students will know if it is not.

Learning Accelerated

On the educational front, much has been said regarding learning styles, particularly in relation to Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory. "At-risk" youth are often clumped together under one label, but look again at those 100 travelers with those diverse histories, learning styles, and goals. We must ask ourselves whether each student's needs are being met in our diverse student population. If not, we have to creatively find a way to meet those needs through a variety of program options. We can begin by focusing on the individual learner – what is already known? Through in-depth evaluations for each student, content can be developed, built on what the student already knows, and directed toward what the student needs to know, all in relation to where the student needs and wants to be.

Research shows that the emotional state of the learner also plays a major role in the ability to learn (Rose, 1987). "Many studies have shown that stress can lower your learner's intelligence. Dr. Bernard Brown of Georgetown University discovered that increased stress impaired learning, thinking, memory, and problem-solving in over 4,000 participants. In fact, increased stress even slashed their IQ scores by fourteen points! Brown says that chronic stress robs one's ability to think (Jensen, p. 95)." The environment is a tool. It can be used to enliven and activate the learning curiosity within the student. The climate of the environment can be adjusted to enhance learning: plants for more oxygen, good lighting for restful reading, comfortable temperature, music for soothing emotions, colorful and meaningful academically-oriented visuals for peripheral learning. When the climate is conducive to learning, the student will more readily be able to experience accelerated learning. And in Orange County, accelerated learning has evolved from the following typical scenario:

> In the ACCESS programs, the "average" entering student is a 10th grader who reads at 5th grade level. The overall rate of learning has been equal to one half-year gained for every year spent in a traditional learning program. In other words, at-risk students in traditional programs have been "progressing" backwards.

In ACCESS alternative programs, pre- and post-assessments reveal that students gain approximately two months of reading achievement for every month of attendance in school. This equals a two-year gain for every year of attendance. Given the students' history, this is a quite a phenomenon. However, is it good enough? The answer is "No," not in a standards-based

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

program. For a 10th grader to reach grade level [i.e., to grade 12 by graduation], he/she needs to achieve a five-to-six-year gain in two years. This is the challenge for the alternative education field. Can this challenge be met? We believe accelerated learning is the answer.

Several methodologies exist today that make fast-paced or accelerated learning possible. The possibility of phenomenal rates of learning was made widely known in 1985 by Colin Rose in his book, *Accelerated Learning*, and revised and supplemented in his 1997 book, *Accelerated Learning for the 21st Century*. The premise is based on brain research findings and actual results observed. For example, in the accelerated learning program developed by Colin Rose, there are six basic stages of learning that can easily be remembered through the use of the acronym MASTER:

MIND:	to be in a resourceful state of mind.
ACQUIRE:	to acquire and absorb the information in the way best suited to personal learning style.
SEARCH:	to fully explore the learning material.
TRIGGER:	to make sure that the subject matter is locked into long-term memory so it can be recalled when required.
EXHIBIT:	to test understanding of what you've learned.
REVIEW:	to reflect on the learning experience - not just what was learned, but how it was learned.

This systematic approach to learning how to learn is just one of many approaches and/or techniques that can be used to achieve dramatic improvements in student achievement. For example, in the San Diego County Juvenile Court and Community Schools, the results of the Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading showed an improvement in reading scores by an average of 1.51 grade equivalents in 2.82 months of enrollment. This translates to an almost four-year gain for every year of instruction. Other tactics alternative programs are employing to drive our students more quickly toward meeting standards are:

- Focused instruction in one content area
- Immersion in a program developed around student interests
- Home schooling, where the competition is only about how well one does in comparison to one's capability
- Supplementing instruction with methodologies that are brain-compatible in design

These strategies are proving to be highly effective in reaching students, engaging their interests, and igniting the spark of motivation.

Transition Planning

Now that students are grounded and learning, what comes next? In Orange County, the focus on exit at entry leads right into the final phase of the program.

> "With the approach of a new century, a new priority has emerged for schools to play a major role in the transition of young offenders from confinement within a

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

juvenile justice setting to life in the community. Schools are being asked to shoulder the dual responsibility of preventing juvenile crime and developing a responsible citizenry." (*From the Courthouse to the Schoolhouse: Making Successful Transitions*, by Roland D. Stephens and June Lane Arnett, OJJPD)

Transition programs are fast becoming an integral part of alternative education services. Because of the wide range of needs identified with the transition process, the concept of interagency support has become an essential element in developing transition models. Various need assessment instruments have identified the most common risk factors as: substance abuse, emotional stability, family problems, school problems, and intellectual impairment. The educational field alone is not equipped to meet or solve this wide range of needs for the individuals served. ACCESS has over 35 community partners who have become a part of the transition focus (ACCESS Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities Act – Year-end Report by PARs 1997-98).

For example, in the 1980s, the Orange County Probation Department conducted two studies of repeat juvenile offenders in the city of Santa Ana, California. The results revealed that "a small portion of juvenile offenders (8%) are responsible for more than half of the repeat offenses committed by juveniles in Orange County." A profile of these youth showed commonalties in the following four areas: significant family problems (abuse, neglect, criminal family members, and/or lack of parental supervision and control); significant problems at school (truancy, failing more than one course, or a recent suspension or expulsion); pattern of drug and/or alcohol use; and delinquent peers, chronic runaway, or pattern of stealing. The result of these studies was the creation of Youth and Family Resource Centers. These multi-agency collaboratives focus on meeting the needs of youth in one setting. Early indications are quite promising.

Other ideas to facilitate the building of an appropriate transition plan and environment for youth include a review of research from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Five reform ideas for transitional programs offered by the OJJDP help to keep all collaborators working in unity:

- Meaningful re-entry
- Community partners
- Formal assessment procedures
- Increased level of contact
- Aftercare during confinement

Interagency endeavors can create dynamic sources of advocacy for students, working best when responsibilities and accountability are shared, the interest of the students is at the forefront, and a collaborative ethic is established.

Ensuring a Safe Arrival

What are ways to help make their trip into the larger society a more successful one?

Actual maintenance complaint submitted by a US Air Force pilot and the reply from the maintenance crew.

Problem: "Left inside main tire almost needs replacement."

Solution: "Almost replaced left inside main tire."

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

Now that they are ready to take off, what's next? When students leave our programs, we don't want them "almost" ready to face the world...we want them to be certain of their ability to succeed and confident that they have potential value to contribute to the larger society.

The concern is that these students will continue in a cycle of recidivism, never moving out and beyond a life that discounts their abilities, personal potential, and value as human beings. This high-risk group tends to exhibit a persistent pattern of intense and severe delinquent activity and is plagued by a multitude of other problems. They often have emotional and interpersonal problems that are sometimes accompanied by physical health problems. Many come out of family settings characterized by high levels of violence, chaos, and dysfunction. Excessive alcohol and drug consumption and abuse, chronic truancy, and academic failure are all familiar characteristics of this group.

The at-risk students who have landed in our schools are not an isolated group, but part of the community. We have come to realize that "children are not the problem: at-riskness has to do with the *situation* in which we place children" (Hopfenberg, Levin, 1993). When these students arrive at alternative education programs, their history, expectations, attitudes, and learning styles all impact the success of future programs and transitions. The time available to serve students is short – accelerating the learning process in an appropriate environment becomes a priority for each individual, helping to change each one's destination to one of success and well-being. It is the job of the staff, the traveling companions, to help them set high personal goals and expectations in a concentrated yet comfortable learning environment, to teach the unsuccessful to think successfully, and to think exit – to think success – on entry back to the larger community.

In alternative education programs, students are encouraged to become involved in goal-setting exercises. They learn to take responsibility in planning their own meaningful transition process. Students who participate in their own education become lifelong learners. When the environment is active, alive, and student-directed, students are enabled to see learning as a pleasurable experience, and they can "learn how to learn." This climate allows for the increased pace of academic development, performance, and assessment. Through accelerated learning processes and techniques, students can make rapid, almost unbelievable, gains. As interagency advocates help students solve varied emotional and social dilemmas, students learn to confidently reunite with the local school district or successfully move on to higher education or employment. At the foundation of the success of the journey is powerful student interaction with staff who focus on each youth with care, competence, and commitment. While at this often-brief stopover, the enthusiasm and passion of educators combines with renewed enthusiasm for learning by students, and these travelers begin to experience phenomenal life changes. A future is redesigned and presented in such a way as to give hope and encouragement to these students as they prepare to "take off" for their next destination.

Alternative Education Youth: *Think Exit on Entry* (cont'd)

About the authors:

Ted Price, Ph.D., is presently serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services (ACCESS) for the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE). He is responsible for programs and services for at-risk, delinquent, incarcerated and home-schooled youth and adults.

Dr. Price has served as President of LeARN, Consultant for the U.S. Department of Justice, and Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Correctional Education in Richmond, Virginia. He has also worked with the Los Angeles County Office of Education as Director of Juvenile Court and Community Schools and is Past-President for the International Correctional Education Association where he was instrumental in creating the strategic plan for this association.

Dr. Price has been in the field of alternative and correctional education for over 30 years, during which time he has conducted numerous seminars throughout the United States. He is a published author, teacher, and leader in his field.

Debbie Van Hook graduated with a BA from California State University at Fullerton. Her credential has enabled her to teach in the Orange County Juvenile Hall, Alternative Education day classes, and public schools.

Lynne Robertson, a graduate of California State University at Long Beach, is a Senior Department Secretary in the Alternative Education Division of the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE).

References

Darling-Hammond, Linda. (997). The Right to Learn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Dryden, Gordon and Dr. Jeannette Vos. (1999). The Learning Revolution. Torrence, CA: The Learning Web.

Gardner, Howard. (1993) Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice. New York, NY: Basic Books

Hopfenberg, Wendy S., Henry M. Levin and Associates. (1993). The Accelerated Schools. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Kohn, Alfie. (1999) Schools Our Children Deserve. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Lewis, James Jr. (1986) Achieving Excellence in Our Schools. Westbury, NY: Wilkerson Publishing Co.

Orange County Department of Education, Division of Alternative Education. (1997-98). Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities Act – Year-end Report by PARs.

Orange County Department of Education, Division of Alternative Education. (2000). ACCESS Our STARS - STudents Achieving Remarkable Success.

Phi Delta Kappa/Opinion Poll 2000. Of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. [Online] Available: www.pdkintl.org/kappan kpol0009.htm#1

Rose, Colin. (1987) Learning accelerated. New York, NY: Dell Publishing Co.

San Diego County Office of Education, Student Services Division. (2000, November). 2000 Standardized Testing and Reporting Program Results.

Stephens, Roland D. and June Lane Arnett. (2000, February).From the Courthouse to the Schoolhouse: Making Successful Transitions. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. [Online] Available: http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/jjbulletin/9907_3/compare.html

Stone, Sandra S., Ph.D. (1998, May). The Changing Nature of Juvenile Offenders. Juvenile Justice, 4(1). Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. [Online] Available: http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/conference/contents.html

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Alternative Education in a High Stakes Climate

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth

by Dr. Robert Metcalf

The cost of crime in the state of California has escalated at unprecedented rates over the past two decades. The largest prison population growth in history occurred during the 1980s. The number of prison inmates has more than tripled in most parts of the United States since 1980. Violent crimes committed by juveniles have increased dramatically. California, like most states, has responded with more incarceration, despite the fact that available evidence does not support increased incarceration as the most effective remedy for criminality. Recent studies examining costs and benefits of early intervention programs with high risk youth suggest that large scale public investment in certain intervention programs may result in long term savings to taxpayers by cutting criminal justice system costs. Large scale implementation of early intervention programs for high risk youth could be accomplished through California's Juvenile Court and Community Schools, an existing statewide system already serving large numbers of "at-risk" juveniles. Longitudinal, controlled program outcome evaluation of early intervention approaches has been lacking, but is crucial to success. Possible annual savings to California taxpayers are estimated to be in the range of $68-$950 million.

Background

Over the past two decades, California has experienced an undesirable cycle of growth in one significant area: the numbers of people incarcerated are at historic highs.

In the year 2000, there were approximately 161,000 adult inmates in California's prison system, the nation's largest. This number reflects several hundred fewer prisoners than at the same time last year, and the first decrease in two decades of otherwise spiraling growth. During the 1980s the prison population grew at an average annual rate of 14.5%; the annual growth in the 1990s averaged 6.3%, leading to the current boom in prison construction (CDC, 2000).

One response to growing prison populations is to continue to build more prisons and detention facilities, but evidence suggests that the increases in imprisonment over the past decades have not had large effects on crime (Zimring and Hawkins, 1995).

Responding to crime with incarceration is essential for public protection, but relying too heavily on this method of deterrence is socially and economically counterproductive. For example, it has been estimated that California's "three strikes" law, containing the nation's harshest and most sweeping repeat-offender sanctions, would reduce serious crimes perpetrated by adults some 21% if fully implemented (Greenwood et al., 1994). But this comes at a huge price - $5.5 billion a year (1993 dollars), which represents an increase in California's criminal-justice system annual operating costs by more than 100%.

The source of the growing prison population is a steady flow of high-risk juveniles reaching adulthood poised to enter a life of crime, not having received basic interventions which could have prevented

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

their entry into the welfare and criminal justice systems. The flow is relentless. In 1996, there were over 85,000 juvenile felony arrests (California Youth Authority, 2000).

When high-risk youth get into trouble, they often get expelled from school and/or enter the juvenile justice system. Whether these children wind up in juvenile hall, on probation, or participating in any of a myriad of juvenile correction programs, the law still requires that they receive a free and appropriate public education.

California juvenile court and community schools are mandated to provide education for youth in trouble. Classes are provided in many different settings to continue the education of the juvenile offender, whether they are at a juvenile hall, psychiatric facility or a community based classroom.

In order to analyze the cost effectiveness of interventions with high-risk youth, it is necessary to look at the potential cost of a high-risk youth to society in comparison to the cost and efficiency of early intervention programs.

Recent research suggests public investment in certain interventions for high-risk youth may be several times more cost-effective in reducing serious crime than long mandatory sentences for repeat offenders. Successful intervention programs take some of the burden off prisons and make the three strikes law more affordable by diverting youth from a life of crime. The cost for some intervention programs may be offset by long term reductions in prison costs (Greenwood, 1998).

What is a high-risk youth?

Early interventions with high-risk youth require accurate identification of children at risk for future trouble with the law. Research suggests a high degree of continuity from childhood conduct problems to delinquency and later criminal behavior (Loeber and LeBlanc, 1990). The amount and severity of similar past antisocial behaviors is the best predictor of an individual's future deviant behavior (Farrington, 1994). Severity of juvenile record and age at onset are two of the best predictors of adult criminality (Greenwood and Abrahamse, 1982; Blumstein, 1986).

Tables 1A and 1B summarize factors associated with criminal justice system involvement and youth violence.

Table 1A

Factors Increasing Probability of Criminal Justice System Involvement
U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- ❑ No high school diploma
- ❑ History of drug/alcohol abuse
- ❑ Family member who abused alcohol/drugs
- ❑ Severe truancy/behavior problems in school
- ❑ History of physical/sexual abuse/domestic violence
- ❑ Early childbearing, teenage pregnancy and substance use during pregnancy
- ❑ Low birth weight and other types of birth complications
- ❑ Growing up in a home with one parent/grandparent
- ❑ Poor parental supervision, erratic child-rearing behavior, parental disharmony, and parental rejection of the child
- ❑ Prior arrests
- ❑ Parental criminal record or mental health problems
- ❑ Gang affiliation
- ❑ Time spent in foster home(s)
- ❑ Family reliance on public assistance
- ❑ Presence of learning disability
- ❑ History of emotional disability

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Table 1B

Predictors of Youth Violence
Hawkins et al. (April, 2000), U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Individual

- ❑ Pregnancy and delivery complications
- ❑ Low resting heart rate
- ❑ Internalizing disorders
- ❑ Hyperactivity, concentration problems, restlessness, and risk taking behavior
- ❑ Aggressiveness
- ❑ Early initiation of violent behavior
- ❑ Involvement in other forms of anti-social behavior
- ❑ Beliefs and attitudes favorable to deviant or antisocial behavior

Family

- ❑ Parental criminality
- ❑ Child maltreatment/domestic violence
- ❑ Poor family management practices
- ❑ Low levels of parental involvement
- ❑ Poor family bonding and family conflict
- ❑ Parental attitudes favorable to substance use and violence
- ❑ Parent-child separation

School

- ❑ Academic failure
- ❑ Low involvement in school
- ❑ Truancy and dropping out of school
- ❑ Frequent school transitions

Peer-Related

- ❑ Delinquent siblings
- ❑ Delinquent peers
- ❑ Gang membership

Community and Neighborhood

- ❑ Poverty
- ❑ Community disorganization
- ❑ Availability of drugs and firearms
- ❑ Neighborhood adults involved in crime
- ❑ Exposure to violence and racial prejudice

There are approximately 33,145,000 residents in California, 27% under the age of 18 years. (U.S. Census Bureau, 1998). Six hundred thousand children are born every year in California, according to 1990 Census data. More than 30% of these children have no father present or willing to provide economic support. Approximately 12% are born to teenage mothers. Greenwood et al. (1998) states, "We conservatively estimate that about one-quarter of California's children come from families having one or more of the characteristics identified that place them 'at-risk' for eventual involvement in violent behavior. This amounts to 150,000 of the 600,000 children born in California every year."

Another way to estimate the number of youth at risk for being incarcerated is to look at the existing adult prison population. In California, 28.5% of the 161,401 incarcerated adults are in the 18-24 age range (45,192 inmates). If we assume a consistent prison population six years into the future, these prisoners will be replaced by approximately the same number of juveniles now in the 11-17 age range. In California, there are approximately 2,627,907 children ages 11-17 now attending public school. If the prison population remains constant, 1.7% of these children will end up going to jail. A high percentage of those will have attended juvenile court schools.

Economic Impact of High Risk Youth

There are two general

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

approaches for estimating the cost to society inflicted by a high-risk youth. Costs of antisocial behavior can be tangible and/or intangible, paid by individual victims or society (i.e., taxpayers). Tangible costs include such things as taxpayer expenses for social service and criminal justice remedies, medical expenses, loss of labor productivity and other victim costs. Intangible costs include pain, suffering and lost quality of life.

A 1998 study by Cohen examines the cost to society of various acts committed by high-risk youth, including crime, drug abuse and high school dropout. Economic analysis yields estimates of lifetime costs associated with the typical career criminal, drug abuser and high school dropout. Costs are discounted to present value to account for the fact that a 15-20 year time span is frequently involved, and a dollar today is not the same as a dollar 15 years from now. Based on a typical 2% discount rate, Cohen concludes that a typical career criminal costs $1.3-1.5 million; a heavy drug user costs $370,000 – 970,000; and a high school dropout costs $243,000 – 388,000. Eliminating duplication between crimes committed by individuals who are both heavy drug users and career criminals results in an overall estimate of the monetary value of saving a high-risk youth of $1.7 to $2.3 million. Tables 2A, 2B and 2C summarize costs to crime victims, criminal justice related costs and the value to society of saving a high-risk youth.

Table 2A

Average Cost to Crime Victims (1997 Dollars), Cohen (1998)

Crime	Tangible	Intangible	Risk of Death	Total
Rape	$6,000	$96,000	$1,000	$103,000
Robbery	$2,700	$6,700	$6,200	$15,600
Agg. Assault	$1,800	$9,200	$29,700	$40,700
Burglary	$1,300	$350		$1,650
Larceny	$440			$440
Motor Veh. Theft	$4,100	$350		$4,450

Table 2B

Annual Criminal Justice Related Costs From Crime (1997 Dollars), Cohen (1998)

Crime	Criminal Investigation	Legal Defense	Prison, Jail	Parole	Probation	Total
Murder	$8,700	$1,100	$118,500	$607	$70	$163,500
Rape	$380	$30	$2,400	$24	$7	$2,900
Robbery	$890	$60	$5,800	$72	$25	$6,900
Agg. Assault	$870	$70	$3,500	$97	$75	$4,600
Burglary	$765	$20	$1,500	$46	$50	$2,300
Larceny	$540	$20	$700	$44	$50	$1,400
MV Theft	$1,550	$35	$1,300	$77	$90	$3,000

Table 2C

The Monetary Value of Saving a High-Risk Youth (1997 Dollars), Cohen (1998)

Description	Total Costs	Present Value (2% discount rate)
Career Criminal	$1.5 - $1.8 million	$1.3 - $1.5 million
Heavy Drug User	$483,000 - $1.3 million	$370,000 - $970,000
High School Dropout	$469,000 - $750,000	$243,000 - $388,000
Less duplication: (Crimes committed by heavy drug users)	($283,000 - $781,000)	($220,000 - $606,000)
Total	**$2.2 - $3.0 million**	**$1.7 - $2.3 million**

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Early Intervention Programs

There have been many intervention programs over the years designed to divert high-risk youth from crime, but very few have produced reliable program outcome data. Virtually every intervention program reports anecdotal success stories, but few manage to implement the controlled, long-term evaluations necessary to verify results. One study that did a credible job analyzing program outcomes was completed by Greenwood et al. (1998), through the Rand Corporation. The cost effectiveness of four different intervention approaches was examined and compared to the cost effectiveness of California's "three strikes" law.

The types of intervention programs evaluated were:

- Early childhood interventions for children at risk of later antisocial behavior.
- Interventions for families with children who "act out."
- School-based interventions (graduation incentives).
- Interventions for troublesome youth early in delinquency.

Early childhood interventions are based on the premise that inadequate parenting is one of the strongest predictors of later delinquency (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986). Poverty, single parenthood and youthfulness are the three factors most closely associated with being an ineffective or abusive parent (Farrington, 1994).

> "After five arrests, they will have approximately a 90% chance of being arrested again and be labeled a 'chronic offender,' one of the 6% of all boys who account for more than 50% of all arrests" (Blumstein et al., 1986).

School-based interventions focus on problems in school and early dropout. These approaches typically aim to increase high-risk youths' attachment to school and provide skills for resisting invitations to participate in negative behavior from delinquent peers.

Interventions for troublesome youths early in delinquency mostly target the 30-40% of boys growing up in urban areas of the United States arrested before their 18th birthday. Most will not be arrested again, but some will continue to offend, and each successive arrest will place them at a higher level of risk. After five arrests, they will have approximately a 90% chance of being arrested again and be labeled a "chronic offender," one of the 6% of all boys who account for more than 50% of all arrests (Blumstein et al., 1986). Most career criminals begin with multiple contacts with the juvenile justice system (Blumstein et al., 1986).

The Orange County, California Probation Department is currently conducting an intensive supervision and counseling program for high-risk youth with five or more arrests prior to age 18. Early analysis of pilot program data indicate the program may reduce juvenile recidivism by up to 50% (Orange County Probation Department, 1994).

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Cost-Benefit Analysis of Early Intervention Programs

Greenwood et al. (1998) found that graduation incentives are by far the most cost-effective of the four interventions studied, followed by parent training and delinquent supervision. Early home visits and day care are the least effective and most costly of the four interventions. The cost-effectiveness of early interventions after 30 years is summarized in Table 3A.

The California "three-strikes" law is projected to reduce the number of serious felonies committed by adults in any one year by approximately 21%, at a cost of $5.5 million annually (mostly the costs of constructing and operating additional prison facilities). This equates to a cost of $16,000 per serious crime prevented. Relative to early intervention, "three-strikes" appears to be more cost effective than Home Visit/ Day Care, but less cost-effective than Graduation Incentives, Delinquent Supervision and Parent Training.

Discussion

Many of the high-risk youth that attend California Juvenile Court and Community schools will continue their anti-social behavior into adulthood and become incarcerated. It seems that during the time a high-risk youth is captive audience in a Juvenile Court or Community school an opportunity exists to administer the ounce of prevention to save the pound of cure which will later be required. It may be strategically and economically advantageous to strengthen these programs and make them into primary delivery systems for intervention programs.

It costs about $24,800 each year in California to maintain one adult inmate (California State Auditor, 1998), whereas the annual cost to provide a classroom education to one student is approximately $5,400 (Digest of Education Statistics, 1999). Making effective interventions with students to prevent future incarceration may significantly add to the per pupil cost, but will never approach the high cost of supporting a prisoner.

The average prison stay is about eight years (Cohen et al., 1994). Assuming each person diverted by an early intervention into a productive life would have spent eight years in prison, the savings to taxpayers would be $198,400 current dollars per person, less the cost of intervention.

Early intervention approaches are a cost-effective means of reducing crime. Graduation incentives for high-risk youth are the most

Table 3A

Cost-effectiveness of early interventions after 30 years (from Greenwood, P.W. et al., (1998) "Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits," Rand Corp., Santa Monica, CA.)

	Home Visit/ Day Care	Parent Training	Graduation Incentives	Delinquent Supervision
Cost per participant	$29,400	$3,000	$12,520	$10,000
Serious crimes prevented per participant	0.59	0.71	4.16	0.99
Dollars per serious crime prevented	$89,035	$6,351	$3,881	$13,899
Serious crimes prevented per million dollars spent	11	157	258	72

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Table 3B

Cost to Prevent One Serious Crime by Intervention (from Greenwood, P.W. et al, (1998) "Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits," Rand Corp., Santa Monica, CA.)

Intervention	Cost
Graduation incentives	$4,000
Parent training	$6,500
Delinquent supervision	$14,000
Three Strikes law	$16,000
Home visits/day care	$89,000

cost-effective of the four intervention strategies evaluated. The cost of an intervention to prevent one serious crime is indicated in Table 3B.

Graduation incentive programs (modest cash and scholarship rewards) are clearly the superior approach. Benefits will result within a few years, compared to a 10 or more year wait for benefits with parent training, and a 15-20 year wait for benefit with home visits/day care. With delinquent supervision, impacts occur immediately, and at the start of a criminal career rather than at the end, as with the "Three Strikes" law. Based on current estimates of early intervention program costs and benefits, expenditures of public funds for graduation incentive intervention programs for high-risk youth would be several times more cost-effective in reducing serious crime than the "Three Strikes" law. Graduation incentive programs implemented in conjunction with "Three Strikes" law will relieve the burden from the prison system and make the "Three Strikes" law more affordable by diverting high-risk youth.

Greenwood et al. (1998) note that graduation incentives and parent-training interventions could together reduce serious crime by 22% at a combined annual cost of less than $1 billion. They conclude, "If it is indeed worth $5.5 billion a year to reduce serious crime by 21%, it might be worth spending another $900 million a year to roughly double that reduction."

It is estimated that about 8% of the juvenile offenders are the ones who will develop into serious lifelong criminals (Kurz & Moore, 1994). The savings in public support dollars would be significant if only one out of every ten could be successfully diverted from crime and socially maladaptive behavior. Implementation of a four year statewide graduation incentive program for 50,000 high risk youth will likely result in substantial savings to California taxpayers, depending on the degree of success, as summarized in Table 4. Based on the projections in Table 4, annual tax dollar savings would be in the range of $68-$950 million.

The projected savings in Table 4 may be conservative because the average annual cost of incarceration used in the calculations may be underestimated. Although the statewide annual average "per-inmate" cost is $24,807 (California State Auditor, 1998), many incarcerated youth are sentenced to California Youth Authority institutions, where the annual cost to house a ward is $41,700 (California Youth Authority, Summary Fact Sheet, March, 2000).

Projections in Table 4 illustrate how important it is to achieve a high success rate. Each 10% increase in success beyond the first 10% saves about 900 million dollars. There are two keys to

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Table 4

Projected $ Savings to California Taxpayers from a 4 Year Graduation Incentive Intervention Program for 50,000 High-Risk Youth, by Degree of Effectiveness
(Based on four year program cost of $12,520 per youth; $24,807 annual cost of incarceration; 8 year average length of incarceration)

Incarceration Reduction Rate	$ Taxpayer Savings
10%	271 Million
20%	1.2 Billion
30%	2.1 Billion
40%	2.9 Billion
50%	3.8 Billion

increased success:
1) accurate identification of potentially high-risk youth, and 2) the degree of efficiency achieved by the early intervention program.

Comparison of prevention vs. incarceration is not a straightforward operation; multiple variables must be considered when analyzing the cost-effectiveness of early intervention programs, including:

- What impact does incarceration have on criminality, and at what cost?
- How can we accurately identify who should receive early intervention?
- What is the cost of early intervention, and how effective is it for preventing crime?
- How much efficiency will be lost when a small program is implemented on a larger scale?
- How long will the intervention remain effective?

There is a critical need for program outcome research in the area of early intervention. Graduation incentive programs and other approaches cited in this article constitute a very small percentage of the efforts implemented over the years, but they represent the very few programs that are thoroughly evaluated from a cost-benefit perspective. There are many early intervention programs for high-risk youth that show great promise and seem to be effective, but the comprehensive program outcome research necessary to evaluate their effectiveness is absent.

An obstacle to implementing and evaluating early intervention programs for high-risk youth is the lack of one agency whose primary mission is to prevent and reduce crime through diversion of high-risk youth. The mission of the criminal justice system is to incarcerate and rehabilitate juvenile offenders. The mission of the juvenile court and community schools is to educate juvenile offenders and high-risk youth. The mission of health and social services agencies is to provide a social welfare safety net. None of these public entities has the mission statement or the funds in their budget to implement and evaluate graduation incentive or other early intervention programs for high-risk youth.

Fighting crime by expanding the capacity for incarceration is like trying to keep a pot from boiling over by removing the lid rather than simply turning down the flame. It is far more efficient and cost effective to treat the problem at the source rather than trying to relieve the pressure of overcrowding.

It may take an interagency consortium to effectively evaluate prevention approaches. Criminal justice, education and social service leaders in California must collaborate to establish an effective statewide early intervention program for high-risk youth. Providing early

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

intervention programs for high-risk youth is one sensible and cost effective way to treat this growing social problem in California.

About the author:

Robert Metcalf, Ph.D. serves the San Diego County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community Schools as a bilingual, (English/Spanish) psychologist. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in psychology from United States International University. He holds a Masters degree from California State University at Los Angeles in rehabilitation counseling, and a Bachelors degree in psychology from UCLA.

Dr. Metcalf is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, Board Certified Vocational Expert and founder/past president of the American Rehabilitation Economics Association, the national certifying body for Rehabilitation Economists. Dr. Metcalf has been a consultant and expert witness on matters of disability, rehabilitation and economics for over 20 years in San Diego, California, where he resides with his family.

References

Blumstein, A., Cohen, J., Roth, J.A., and Visher, C.A. (eds.). *Criminal Careers and Career Criminals,* National Research Council, National Academy Press, Washington, DC., 1986.

Blumstein, A., and Petersilia, J., "Investing in Criminal Justice Research." In Wilson, J.Q., and Petersilia, J. (eds.), *Crime,* San Francisco, Chap. 20, 1995.

California Attorney General's Office, *Crime and Delinquency in California: 1996,* Sacramento, CA, 1997.

California Department of Corrections, *CDC Facts,* Sacramento, CA, March 1, 2000.

California State Auditor, *Calculation of Annual Costs Per Inmate for Fiscal Year 1996-97,* Sacramento, CA, Sept. 15, 1998.

California Youth Authority, *Summary Fact Sheet,* Sacramento, CA, March, 2000.

Cohen, Mark A., "The Monetary Value of Saving a High-Risk Youth," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology,* Vol. 14, No. 1, 1998, pp. 5-33.

Cohen, M.A., Miller, T.R., and Rossman, S.B. "The Costs and Consequences of Violent Behavior in the United States." In Reiss, A.J., Jr., and Roth. F.A. (eds.), Volume 4: *Consequences and Control of Understanding and Preventing Violence,* National Research Council, National Academy Press, Washington, DC.,1994, Pp. 67-166.

U.S. Dept. of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics,* 1999, Washington, DC, 2000.

Farrington, David P., "Early Developmental Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency," *Criminal Behavior and Mental Health,* Vol. 4, England: Whurr Publishers Ltd., 1994, pp. 209-227.

Greenwood, P.W. et al, *Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits,* Rand Corp., Santa Monica, CA., 1998.

Greenwood, Peter W., and Allan F. Abrahamse, *Selective Incapacitation,* Santa Monica, CA: Rand, R-2815-NIJ, 1982.

Hahn, Andrew, *Evaluation of the Quantum Opportunities Program. Did the Program Work?,* Brandeis University, Heller Graduate School Center for Human Resources, Waltham, MA, June, 1994.

Hawkins, David, Herrenkohl, Todd, Farrington, David, Brewer, Devon, Catalano, Richard, Harachi, Tracy & Cothern, Lynn, "Predictors of Violence," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin,* U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, D.C., April, 2000.

Kurz and Moore, *8% Problem: Chronic Juvenile Offender Recidivism,* Orange County Probation Dept. Publications, March, 1994.

The Economics of Early Intervention Programs for High Risk Youth (cont'd)

Lipsey, Mark W., "Juvenile Delinquency Treatment: A Meta-Analytic Inquiry into the Variability of Effects," Thomas Cook et al., eds., *Meta-Analysis for Explanation*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992, pp. 83-126.

Loeber, R., and M. LeBlanc, "Toward a Developmental Criminology," M. Tonry and N. Morris, eds., *Crime and Justice*, Vol. 12, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp.375-473.

Loeber, Rolf and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, "Family Factors as Correlates and Predictors of Juvenile Conduct Problems and Delinquency," Michael Tonry and Norval Morris, eds., *Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research*, Vol. 7, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, pp. 29-149.

Miller, T.R., Cohen, M.A., and Wiersema, B. "Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look," *National Institute of Justice Research Report*, NCJ-155282, Feb.,1996.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders in Residential Placement, 1997,"* Washington, DC., 1998.

Orange County Probation Department, *The 8% Early Intervention Program, 1994*, Orange County Probation Department Publications, 1999.

Sampson, Robert J. "The Community," in James Q Wilson and Joan Petersilia, eds., *Crime*, San Francisco, CA, ICS Press, 1995, pp. 193-216.

San Diego County Probation, *Final Report to the California Board of Corrections*, San Diego County Local Action Plan, March, 1997.

Snyder, H.N., S. M., and Peo-Yamagata, E., *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1966, Update on Violence*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, DC., 1996.

Taggart, Robert, *The Quantum Opportunity Program: Second Post-Program Year Impacts*, Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA. February, 1995.

Tracy, P.E., Wolfgang, M.E., and Figlio, R.M., *Delinquency Careers in Two Birth Cohorts*, Plenum Press, New York, 1990.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *USA Counties, 1998*, Washington, DC, 1999.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1997*, Washington, DC, 1998, table 81, p.66.

U.S. Department of Justice, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1998*, Washington, DC, 1999.

U.S. Dept. of Justice, *Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin*, Beck, Allen J., Ph.D., "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear, 1999," Washington, DC, April, 2000.

Zimring, Franklin, and Gordon Hawkins, *Incapacitation: Penal Confinement and the Restraint of Crime*, Oxford Community Press, New York, 1995.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Alternative Education in a High Stakes Climate

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge

by Dr. Lanney Mayer

Alternative Schools as the Cutting Edge?

When we think of cutting-edge education, what comes to mind is the high school I was privileged to attend. Singled out in a *Time Magazine* article some years back, Rye High School in suburban Westchester, New York was spending $10,500 per student to provide innovative programs with some 98% of its students going on to college. There is, however, a bigger picture.

Throughout its history American education has been unique in its enormity and cultural complexity. No other country has attempted public education for such vast numbers of students, much less the numbers of languages and cultures represented. All things considered, our system has accomplished more for many than any other system in the world.

Nevertheless, there are circumstantial and social-psychological challenges confronting educators. In urban contexts, for example, multiple languages in a classroom and a transient student population are slowly but surely arriving in suburban and rural contexts. Some suburban schools now have a transiency approaching 30% during a school year.

Then there are the psycho-social realities of students themselves. The common perception of pervasive violence in inner-city high schools has now resonated where the same common perceiver might least expect it, at suburban high schools like Columbine. Picture the irony: students struggling for accessible and equitable education enter and are passed by students who are heading for the door, weary of their educational experience. They may share a common inner challenge.

The ethos of traditional programs that Bram Hamovitch (1996) called an "ideology of hope" presumes our educational programs are meaningful to all. This presumption of hopefulness often fails to take into account the spreading sense of futility felt by students of color and now Anglos as well. Student futility often yields what Peter McLaren calls a "work stoppage," a "passion for ignorance," or "conceptual anesthesia." Discounting attendance, homework and tests, these students eventually leave school or worse, they stay on as the school's worst nightmare -- a critical mass for generating resistance to what McLaren characterizes as the "'dead time' of school" (1994). Historically, educators have not engaged this state of affairs with dialogue and understanding. We tend to confront it as a deficit to be corrected by even more concentrated programs new and old (cp., McLaren, 1993, 1994, Fine, 1991).

Because alternative educational programs focus on marginalized students, they must take seriously student expressions of futility. They also face more intensively the growing cultural and organizational complexities of American education. Consequently, their solutions promise to be increasingly relevant to a

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

broader range of educators, and where such alternative programs prove successful, they can be at the cutting edge of the larger American educational enterprise. What works best for Court and Community Schools where I serve may prove pivotal for the future of American public education generally.

While traditional accreditation criteria and the need to blend with district programs encourage alternative schools to emulate more traditional schools, our experience, and that of more and more district schools, continues to present challenges to this model. In his *New Realities*, Peter Drucker observed, "Within the next decades education will change more than it has changed since the modern school was created by the printed book over three hundred years ago." Perhaps it is time to reverse the traditional logic of education. Rather than build alternative education on the traditional model, innovative thinking in alternative schools may be an important exemplar for regular districts to follow. In any case, with the growing scrutiny of all education and the consequent emphasis on accountability, meaningfully addressing these issues is critical for demonstrable educational success in any K-12 setting.

A Lexicon of Challenges to the Factory Model of Education

Factories emphasize similarities, regularity, and interchangeable parts. They create efficiency for repeated tasks in a controlled and predictable situation. As applied to education, the factory model has evoked an assembly line of grade levels, a lock-step curriculum, inflexible standards, classes where growing numbers of students are massed together, and a pedagogy that addresses students as interchangeable cognitive entities rather than unique interpersonal beings. While the weaknesses of such a model are less evident in more homogeneous contexts such as Japan, the complexity and rate of change in American public education bring its fundamental flaws into relief. Because alternative education is predicated on addressing these challenges, it might be an appropriate focal point for the future of American public education.

Short-term Enrollment

The increasing transiency of regular district students is magnified in alternative settings. Units of study in juvenile hall settings must take into account the fact that regular stays are from 12 to 20 days, while camps are generally 2-4 months. Because alternative schools regularly create transcripts with partial credits and incomplete semesters, a continuation school model that allows for an accelerated program becomes a meaningful option. This can happen only where such schools break with traditional district formats (cp. Levin, 1988).

Intermittent Attendance

In addition to short-term enrollment, excused and unexcused absences in regular education are multiplied in alternative settings by court dates, medical appointments, illness, psychological evaluations, short-term disciplinary removal, and even furloughs. For this reason alternative education relies more on self-contained lessons emphasizing discreet and short-term skill development.

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

Special Education Services

A recent Los Angeles Times' article noted the following about the Los Angeles Unified School District:

> Special-education population has increased four times faster than its general educational enrollment over the last decade. . . . The friction is most intense in middle schools, where 20% of the classrooms are taken by students with special needs, more than double the number of a decade ago. . . . Learning-disabled students have accounted for nearly all of [this] growth (Helfand, 2001).

This is felt with more intensity in alternative settings where the turnover is greater and there is also an even higher incidence of students who qualify for special education services. For example, a caseload of 28 means that number of annual Individual Education Plan (IEP) reviews and 9 or 10 full-blown triennial reviews. That number is magnified three or more times with a short stay and turnover. The two Los Angeles Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) I serve currently have over 1/3 of students identified or in the labor-intensive process of being identified. The potential is for a caseload of 140 out of 370 students for one resource teacher. In addition, John Griffin (1992) has discovered the startling reality that in one juvenile hall dyslexic students, characteristically learning disabled (LD) because of encoding and decoding problems, were in numbers nine times that of local regular education classrooms. This implies the possibility of a thread linking learning disabilities, failure in school, and incarceration. For pragmatic reasons, an inclusion model with the support of tutors and pullout programs has been implemented more fully in alternative settings, but such a model may prove to be the most appropriate and least restrictive environment for students with all but the most severe forms of disabilities.

Placement Process

Ideally, students are placed based on full and complete transcript records that should reflect age-appropriate skill levels. Increasingly, however, students arrive with such a patchwork of attendance that records are not complete, and students of comparable age have reading and math skills at every conceivable level. Because the majority of students in alternative education settings have a history of irregular attendance and multiple enrollments in multiple districts, sometimes they are grouped by chronological age, sometimes by reading level, and sometimes merely to balance classroom numbers. Each method requires greater flexibility in the classroom to ensure a meaningful educational experience.

Lock-Step Curriculum

While established skill levels at each grade level are always helpful benchmarks, the presumed link between skill level and age is increasingly problematic. Avoiding social promotion creates an equally challenging bottleneck of students, but both options are symptomatic of a need for greater flexibility and adaptability in the curricular process. Because multiple math and reading levels at every age are a defining and unavoidable feature of alternative schools, their curricular

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

approaches accept the unique experience of each student as the rule rather then the exception.

Multiple English Reading Levels in each Classroom

However students are placed, there are multiple reading and math levels that must be taken into account in terms of materials and pedagogy. Non-standard students, individuals with exceptional needs (IWENs) at both ends of the spectrum, have greater difficulty fitting in and having academic needs meaningfully addressed because they are exceptional and need *special* programs. Alternative schools accept that students with academic differences are normal. In these settings they constitute the majority and strategies to work with them are central rather than peripheral to the educational task: intensive reading programs, reading across the curriculum, and cooperative techniques.

Appropriate Materials

Increasingly, core textbooks are failing to meet the needs of kaleidoscopic classrooms. Such texts cover curricular content at high reading levels while the more broadly useful supplementary materials only partially cover curricular content at generally lower reading levels—some have even been "dumbed down" to the point where they are virtually unreadable due to poor sententiality and some are even inaccurate. I was at Berkeley during the summer of 1989 participating in a National Science Foundation project, Science for Science Teachers. A paleontology professor had us take a true/false test of 100 statements pulled verbatim from various high school science textbooks. As it turned out, every one of the 100 statements proved false, the result of attempts to simplify and make concepts more readily understandable at a sixth grade reading level. Many of the best alternative education teachers find themselves virtually writing their own textbooks on a daily basis as they create self-contained lessons utilizing materials at multiple reading levels while also aiming to cover the curriculum. As the information age filters down to classrooms, publishing on demand, instantly collating materials on the internet (and even the intranet of individual school servers) can provide resources for immediate access to a broader range of activities and age-appropriate information at multiple reading levels.

Scope and Sequence of Daily Lessons

In light of attendance issues, materials available, and a persisting factory model, the larger pedagogical challenge even in traditional education has not been the often–mentioned content standards of a particular course of study. In fact, in order to be published, marketable textbooks are written with those standards in mind (notably those of Texas and California). Rather, the daily educational challenge already being addressed in alternative education is to create lessons that are both self-contained and sequenced for continuity. This, along with multi-modal approaches including both group and individualized lessons, cooperative learning techniques, and team building collectively offer promise for meeting a desperate need: a more flexible pedagogy.

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

Doing Time for Credits (Carnegie Units)

Many alternative schools follow the traditional model of 15 clock hours of instruction per credit. With the increase in transiency, intermittent attendance, and the difficulty of quickly communicating credits between schools, agencies, and districts, earning full 5 unit blocks of credit is increasingly difficult. Consequently, students lose credits when they return to district with only part of a semester's work. Then there are occasions when students are incarcerated for over a year and may have three or more semesters of work at one grade level. In these cases the traditional lock-step model of education cannot easily address the complexities of student circumstances. Moreover, the analogy between incarceration and seat time for educational credit raises important questions about our educational process. Because alternative education faces these issues daily and with greater intensity, it is in a unique position to forge a path to address them. Doing so, however, means that alternative educational models lead the way rather than continuing to mimic traditional models. Districts might well emulate what can grow out of alternative settings, such as continuation schools that contract credits for skill development rather than seat time.

The Meaning of Grades

In light of the emphasis on educational accountability, measures of achievement against national standards make some sense. While "differential standards," or a grade reflecting "remediation," is legally limited to special education, college presidents know that the quality of high school education varies widely and that "high school grades are flawed" as a predictor of college success (Zitner, 2001). Univocal standards are increasingly difficult to apply across the board, and this reality is more openly confronted in alternative settings. How, for example, does one interpret an eighteen-year-old student's 'A' in Basic Math who returns to district and is enrolled in an Algebra I class when he can't multiply? The highest academic standards are our legitimate goal, but grades, pedagogy, and the standards themselves are always contextualized by the living circumstances of students.

The Sameness of Students

The key to the success of Fordism was its ability to increase production and lower costs. It did so by routinizing manufacture with interchangeable parts and repeatable tasks. Almost 10 million immigrants entered this country between 1880 and 1900. New York City's population alone exploded from 850,000 in 1860 to 4,000,000 by 1914, and education through mass production was, perhaps, inevitable. But it was also driven by industry's insatiable demand for willing workers (Tyack, 1974; Zinn, 1995). Joel Spring, in his *Education and the Corporate State*, goes so far as to say, " The development of a factory-like system in the nineteenth century schoolroom was not accidental" (In Zinn, 1995).

Today's educational machinery continues to treat students as interchangeable. In this context diversity is deviance. One pathway to such deviance is suggested by Lisa Delpit (1995) who quotes Shirley Brice Heath's study (1983) of culturally influenced oral interactions. Middle class teachers tend to give directives with an indirect use of authority that is misunderstood as weakness among students

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

from working class homes. A teacher might veil her authority by saying "Is this where the scissors belong?" when at home he will hear, "Put those scissors on the shelf." Delpit concludes, "Those veiled commands are commands nonetheless, representing true power, and with true consequences for disobedience. If veiled commands are ignored, the child will be labeled a behavior problem and possibly officially classified as behavior disordered."

Helfand (2001) suggests that, "students often land in special education for the wrong reasons—because they haven't learned to read properly, don't understand English or have been tagged as behavior problems." I have received numerous individual education plans (IEPs) for special education students in JCCS labeled learning disabled (LD) or emotionally disturbed (ED) whose qualifying statement read, "He continues to act out, therefore he qualifies." While disruptive behavior is a problem to any classroom-- indicating immaturity if not a social disorder--it is not a criterion for LD or ED services. What the leap from disruptive behavior to a handicapping condition does accomplish, however, is a removal of the student from regular education classes. And based on the numbers of students who return from special education or continuation classes to regular education, this appears to be a one way street.
Alternative education programs are filled with these students who in this setting are not deviant, but the mainstream. The implications of John Griffin's study on the incidence of dyslexia in juvenile hall are important. In many cases these students remain undiagnosed until they reach these JCCS settings, and often their disruptive behavior is not because they cannot learn but because their desire to learn is frustrated. As Delpit concludes, "The teacher may not view the problem as residing in herself but in the student, and the child may once again become the behavior-disordered black boy in special education." In this context, it makes little sense for alternative education to continue trying to follow regular education models. To the degree these issues can be addressed in regular classrooms, the strategies and resources of alternative education might take the lead.

The Impersonal Nature of Education

Education modeled on the factory de-emphasizes the interpersonal nature of teaching and learning. Mass education not only supposes that students are interchangeable, but that they are also passive. Paulo Freire (1997) characterized this as "banking" whereby teachers make deposits in students as "receptacles." But students are not passive, and learning cannot be demanded any more than doing the dishes or implementing district programs. Education, like any interpersonal enterprise, involves not control but facilitation. To the degree that marriage involves yielding power to build the relationship, so also does meaningful education.

Most educational programs prefer control, and the result is often resistance (McLaren, 1993). William Tierney (1993) noticed such resistance among Native Americans who viewed the price of American education as "cultural suicide." This insight might explain the "work stoppage" and the Latino students' denigration of becoming a "school boy." It certainly explains the attitude of many alternative

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

education students toward achievement tests. Too often students in alternative schools leave with markedly lower test scores than what they demonstrated upon arrival in juvenile hall. They hope for easier classes upon return to district, they don't like the student taking the test next to them, or they just don't think it matters because, "I'm going home anyway."

I'm reasonably sure that most effective educators resonate Freire's dialogical approach that sometimes views the "teacher as learner and learner as teacher." Alternative education, however, *must* build on this foundation because the pervasive sense of futility and powerlessness among students must be addressed before teaching and learning can begin. We just don't have a critical mass of students who will succeed without such support. When asked where they will be in five years, JCCS students characteristically respond, "I never thought about it," "Everybody's got to die sometime," or "Whatever happens, happens." Building trust is not incidental to alternative education, but a critical starting point. Perhaps it might be for all education.

Final Thoughts

By its nature, alternative education deals with failures in regular education. In a climate of intensifying accountability, however, educators should be especially wary of assuming that academic failures are unavoidably the problem of the student. Central to this task is a thorough review of the persisting Fordist style of educating. Business is shifting from hierarchical, rational organizations toward flattened web-like nimble social organisms. It's like comparing guerilla warfare with orchestrated armies. Drucker promises that education will shift also. He predicts that education in the new realities will:

- Not be value-free, so we would be wise to reflect on just what these driving values will be.
- Be damaged by barriers between the highly schooled and the other half. Michelle Fine (1991) more pointedly suggests that "Judging from the numbers [of dropouts], schools are not for lower socio-economic groups or persons of color." Human capital must overtake education as a badge of class.
- Be continuing, open-ended, and demanding non-traditional models where every institution and business will participate.
- Break down the compartmentalizing of vocational and liberal education. All education must make sense of life and all education must be relevant to making a living.

I have emphasized organizational flexibility and a need for cultural and relational competence--welcoming difference to empower students (cp., Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell, 1999). Traditional organizational structures and processes hinder these possibilities while alternative schools are already engaging them.

One final point. It is critically important that principals be both freed up and prepared to lead their schools through these changes to enhance student achievement. Randall Lindsey,

From the Front Lines: Alternative Education as the Cutting Edge (cont'd)

a noted educational consultant, has evaluated tier II credential programs for principals, and recently expressed his concern that no program he has reviewed currently includes any coursework related to student achievement. Moreover, a recent National Public Radio story suggests that the widespread unwillingness of many to become principals is due to the stress they experience dealing with innumerable details any corporate executive would delegate. The conclusion was that no business would succeed with top executives operating the way most principals are constrained to function as educational leaders.

If alternative education focuses on educational issues that are spilling over to traditional settings, how can it better function as a laboratory for the larger educational enterprise and collaborate on ways to enhance our educational programs and the achievement of all students? To be effective and democratic, whether public or private, the future of American education may depend upon how meaningfully and collectively we address this question.

**Alternative education is defined to include Court and Community Schools, Special Education Programs, and Continuation Schools.*

About the Author:

Dr. Mayer currently serves as an administrator with the Los Angeles County Office of Education Juvenile Court and Community School (LACOE/JCCS) program. He has been with LACOE/JCCS for 20 years. Dr. Mayer also serves as an adjunct professor at the CSULA Charter School of Education where he teaches Social Issues in American Education. Dr. Mayer received his doctorate from the University of California at Los Angeles with a focus on organizational culture and educational leadership.

References

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: The New Press.

Drucker, P. (1989). *The new realities*. New York: Harper.

Fine, M. (1991). *Framing dropouts: Notes on the politics of an urban high school*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Freire, P. (1997). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 20th Anniversary Special Edition. New York: Continuum Publication Group.

Griffin, J. R. (1992). Prevalence of dyslexia. *Journal of Optometric Vision Development (23)*, 17-22.

Hamovitch, Bram (1996). Socialization without hope: An ideology of hope for at-risk students. *Teachers College Record (98)* 2, 296-306.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Helford, D. (2001, February 21). Kid's special needs raise pressure on L. A. schools. *Los Angeles Times*, pp. B1, B2.

Levin, H. M. (1988) *Accelerated schools for at-risk students*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Policy Research in Education.

McLaren, P. (1993). *Schooling as a ritual performance: Towards a political economy of educational symbols and gestures* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

McLaren, P. (1994). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. New York: Longmans.

Lindsey, R. B., Robins, K. N., and Terrell, R. D. (1999). *Cultural Proficiency: A manual for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Rye High School (2000). *The Rye High School alumni directory: Millennium edition, 1999-2000*. White Plains, NY: Harris Publishing company.

Tierney, W. G. (1993). The college experience of Native Americans: A critical analysis. In L. Weiss and M. Fine (Eds.). *Beyond the silenced voices: Class, race, and gender in United States schools* (pp. 309-323). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Tyack, D. (1974). *The one best system: The history of urban American education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Zinn, H. (1995). *A people's history of the United States: 1492—present*. Revised and updated ed. New York: Harper.

Zitner, A. (2001, February 19). Top educators reluctant to throw out SAT. *Los Angeles Times*, pp. B1, B4.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools
Alternative Education in a High Stakes Climate

Algebra and Anger

by Paul Myrvold

The first order of business in a classroom at a juvenile correctional facility is behavior modification. Without an orderly, safe, respectful environment no learning can take place. Student anger is never far away and can be summoned up by a thwarting of will or the touching of an invisible emotional button. Dealing with an angry boy while maintaining control of the rest of the class can be like crossing a tight rope in gusty winds—tricky and potentially dangerous, especially with young offenders who are often labelled assaultive. The consequences of failure can be dire. For the student, an incident could mean program failure that may ultimately lead to a life in prison. For the teacher and other students, physical harm is always a possibility.

The following narrative tells of one student and one teacher one time.

Bob (not his real name) is angry with me. It's eighth period math and I have become an obstacle by insisting he work on algebra instead of painting with the computer. He fancies himself an artist and would spend all his time on the computer or drawing with pen and paper. But he is a juvenile offender sentenced to rehabilitation at the Boys Ranch and he is mandated to follow his instructions or pay the penalty for refusal. The penalty could be an hour dock, which could take away from his O.T. (off-ranch time) or, if a conflict escalates, he could receive an I.R. (incident report) which might add days to his sentence.

After a warning, Bob knuckles under and with much huffing and puffing, and an attitude bordering on insubordination, he gets his book and folder and goes to work. But the seeds have been sown and his anger escalates during the period. He is factoring binomials, a fairly simple process, but when he brings his paper up for correction I see that he has gotten most of them wrong. When I try to point out his error, he becomes enraged and abusive. It is a simple mistake, really, an error that he could learn to correct in a few seconds, but the walls are up; he is beyond reach. I tell him to take his paper and put it in his folder and we'll work on it next time. Instead, he crumples it and throws it in the wastebasket.

His anger builds. He is a volatile kid. I know this and treat him with some caution, yet there are a dozen other boys watching and my control of the classroom depends on how I handle this volatile boy. If I let him get away with sarcastic putdowns and rudeness, if I fail to give him the dock that everyone knows he has coming, then my credibility, built up over many months, will be shot. Some will see racism and say I didn't dock him because he is white, others might see fear (Bob is a big boy, bigger than me). The last thing I can tolerate in a room full of boys, whose crimes run the gamut from assault to theft to drugs to rape, is any question as to who is in charge.

I dock Bob an hour for "failure to follow instructions." This gets his attention and

Algebra and Anger (cont'd)

with much grandstanding he fishes the paper out of the trash and smoothes it out and puts it away, assuming this will wipe out the dock. It doesn't. It is too late for an easy out.

As the boys line up for class change, I hear Bob muttering loud enough for me to hear, "Yeah, just keep on pushing me. Go on. Keep pushing. See what happens." The bell rings, giving us a breather, and the boys go out.

It's strange that this happened. I didn't expect it. Bob and I have generally had an excellent relationship. On his good days, he is a bright and personable guy, highly intelligent (but with huge gaps in his education—the case with most of the boys), with an appealing wit and sardonic sense of humor. He is a talented artist, even if his choice of subjects is decidedly adolescent—scantily clad, impossibly endowed females and iron muscled superheroes. He has been my student in computer class, welding and science and he has rarely been a problem. We got along. He showed me his portfolio and I recommended a book, *Drawing in the Marvel Style*.

Like most of the boys at the ranch, he doesn't like to be told what to do and is happiest if left to his own devices. But, of course, that is impossible. The ranch is about changing behavior. The code is rigid and fraught with penalties for those who fail to "get with the program." If they can play the game and follow the rules, they will get out and go on with their lives in a minimum amount of time. If not, then their stay can be very bumpy indeed. The idea is to give them the experience of walking a very straight and narrow path with consequences for straying, so when they are "on the outs," with all the freedom in the world to make choices for themselves, they will know what it is to choose the safety of life within the law.

After the class leaves, I call the school counselor and ask him to see the boy, calm him down, remind him of rules. I am to have him back for more math in another period and I want no repeat of the situation. He was already with the counselor when I call; his ninth period teacher sent him out immediately. The counselor calls me to his office and together we try to reason with Bob, explain the concerns. He sits there, a smoldering heap of resentment. His emotions control him. He has convinced himself he is the victim of an institutional power play. Seeing that nothing is being accomplished, I return to my classroom and wait for tenth period.

When Bob comes in he seems calm. He gets his book and folder after roll call and sits at the corner of my desk awaiting help. I explain the problems to him, analyzing the paper he had crumpled and thrown away, showing him where he got his positive and negative signs reversed. He sees his mistake instantly (as I knew he would) and sets about correcting his paper. He sits at my elbow the entire period with no rancor or anger and when the group lines up to return to the dorm, we seem to have come to terms.

Three weeks pass quickly in the math class and Bob is once again the interesting kid with the offbeat wit. He does his algebra every class day (the boys attend school for ten periods every other day) and never causes a problem.

On the final day before Christmas break, in the gloom of a winter dusk, the group lines up to move to the dorm. Bob is the last one to fall into line and I head toward my car. As I pass by I whisper, "Have a good Christmas."

"You, too," he whispers in reply.

Algebra and Anger (cont'd)

What happened to Bob I do not know. We rarely learn what becomes of our students after they leave the ranch. Sometimes we hear of students who do well, who go on to create a productive life. Sometimes we hear of new charges and a life behind bars or worse, death by accident or violence. My wish for Bob is that he learned to channel his anger and tap his talent. Maybe I helped.

I always picture him with his drawing tablet and pens.

About the Author:
Paul Myrvold taught for 13 years at Blue Ridge High School, the educational component of William F. James Boy's Ranch, Santa Clara County. He is currently the Technology Coordinator for the Alternative Schools Department of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Alternative Education in a High Stakes Climate

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right

by Dennis R. Parker

"Dear God,
I got left back. Thanks a lot.
— Raymond"
(Children's Letters to God, 1966)

Unlike any other profession, education rides an ideological pendulum with uncanny regularity. From bridge builders to pediatricians to automobile designers, better practices and products regularly replace old ones. Yet education policy-makers sometimes revert to the past for their future. They think nothing of re-adopting materials, practices or policies from the past and calling them "innovations." Indeed, it is now not unusual to find "new" books in classrooms that were originally used in the '70s, language policies for immigrant students that would make Henry Ford rejoice, a revival of norm-referenced tests and bell curves born of social Darwinism and eugenics from the turn of the century, not to mention a resurrection of retention as a cure for social promotion and other academic maladies.

It is not that we don't make research-based advances — most recently in the area of helping high-poverty schools become high-performing. It is just that our affinity for the occasional lapse backwards appears so alive and so well.

Enlightened retention policies can lead to working smarter, providing more powerful classroom instruction and better intervention measures, and disallowing failure as an option.

Oddly, between the mid-'80s and the mid-'90s, research appeared to all but put to rest retention as a viable alternative to underperformance. In 1993, the California Department of Education even provided a comprehensive research summary on the topic and offered alternatives with its publication, "Beyond Retention: A Study of Retention Rates, Practices, and Successful Alternatives in California." Notwithstanding, there is now a recent spate of legislation that has revived retention as a requirement for students not meeting standards.

Who is most likely to be retained? Students for whom schools are traditionally least successful: minorities, English Language Learners, students with special needs and students living in poverty. And the percentage of such students is steadily creeping up by an average of 1 percent to 3 percent per year.

Richard Rodriguez recently announced on The PBS News Hour that all ethnic groups in California now number less than 50 percent, including whites. That makes us like Hawaii, the nation's first majority-minority state. It also

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

means that traditional approaches to education will result in decreasing educational outcomes if we continue to conduct business as usual, making differences that do not make a difference.

In fact, "poor and minority students only fail because of the way we run schools now," observes Benjamin Bloom. Do the same things, get the same results. Do dramatically different things, get dramatically different results.

Whether you agree with this characterization or not, the task before us is to ensure that all students meet grade-level standards in preparation for a role in the Information Age, a much more cognitively-demanding role than baby boomers faced as students.

But how do we end social promotion, heed the negative research on retentions and still comply with new laws in ways that will pay off for students? There are answers to this question if we can learn from our mistakes. It means working smarter and more strategically, providing more powerful classroom instruction as well as better prevention and intervention measures, and implementing a more enlightened version of retention, should it come to that.

The case against social promotion

The hue and cry has gone up. End social promotion! From former President Clinton's last State of the Union address on down — through Legislatures, state education agencies and local administrations — the current consensus opposes passing kids on in payment for seat time and good behavior.

And it makes sense. We are trying to learn to live and work by a new performance-based ethic. We have state content standards, state tests and benchmarks, data-driven decision-making and rewards and sanctions for demonstrated performance. Delaine Eastin has challenged the bell curve, calling for 90 percent of the state's students to meet grade-level standards by 2006. Indeed, the High School Exit Exam will soon replace "mercy D's." Clearly, social promotion is inconsistent with this scene.

Besides, it just goes against the grain of our pragmatic, up-by-the-boot-straps culture where the Puritan work ethic still reigns and people still frown on getting something for nothing. How it has lasted this long is anyone's guess. In fact, the advent of standards-based education and the subsequent demise of social promotion might be just what the doctor ordered to support our elusive pursuit of equitable educational opportunities as well as outcomes.

At any rate, with the passage of AB 1626, AB 1639, SB 1370 and SB 1683, the Legislature intended to end social promotion for good, replacing it with a variety of measures including prevention, intervention and retention. To its credit, the Legislature also linked these measures with a renewed call for educators to spare nothing in the pursuit of every child's success: "With the development of rigorous academic standards in each discipline for each grade level, it is the expectation of the Legislature and the governor that all public school educators will do all that is necessary so that each pupil meets high academic standards" (AB 1626, Section 1, b).

The case against traditional retentions

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

Typical of western thought is the habit of generating either/or choices. The issue of social promotion or retention is a perfect example. Alfred Korzybski, in "Science and Sanity" (1933), pointed out that either/or options contribute to maladjustments or "unsanity" by making us blind to all the possibilities both outside as well as in between the two options. Although it appears "logical" to choose retention as the alternative to social promotion, perching ourselves on the horns of an either/or dilemma — where both horns have a history of doing damage — is no solution.

Unfortunately, as pressure for improved student performance has grown, the number of retentions and the number of laws calling for them has also grown. Although formal data are scarce, one report says, "Research suggests that retention is on the rise ... from 1980 to 1992 the national percentage of retained students increased from approximately 20 percent to nearly 32 percent" (Owings and Magliaro, 1998).

And this has occurred in the face of a sizeable literature on the negative effects of traditional retentions:

- Approximately 60 percent of students retained once drop out of school by grade 12.
- An average of 30 percent of students retained once drop out by grade nine.
- Students retained twice have a 90 percent chance of dropping out before graduating.

Although some studies show modest academic gains for students retained in kindergarten or grade one, the gains of retained students seem to wash out by grades two and three. In fact, the only major difference between students who were retained vs. like students who were socially promoted is the emotional stigma carried by the former for the rest of their lives (California Department of Education, 1998).

As one research summary put it, "Few practices in education have such overwhelming negative research findings arrayed against them" (ACSA, 1998).

Clearly, traditional, year-long retention is not the solution to problems of social promotion or educational inequity.

Although the admonition of the medical profession to "at least do no harm" could easily be applied here, maintaining the status quo of social promotion is also unacceptable.

An alternative: strategic schooling

As an antidote to traditional views of social promotion and retention, consider the following three constructs. They form the basis of what might be called "strategic schooling." They are drawn from the principles of Psycho-Cybernetics (M. Maltz, 1960) and the notion that the brain and other complex systems, like schools, are "goal-seeking devices." These systems can only function optimally when the following elements are in place and fully functional.

Targets

The first element is targets: both students and content. By law, there are three types of students to be targeted in any district retention policy: struggling, at risk of retention and retained. The implication is that there should be assessments and remedies in place to accelerate the learning

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

of each student — by name — in each group.

The content of the remedy should be related specifically to standards that a student has not yet mastered. Thus, it would make no sense — in a standards-based system — to retain a kid for a whole year in the traditional way unless the student had mastered none of the previous grade-level standards.

With regard to content targets, however, there is an elephant in the living room that few are talking about: there are almost twice as many standards as we have time for in K-12. Recently, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 22 years to teach all the standards that we are asking K-12 students to master (Marzano and Kendall, 1998). This means that districts, schools and educators must prioritize and select the minimum, yet most important, standards necessary to meet grade-level requirements.

Douglas Reeves of the Center for Performance Assessment (testdoctor.com), speaking recently in Northern California, suggested we choose approximately a dozen "power standards" per subject per grade level that are (a) enduring ideas; (b) related to tables, charts and graphs; and (c) involve writing.

However we do it, the sheer quantity of standards to be taught will have to be addressed in our retention policies.

Feedback

The second key element in "strategic schooling" is feedback. A system of daily, weekly and/or monthly assessments — used more frequently with the most struggling students — is crucial for acceleration. And the results need to be shared — not just among educators, but with the struggling students and their parents. There is just something about knowing what you are shooting at and how close you are coming to hitting it that generates motivation, ownership and investment of energy. Let students and parents in on the enterprise, and they will begin to pull their own weight.

Schools must develop an arsenal of organizational interventions to support their neediest students and their teachers. The goal is prevention as well as accelerated progress.

Unfortunately, a lack of alignment between standards and assessments used to make retention decisions should give anyone pause before making such an important decision.

Know-how

The third key element is know-how: both organizational and classroom. Classroom know-how would include the best — not just good — research-based strategies, activities and materials aligned with standards.

Because it is unrealistic for the teacher to be the only remedy, however, the school must also develop an arsenal of organizational interventions to support its neediest students and their teachers. This means students are provided more intensity, more time and more focus on

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

targeted content through programs during school, before and after school, during intercession, on Saturdays and in the summer. Fortunately, the new retention laws provide money for such interventions.

In addition, there need to be structured opportunities for on-target meetings with staff, students, parents and Student Study Teams. Teachers need the chance to meet regularly in grade-level or subject-area groups to discuss best practices, content and kids. And students need to be referred for health and social services when necessary to remove obstacles impeding their learning.

The goals of these classroom and organizational features are prevention — where possible and as soon as possible — as well as acceleration, i.e., two to three year's progress in a year. Fortunately, both are possible for virtually every child if the three elements of strategic schooling outlined above are in place.

The degree to which any of these elements — targets, feedback and know-how — remain undeveloped or dysfunctional is the degree to which the system will continue to fail some students and teachers. What grade would you give your school in each of these three areas? What needs to be tackled right now that will accelerate learning in your most struggling students? In what ways can you work smarter ... spending calories and dollars where they are needed most?

Fortunately, most districts are making good faith efforts to develop and implement more powerful and enlightened promotion and retention policies. Elk Grove Unified School District, for example, last year developed a list of fewer than 10 standards per subject area per grade level in Language Arts and Math that elementary students had to master in order to be promoted. The district's assessment and record-keeping systems make it possible to target both students and standards-based content for maximum effect.

Similarly, Ontario-Montclair has set up an exemplary system. Although 12,000 students were identified as at risk of retention last year, only 210 were retained. Of 53 eighth-graders retained in June, 42 were promoted after successfully completing summer school.

And although 327 of their 13,000 students were retained this year, Billie Holt of Fullerton Elementary School District is confident that retentions will decrease as their new early-identification and intervention measures become fully operational.

Implications and practical considerations

The following considerations are designed to work within the law but to mitigate the negative effects of traditional, year-long retentions:

1. Treat the curriculum as a continuous progress ladder of standards with a minimum number of rungs to be climbed each year. Students not meeting promotion standards only focus on missed rungs and do not return to re-climb last year's entire ladder again.

2. Consider social and emotional — not just academic — aspects of a promotion or retention decision. Is it wise to retain an older sibling who will then be in the same grade as a younger one? Should we promote one twin and hold the other one back? What effect will retention have on a student's connection to school

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

and his/her peer group? Are parents for or against the decision and why?

3. Make all retention decisions on a case-by-case basis. By law, teachers may overturn a retention decision by the school if it not in the best interest of the student.

4. Focus interventions on only those high-priority skills and concepts required for promotion and move on just as soon as data indicate they have been learned.

5. To mitigate the negative effects of retention, place retained elementary students in combination or ungraded classes with promoted classmates so that they can keep up with the next grade while making up last year's standards. Then, promote them — without changing classrooms — at any point in the year they have met requirements for promotion.

6. In secondary schools, allow more mixed-grade classes across the curriculum.

7. If they are working substantially in their home languages, hold English Language Learners to the same standards — taught and assessed principally through their home languages — and timeline as English speakers.

8. If they are working substantially in English, hold ELL's to the same standards as English speakers, but not to the same timeline. For example, ELL students working in English might not be considered for retention until they have:

- achieved a specified level of English language proficiency within a specified period of time (e.g., high intermediate fluency or fluent within three to five years); or
- attended school in the U.S. for a specified period of time (e.g., five to seven years); or
- both.

Postscript

Today's emphasis on pupil promotion and retention can result in abuse or enlightenment. We can increase the pressure on struggling students and their parents in ways that smack of blaming the victim. And we can reduce instruction to a sterile, test-prep, skills-based approach for students most in need of help. Such an approach would not only take the joy out of teaching and learning, but also preempt opportunities to apply skills and concepts in ways that would help students own them forever.

But new promotion and retention policies can also lead to redoubled efforts to work smarter, more strategically, more personally and in greater collaboration with colleagues, students and parents to prevent any child from failing. This will require doing whatever it takes and disallowing failure as an option!

There is a Zen saying: "Knowledge is learning something every day. Wisdom is letting go of something every day." Educators cannot continue to do more on top of more. We must find ways to spend our energies and resources more effectively and strategically on targets, feedback and know-how.

The good news is there is more evidence than ever that Benjamin Bloom was right — that poverty and minority status only seem like causes of failure because of the way we do business today. With studies such as Doug Reeves' (2000) on schools with 90 percent minority enrollments, 90 percent poverty and 90 percent meeting standards, we have a fighting chance of

Social promotion or retention? Two wrongs still don't make a right (cont'd)

reaching every child.

Why not use retention policies to remake our schools? Indeed, an enlightened policy could leverage an entire district, ensuring an optimal, standards-based educational experience in every subject, in every grade level, for every child ... and that would definitely not be business as usual!

References

ACSA. (1998). *Research in Grade: Research and Practice*. Information for School Leaders, Educational Research Service.

California Department of Education. (November 1998). *Pupil Promotion and Retention Information Packet*. Sacramento, CA.

Children's Letters to God. (1966) Compiled by E. Marshall & S. Hample. Simon & Shuster, NY.

Marzano, R.J. and Kendall, J.S. (1998). *Awash in a Sea of Standards*. Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc.

Owings, W.A. and Magliaro, S. (September 1998). "Grade Retention: A History of Failure." *Educational Leadership*. ASCD: Alexandria, VA.

Reeves, Doug. (2000). *Accountability in Action, 2000*, Chapter 19. Center for Performance Assessment. Denver, CO.

About the Author:

Dennis R. Parker is a former administrator with the California Department of Education in charge of Pupil Promotion and Retention. He is now on the faculty of the School Management Program at UCLA. He provides professional development in best practices and coaches low-performing elementary and secondary schools throughout the state. He can be reached at dennisrparkerca@prodigy.net.

Permission was granted to reprint this article from *Leadership*, Vol. 30, No. 4, March/April 2001.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Effective Teaching

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student

by Janice Bussey

> *I have noticed an improvement in the students' intuitive thinking. Learning happens at many different levels. In one activity, some students may be grasping probabilities, while others are understanding adding fractions or converting decimals to percents for the first time. This is particularly valuable in our flexible alternative setting where we can adjust our pace or have students repeat certain sections.*
>
> *-Janet Johnson, Teacher at one. Achievement Community School, Stockton, Ca.*

When alternative high schools are trying to provide for the mathematical needs of their students, there are numerous challenges. Many students enter alternative programs with very low math skills. They have been unsuccessful in the mathematics program of their home school and have traditionally been turned off to math. There is also a wide range of math ability levels that often must be addressed in one self-contained classroom. As a solution, teachers typically focus on basic skills, hoping to at least get students to pass a basic proficiency level in arithmetic. At times, brighter students might work independently in packets or in an algebra text. But one would seldom see excitement or enthusiastic engagement in this type of a math program. Teachers do not have to settle for this approach.

The Interactive Mathematics Program (IMP) offers another option and a glimmer of hope for teaching mathematics to alternative high school students. Alternative high schools in the Middle College High School Consortium have been using IMP for the past four years. Two years ago, alternative schools in San Joaquin County started using IMP and the county now has ten of its schools implementing the program.

IMP is an integrated four-year core mathematics program intended as an alternative to the traditional Algebra I-Geometry-Advanced Algebra-Pre-Calculus course sequence. It was developed in 1989 by two mathematics professors from San Francisco State University and two math teachers and professional developers at the University of California's Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley (Introduction and Implementation Strategies for the Interactive Mathematics Program, 1998). After extensive piloting and field-testing, with feedback provided from both students and teachers, IMP was published in 1997 by Key Curriculum Press.

Teachers using IMP have found that a greater number of learners, including those with diverse learning needs, are achieving success with high-level mathematics. They have been able to get their students well beyond arithmetic in a way that the students can understand and enjoy.

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student (cont'd)

Why is IMP able to accommodate the needs of students who have been previously unsuccessful in mathematics? Here are five major reasons:

IMP recognizes diverse learning styles

Oftentimes in a traditional math classroom, the teacher relies on lecture to explain a concept or demonstrate a procedure. The students watch and then practice with guidance from the teacher. IMP brings in other learning modalities. Many visual models are used. Hands-on manipulatives are employed to teach integers, angle relationships, probability concepts, and the Pythagorean Theorem. Students move about to role-play, give presentations or reenact the multiplying of matrices or the transformation of linear equations. Pupils are continually asked to justify their thinking either through an oral presentation or with a written explanation. They are encouraged to use drawings, diagrams, or pictures. With all of this variety, those who do not have strength in logical/ mathematical intelligence can still learn since much of the curriculum draws on other intelligences (Armstrong, 1994). One community school student, while learning positive and negative integers through an experiment with hot and cold cubes, admitted, "I never thought about it that way; now it makes sense."

IMP uses open-ended problems and investigations that provide multiple entry points for students

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this concept is with a problem from the IMP curriculum. Figure 1, on the following page, shows a problem from *The Overland Trail*, a unit from the first year of IMP focusing on the foundations of algebra and linear relationships (Fendel et al., 1997). Students are asked to address several different scenarios concerning a brother and a sister who save their money to buy a calculator. They are encouraged to use equations and graphs, but it is not spelled out exactly how to use those tools to answer the questions. Most students initially approach this problem with an organized table showing how much money Seve and Jillian will make after working a certain amount of hours. Students are then able to attack the problem, analyze the situation, and answer the questions with any of the tools they feel most comfortable with . . . or even a combination of those tools. Some feel more comfortable with the numbers in their tables. Many are visual and gravitate towards the graphs. There are even a few who end up writing an equation to solve. The beauty in this lesson culminates when all of the learners come together and share their work. The teacher orchestrates the presentations and discussion so that the entire class experiences the multiple approaches. More importantly, she helps the students to understand the connections between the tables, graphs, and equations, and how they relate and address the story problem, an essential curricular component in mathematics and algebra (Cawelti, 1995).

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student (cont'd)

Figure 1

The Overland Trail *Homework*

Homework 25 The Big Buy

Seve and Jillian Vicaro want to make some money over the spring break from school. They ask their parents to let them work around the house to earn the money. Their parents agree, since Jillian and Seve are saving to buy graphing calculators. Dad tells Jillian that he will give her a starting bonus of $10, and then pay her $5 an hour for the work she does around the house. Mom offers Seve a slightly different deal. She will give him $40 to start but only $3 an hour.

1. Write two separate equations, one for Jillian and one for Seve, expressing how much money each has earned (including their starting money) in terms of time worked. (Use x for the number of hours worked and y for the amount earned.)

2. Graph both equations on the same set of axes. (Be sure you know which graph is for which person.)

3. If the graphing calculator costs $72, who will be able to buy one with the least work time? Explain your answer.

4. If the graphing calculator costs $100, who will be able to buy one with the least work time? Explain your answer.

5. For what price must the calculator sell in order for Jillian and Seve to earn that amount with the same number of hours of work? Explain your answer.

IMP increases student motivation by employing real-world contexts, humor, and emotion

Students need to see meaning and relevance in what they are learning (Jensen, 1998). Alternative high school students especially demand a rationale for what they are learning and how they are spending their time. The mathematics in IMP is presented in a wide variety of real-world contexts. In addition, the latest brain research supports that students learn more and retain information better if it is presented with humor and situations that evoke emotion (Sprenger, 1999). Many of the IMP problems might seem silly, but their fanciful nature makes the students laugh. They might make fun of Alice, who grows when she eats an ounce of cake and shrinks when she drinks an ounce of beverage (Fendel et al., 1998), but the story helps them to remember the laws for exponents.

IMP presents mathematical ideas that can be useful to the average adult, not just for the college-bound

In addition to meeting college entrance requirements, the program contains a large number of mathematical concepts that will promote informed consumerism, problem solving, and logical reasoning. These are just a few examples of the exciting contexts embedded in the curriculum:

- Sorting out important information, formulating sound arguments, providing counter examples, and recognizing faulty reasoning
- Learning to make decisions about what is fair and not fair
- Extending and generalizing mathematical patterns to determine what to do next
- Employing curve fitting to

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student (cont'd)

make predictions in a multitude of settings
- Learning about normal distribution and standard deviation so that students can understand statistics and sort through what is relevant and what is not (Introduction and Implementation Strategies for the Interactive Mathematics Program, 1998)

IMP uses a variety of assessment tools

Students are not always adept at demonstrating their learning with traditional paper-and-pencil tests (Frazier & Sickles, 1993). Although the latter do exist in IMP, the program allows students other ways to show what they have learned throughout a unit. There is both individual and group work. Students present their findings with oral presentations, written reports, active demonstrations, or with a finished product or personal portfolio at the end of each unit. Some of the written assessments are done in class, some at home, and many include reflective pieces where the student has to summarize what he/she has learned.

These five points can be illustrated further with a brief walk through one of the IMP 1 units, *The Game of Pig* (Fendel et al., 1997). The unit starts with a description of the dice game Pig. The game involves rolling a die and adding up points. The player rolls until deciding to stop or until a "1" is rolled. If a "1" is rolled, all of the points for that turn are wiped out. If the decision is made to stop rolling before a "1" comes up, the player gets to keep those points. The unit problem asks the class: What is the best strategy for playing Pig? In other words, how should you play in order to end up with the most points over the long run? The nature of the Game of Pig and the fact that students get to play with dice provide instant interest and motivation. The analysis of the game involves probability; thus the unit begins with an introduction to probability by presenting a variety of scenarios where different principles and probability tools are developed. This is a perfect time for the classroom teacher to review fractions, decimals, and percents, since they are necessary for dealing with probability. Alternative high school students need this review and these skills show up on many standardized tests. While the students have certainly seen this content before, the Game of Pig provides students with a new impetus. They now have a reason to learn how to manage fractions, decimals, and percents. They can see where they are used and they realize that they will never be able to analyze the Game of Pig without them.

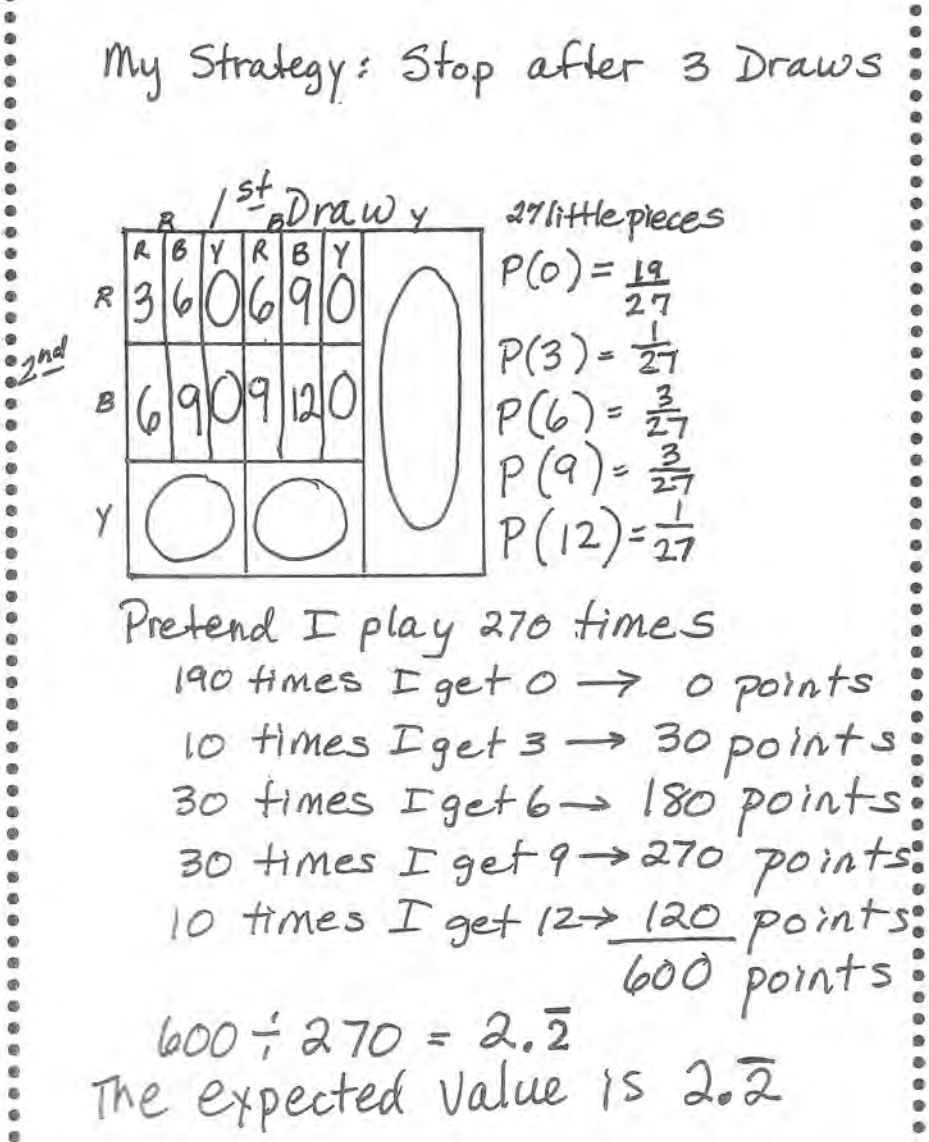
Still, finding the winning strategy for the Game of Pig is a *big* problem. So, like in many other IMP units, the students take a look at a smaller problem: Little Pig. This game involves a bag containing three cubes--one red, one blue, and one yellow. In each turn, the player draws a cube as many times as he wants (replacing the cube after each draw) until he either decides to stop or he draws a yellow cube. Each time he draws a red cube, he gets one point. Each time he draws a blue cube, he gets four points, but drawing the yellow cube wipes out his points. Once again, the students have to find a strategy for Little Pig that will give the highest possible score in the long run.

Groups start out playing Little Pig, developing strategies, testing them, and getting a sense of which strategies give them the most points. This activity is tactile and emotional. Students enjoy playing the game. Motivation and interest is increased. Over the next few days, students test other groups' strategies

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student (cont'd)

and eventually analyze the strategies using an area model and the principle of expected value. Figure 2 below shows one student's work for analyzing the strategy of stopping after three draws. By studying the expected values, students can find the best strategy for playing Little Pig. They extend these principles to the big Game of Pig and solve the unit problem.

Figure 2



Reviewing fractions, decimals, and percents, learning about probability, and handling a sophisticated concept like expected value has a lot of mathematical merit. Teachers are pleasantly surprised that their students can accomplish much more than expected. Still, students need to see where these concepts and skills are useful outside of schools. Figure 3, on the following page, shows an assignment from *The Game of Pig*, which applies the students' new knowledge of probability and expected value to the lottery and to the notion of buying insurance. Students enjoy discussing the realities of these issues because they come up in their day-to-day lives.

Teachers using IMP with alternative high school students have found that their students can actually do some very high-level mathematics and be successful. But implementing such a program is not without its challenges. Teachers in these settings have not been able to progress through the units as rapidly as the course was intended. With a population that is struggling academically, these instructors have frequently found that they have to pause and review basic skills. Many schools still

struggle with the nature of homework, while some have a culture where homework is expected. The IMP curriculum was written with daily homework assignments. Often, the teachers have had to use some of those critical homework assignments as class work, and that means it takes even longer to get through a unit.

On the bright side, it *is* possible to pick and chose IMP units so that the most important concepts are covered in the first year. It is reasonable to get through three units a year even with the stated challenges. Teachers like to use the first IMP unit, *Patterns in Mathematics*, to introduce students to the nature of this math program and to orient them to some of the basic tools of mathematics: problem solving, in/out tables, patterning, graphing calculators, and integers. In this unit, students are also introduced to the idea of justifying one's thinking through written expression and oral presentation. There are also group-building skills that are taught and developed in this first unit (Fendel et al., 1997). *The Game of Pig* follows *Patterns in Mathematics*. It presents an environment to

Figure 3

The Game of Pig — *Homework*

Homework 18 — The Lottery and Insurance -- Why Play

This assignment looks at two real-life situations that involve probabilities to see if expected value tells the whole story.

1. The Lottery

Many states raise funds through various lottery games. (If your state has one, you may want to learn more about how it works and what happens to the proceeds.)

Assume that each lottery ticket costs $1. The number of tickets sold and the value of a winning ticket often vary from week to week. Suppose that, for a certain week, about 14 million tickets were sold and that the winning ticket is worth $6 million.

a. Calculate the approximate expected value of a lottery ticket that week.
b. Do you think buying a lottery ticket is a wise investment? Explain your answer.

1. Insurance

Buying insurance can be thought of as similar to playing a lottery game. You pay a certain amount, called the *premium*, every month to the insurance company. Most of the time, the insurance company just gets to keep your money, and they pay you nothing.

Sometimes, however, you have a claim that is covered by insurance. When that happens, the insurance company has to pay your expenses (for a car crash, illness, fire, or whatever that incident is), and they generally have to pay you much more in that month than you paid as a premium. So, in a sense, you "win" whenever you collect on your insurance. This means that the "insurance game" is a game that you don't really want to win.

In the long run, insurance companies take in more money in premiums than they pay out in claims, or they wouldn't be in business. In other words, their expected value in the insurance "game" is positive, and yours is negative.

So why do people play?

Mathematics for the Alternative High School Student (cont'd)

review basic arithmetic skills while developing higher level skills in critical thinking, probability, and expected value. Finally, in that first year, it's important to get to *The Overland Trail* for the opportunity to lay the foundation for algebra (Fendel et al., 1997).

Professional development is critical when introducing the Interactive Mathematics Program in alternative high schools. Many teachers in alternative high schools are generalists. They teach multiple subjects to all students and math is not always their strength. With IMP, they are teaching mathematical concepts that might be new to them as learners. One community school teacher, Deb Nickols, stated, "I often think I get more excited than my students because I am now beginning to understand the old rules I memorized long ago. IMP does make teaching (and learning) math fun. It makes math make sense!"

Training should be combined with pedagogy and the modeling of exemplary instructional strategies. Professional development and additional training should continue throughout the school year and should include in-classroom coaching and support. With such time, energy, and resources, the students will end up being the beneficiaries with increased knowledge in mathematics and increased options about what they are able to do after high school.

About the Author:
Janice Bussey is a Math Specialist for the Tracy Unified School District. Additionally, she has provided professional development to math teachers in alternative high schools.

. . . . . .

References

Armstrong, T. (1994). Multiple intelligences in the classroom. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Cawelti, G. (1995). Handbook of research on improving student achievement. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

Fendel, D., Resek, D., Alper, L., & Fraser, S. (1997). Interactive mathematics program: Year 1. Berkeley, CA: Key Curriculum Press.

Fendel, D., Resek, D., Alper, L., & Fraser, S. (1998). Interactive mathematics program: Year 2. Berkeley, CA: Key Curriculum Press.

Frazier, G. G., & Sickles, R. N. (1993). The directory of innovations in high schools. Princeton Junction, NJ: Eye On Education, Inc.

Introduction and implementation strategies for the interactive mathematics program: A guide for teacher-leaders and administrators. Emeryville, CA: Key Curriculum Press.

Jensen, E. (1998). Teaching with the brain in mind. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Sprenger, M. (1999). Learning & memory: The brain in action. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Effective Teaching

Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts

By Arline Monks

"I don't do school" is the message -- spoken and unspoken -- from the majority of students entering T. E. Mathews Community School in Yuba County, California.

How that message changes -- sometimes in a matter of only weeks -- came into focus in a year-long study of the project to adapt Waldorf educational methods to the special needs of high-risk delinquent youth attending the Yuba County Court and Community Schools.

The partnership project between Rudolf Steiner College and the two Yuba County schools for juvenile offenders aims at developing a nationally-replicable, Waldorf-based model program. It has been aided in the last few years by grants from the Kellogg Foundation and The California Endowment.

In the study completed last year and funded by The California Endowment, Stanford University researcher Ryan Babineaux points to the nurturing atmosphere of the school and the efforts of its dedicated staff as all-important change agents leading to students' improved attitudes toward learning, better social interaction and "excellent" academic progress (Babineaux, 2000).

The students in question are a challenging group. Between the ages of 11 and 18, most have been expelled or suspended from regular public schools because of violent behavior and criminal activity. Many have learning disabilities and minimal reading and math skills. Getting them to care about school is a major hurdle.

But it is the arts, Babineaux reports, not as a "stand alone exercise (music class or art class)" but integrated Waldorf-style "into every curriculum unit and almost every classroom activity" (p.13) that most powerfully breaks down barriers to learning formed by years of school failure.

"A number of students have said to me 'I can't do math,' yet I have never heard a student say 'I can't do music,'" the researcher writes. "Getting music, as it is presented at T. E. Mathews, isn't about being smart or talented enough, it is simply about being willing to keep trying. . . " (p. 12). And after a few months, many students move from a "get it done" to a "get it right" attitude.

"Shane, for example, is a 17 year old who previously told me, 'I don't do school.' When he first arrived, he refused to write even a single sentence. Yet five weeks later, I was pleased to see him taking charge in his music class."

> Shane is in the main lesson room with three other male students; there is no

Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts (cont'd)

teacher present. He is standing directly in front of the music podium as if he is leading the group. The students keep trying to make it through a difficult part of the music, but are not quite getting it right. One of the students says that he wants to move on to the next page of music. Shane shakes his head and says, "Before I change the page, we have to play it perfectly." The students practice the piece a few more times, and although it sounds better, they still don't have it quite right. "That sounded awful," Shane tells the others. "We have to perfect it or I won't even play it. There is no point playing if it's not perfect." (p. 14)

According to the study, learning through the arts also has other pluses for T. E. Mathews students: increasing focus and weaving social connections between kids who might be warring with each other on the street. "I have noticed that students who feel they have become skilled at some aspect of any art project will share their accomplishments with other students. . . . Signs of positive peer pressure are also evident in the way they will encourage each other during music classes and performances" (p. 12).

It is Friday afternoon in the midst of the Flute Festival. Paul, an eighteen-year-old student who has only been at the school for a few weeks, is being encouraged to play. He only knows a few notes and is obviously quite distressed over the thought of playing in front of the other students. The principal, Ruth Mikkelsen, has walked over to Paul's desk and is pointing to the music stand at the front of the room. Paul tries to talk his way out of playing, but Ruth won't let him off that easily. Sensing that he can't get out of it, Paul walks warily to the front of the room and stands at the podium with Tana, a teacher's assistant, and plays a simple song, stumbling over a few of the notes. After the song is over, he quickly walks back towards his desk, his face pale and sweat running down his forehead. Students clap loudly, and Jason, a student who is often very vocal in his dislike of school, begins to shout, "You've come a long way Paul. Let's hear it for Paul. Way to go Paul." (p. 12)

The Stanford study evaluated students' emotional, social and academic growth. Researcher Babineaux visited T. E. Mathews twenty times during the year, observing classes, interviewing staff and students and attending staff meetings. He also utilized standardized test scores, written student work and attendance records.

The initial portion of his report deals with getting the students involved in school. "It is almost as if they arrive at school with a long checklist of reasons why they will feel justified in tuning out of class or deliberately failing," he wrote. "As the math teacher Craig put it, 'If these kids are given a clear opportunity to fail they will gladly take it. 'Recognizing this, the teachers understand that a large part of the battle is in finding ways to get them involved. One way they do this is by continually focusing on students' accomplishments and refusing to legitimize their negative views of themselves. (p. 16)" For the teachers, it is a great challenge to maintain high expectations knowing that giving students even the slightest

Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts (cont'd)

Principal Ruth Mikkelsen and student DeAngelo Downing play a recorder duet from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*

indication that they are not doing well is enough to make them quit trying.

In assessing the academic impact of the program, Babineaux reports that it is helping students with poor reading and math skills to make excellent academic progress. "Although a full statistical analysis was not performed because of shortcomings in the data, available figures suggest that the longer the student is enrolled at T. E. Mathews the greater the academic development: 62% of the students attending Mathews for at least 3/4 of the year advanced two or more grade levels in both math and reading, while only 18% of the students enrolled for 1/4 to 1/2 of the year showed the same improvement" (p. 33).

According to the study, a great impediment to the success of the program at every level is the high student turnover. Although a few students have attended for several years, and others for a year, many are enrolled for just a few months before they return to regular schools. Just when the students are making real progress, they leave. And at the same time, the school is continuously inundated with new students who bring negative attitudes and disruptive behavior.

Despite this major obstacle, Babineaux concludes that in addition to academic progress, there are substantial and important accomplishments, including: increased student participation in class activities, more time spent on task, greater focus on quality of work, increased willingness to try new things, and increased enthusiasm for engaging in original work.

Although many students are hostile, emotionally volatile and uncommunicative when they arrive, "there are also significant improvements in the way they relate to teachers and classmates, as well as how they respond to challenging or emotionally upsetting circumstances" (p.35). The researcher points to: more polite and considerate behavior, increased engagement in sports, games and conversation with other students, a greater ability to calm down and return to work after an upset, and an increased willingness to keep working under challenging conditions.

In addition to integration of the arts, the Yuba County experiment -- which also involves the

Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts (cont'd)

program at Carden Court School in Juvenile Hall -- utilizes other Waldorf approaches to augment and enliven state-mandated curricula. These include a one and a half hour integrated, thematic "main lesson" in which academic subjects are presented; multi-sensory teaching that addresses the full range of "intelligences" and learning styles; the extensive use of hands-on experiential learning; a focus on creating nurturing, caring classrooms that build resiliency in students; and a strong emphasis on oral language development with the presentation of many lessons -- including history and literature -- through storytelling, thus engaging students with minimal reading skills and opening doors to enhanced literacy.

When she first encountered Waldorf education at a Crocker Art Museum seminar, entitled Transforming Education through the Arts, principal Mikkelsen was impressed with how many of the Waldorf methods and child development principles that support them were now being confirmed by brain research into how children learn.

With nearly 700 independent schools world-wide -- in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and 150 in the U.S, as well as in settings as diverse as New York's upper-east-side and the slums of Brazil -- Waldorf is being adapted to many different student populations. It is now also being translated for the public sector in America. There are two magnet schools, in Milwaukee and Sacramento, both serving urban populations, and a growing number of charters, especially in California. These Waldorf-methods public schools boast waiting lists, enthusiastic parents seeking an education that speaks to the whole child, increasingly

T. E. Mathews students perform songs for parents and guests at their end-of-year graduation and music festival

impressive test scores, and classrooms that resound with the joy of learning.

Teachers at the Yuba County Court and Community Schools are bringing innovative Waldorf practices to yet another student population: high-risk juvenile offenders who stand on the brink of a lifetime of crime, incarceration and hopelessness. These teachers first learned their Waldorf strategies at summer institutes for public school teachers given by Rudolf Steiner College, a partner in the experiment, located near Sacramento. Then specialized classes and on-site mentoring were made possible by grants from the Kellogg Foundation and The California Endowment.

It is clear that the program is gaining attention. It was featured in the September 1999 Atlantic Monthly article by Todd Oppenheimer entitled "Schooling the Imagination." Visitors to T. E. Mathews from other court and community

Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts (cont'd)

schools find it hard to believe that these students who seem so actively engaged in the arts and learning are the same kind of problem kids they have in their own schools. Now, the Bay Area-based Walter S. Johnson Foundation is providing a planning grant for dissemination and replication.

And how do some of the T. E. Mathews students view a program that, eschewing the all-too-familiar work sheets, plunges them into the unknowns of painting, drawing, woodwork, music, drama, poetry and movement? "Three students told me it was the best school they ever attended," Ryan Babineaux reports. "Paul told me he liked T. E. Mathews because it was the first school he had attended where teachers had such high standards. 'They won't let you get away with anything.' And Kimberly, a 17 year old who has been in and out of schools for most of her life, put it this way: 'This is a pretty good school. It's the only one I'm willing to go to. In fact, it's the only one I've ever been willing to go to' " (p. 15).

References

Babineaux, R. (1999). Evaluation report: Thomas E. Mathews Community School. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, School of Education.

Oppenheimer, T. (1999, September). Schooling the Imagination. The Atlantic Monthly, 71-83.

About the Author:

Arline Monks coordinates Waldorf programs for public school teachers at Rudolf Steiner College, including an annual two-week summer institute, and a project to create a nationally-replicable model program for juvenile offenders at two Northern California schools. She has a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Michigan, was a reporter for the Los Angeles Times for several years, trained as a Waldorf teacher, and has written articles for educational journals.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Book Review

Excerpted Thoughts from *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*

Author: Thomas L. Friedman

The Lexus and the Olive Tree explores various aspects of economic globalization in our cyberspace world. It is a wellspring of common sense, astute analysis, and compelling analogies that clear away the clouds that often obscure this topic.

The Lexus and the olive tree function as symbols of the post-Cold War era. Half the world seems to be emerging from the Cold War intent on building a better Lexus, dedicated to modernizing, streamlining, and privatizing their economies in order to thrive in the system of globalization. The other half of the world (or half of the same country, or even the same person) is still caught up in the fight over who owns which olive tree. The Lexus represents the age-old drive for sustenance, improvement, prosperity, and modernization through global markets, financial institutions, and computer technologies. The olive tree is important because it represents that which roots, identifies, and locates us in the family, community, nation, or world.

Communism and socialism have failed; there is only capitalism. We have no choice but to make it work to improve our lives. Countries must either adopt or be seen as moving toward making the private sector the primary engine of its economic growth; maintaining low inflation rates and price stability; shrinking the size of state bureaucracy; maintaining a balanced budget; eliminating or lowering tariffs, foreign investment restrictions, quotas, and corruption; privatizing state-owned industries and utilities, and increasing exports. Countries that succeed in the new world economy will also need to deregulate their currencies and make them convertible, and open their banking, stock and bond markets to foreign investment, private ownership, and competition. This whole process is referred to as the "Golden Straitjacket" – the binding changes that must be made to reap the rewards.

The "Electronic Herd" is made up of the faceless stock, bond, and currency traders sitting behind computers all over the world and big multinational corporations who spread their factories around the world to find the most efficient, low-cost producers. This "herd" has grown exponentially because of the democratization of finance, technology, and information. To thrive in today's globalization system, a country not only has to put on the Golden Straitjacket, it has to join the Electronic Herd. The EH loves the GS because it embodies all the liberal, free-market rules the herd wants to see in a country.

Historically, governments doled out the "goodies" to the people. Now, governments compete to see who can make themselves the most stable, inviting, and attractive to the

The Lexus and the Olive Tree (cont'd)

EH, because it is the EH that increasingly passes out those goodies. Because of globalization and increasing openness of borders, **the quality of your state** (which refers to the ability of an economy to withstand inevitable ups and downs, the legal and financial systems, and economic management) **matters more, not less.** The more democratic, accountable, and open your governance, the less likely that your financial system will be exposed to surprises. When it is exposed to shocks and surprises, it can more quickly adjust to changing circumstances and demands.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

Globalization will also affect the world of education. A review of the implications in this book poses such questions as, "What should we do?" "What do we hold on to?" "What should we give up?" "What new ideas/methods/strategies should we adopt?" Because technology will play a greater and more meaningful role in students' learning, the large centralized school, requiring year-round expensive maintenance and housing thousands of pupils, may no longer be necessary. A "master" teacher may be linked electronically to dozens or hundreds of computerized satellite labs where students learn on computers, supervised by teacher aides who answer individual questions and maintain order. It doesn't make sense that in a world where the amount of information is doubling every 5 years, we will be able to support student learning that occurs primarily as it did 150 years ago. The age of the teacher at the front of the room, dispensing the same information to all children in rows of seats, is over. It's just too "slow" a process. Look at how the new world is run – it demands efficiency and effectiveness, or you will "die," or at best, get left behind.

SUMMARY

A politics of sustainable globalization needs the right *balance* of policies, demanding a new social bargain between workers, financiers, and governments. A pure market vision alone is too brutal and politically unsustainable, and the pure paternalism of the welfare state isn't economically feasible. What is needed is a new social compact that both embraces free markets but also ensures that they benefit and are tolerable for as many people as possible.

Reviewer's Name: Dr. Ted Price
Position: Assistant Superintendent

- and -

Reviewer's Name: Lynne Robertson
Position: Sr. Department Secretary

Address: Orange County Department of Education, Division of Alternative Education
200 Kalmus Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92628-9050

Phone: (714) 966-4485

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Student Success Story

ACCESS

Alternative, Charter, and Correctional Education Schools and Services, Orange County Department of Education

The following success stories exemplify what ACCESS is all about. We connect students with their own talents, develop their skills to be able to give to their community, and develop connections with community agencies to mentor our students. It is truly a circle of life.

Alberto G. enrolled at Santiago Creek School 3/30/99. Alberto could barely read and write in English. He was placed at our school after being involved in a violent fight that almost cost him his life. He was hospitalized for several months and psychologically was damaged from the violent attack. Anaheim Union School District recommended Alberto be placed at Santiago Creek School because it was a safe place for him to be. Anaheim School District bussed him each day to the school. Alberto had experienced many school failures prior to coming to Santiago Creek.

Alberto was placed in Cathy Ferraro's reading lab and stayed in the protected environment of her class during the day. It was very important for Alberto to feel safe at school after surviving the violent attack. The first few months his progress was slow. He participated in the reading lab, but was slow in completing his other assignments. Gradually, after his reading level increased, Alberto's participation in school increased as well.

In December of 1999, our school received a grant to fund art classes from a local art therapist who works with connecting students to art using mixed media. Alberto's first project was a clay mask. The teacher told Alberto his mask looked like masks done by the ancient Incans. Alberto's face lit up! He said his ancestors were Incan and that was part of his culture. Alberto was very proud of this project and signed up for the remaining art classes. We discovered Alberto was a very talented artist. Later in the year another artist, Joni Herman, learned of the art program at Santiago Creek, and volunteered to come weekly to mentor students. She taught Alberto the techniques she learned in Italy to create wall murals by texturing and using paints to create mood and feeling. Alberto eventually became an apprentice to Joni, assisting her on special projects.

The amazing gift art became for Alberto was that he learned he could express himself artistically to cope with his violent past. Art became a therapeutic process where he learned to share his feelings and emotions through appropriate channels without hurting anyone. Alberto discovered that art was a way he could release stress and bottled up feelings. He also received much attention from others because he was so talented. Alberto was never completely satisfied with his art work but he learned from his art teachers that many artists are never happy with their own work because of their quest for perfection.

Alberto was very withdrawn at school and kept to himself. Orange County Human Relations sponsored an overnight retreat in Big Bear on tolerance and peer relationships. The staff encourage Alberto to go on this trip so he would learn how to relate better with others. Alberto agreed to go and had a fabulous time. He loved the outdoor experience, he participated in all the activities and got along well with all the other students. One picture from the trip told it all; he was beaming from ear to ear! When

Student Success Story

Alberto returned from this trip he became even more connected to our school and the other students.

After two years at Santiago Creek School Alberto not only is a talented artist, but he was more self confident. Not only did he experience success in art but he has raised his reading level from 2nd to 8th grade level. Alberto's reading level is a tribute to the success his reading teacher, Cathy Ferraro has with students. Alberto has become very motivated to graduate high school. He has demonstrated excellent study skills and is on track to graduate in late fall. The most important thing Santiago Creek School did for Alberto was making him feel safe to explore his talent in art and safe enough to risk learning to read. Alberto is a completely different person than he was two years ago. His scars from a violent past have healed. He is now a confident, capable, and successful student.

Jose S. enrolled at Santiago Creek School in May 2000. He had not attended school for over a year to take care of his younger brothers and sisters while his mother worked. He had been placed in a parental role at home and only enrolled because of the insistence of his probation officer. Though Jose was a bright and capable student, testing at a 12th grade reading level, he was more than a year behind in school. Jose said he wanted to graduate from high school but felt discouraged since he was so far behind in his credits. The staff worked with Jose to develop a two year plan to reach his goal to graduate. This helped motivate Jose to work on a daily basis to reach his long term goal.

Jose requested to be in the art class with the art volunteer, Joni Herman. This class literally changed Jose's life. Joni is an extremely talented and renowned art muralist. She learned her craft from the art masters in Italy. Joni saw how talented Jose was and helped to develop his talents. She knew an art animator that had a famous art animation school in Burbank. On Jose's behalf she requested her friend give Jose an art scholarship to his school. Jose was thrilled that he was given this art scholarship opportunity. The only problem was finding transportation to Burbank each Saturday for the class. Joni and Santiago Creek staff encouraged Jose to use public transportation to get to the class. Joni actually showed him a train route and bus connection to get his to the art school by taking him through the entire route by car. Our students have many problems with follow-through and commitment, but Jose was very determined and showed all of us how determined he was to get to the class. It took him 2 1/2 hours each way to get to the class but he made it each Saturday for three months! Each week Jose would show us what he learned in class. He became a talented animator. Since this class Jose became involved with other artists from the Santora artist community in Santa Ana. He has been involved with fund raising with this group and promoting art in his community. Jose also is an apprentice to Joni, helping on special assignments.

Jose also attended the Bear Paw retreat sponsored by Orange County Human Relations. Here he was able to get out of the "parent role" he had in his family and be a kid for two days in the mountains. We watched Jose run up the mountain, go on hikes, discover a waterfall and in general be in "wonder" of nature. Jose became a leader with his peers in participating in all the hands-on activities.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Student Success Story

Today, George B. came to school with his assigned work completed, as is the routine of students working full-time who are enrolled in a contract-learning program. The other teachers at the site questioned him about his new job – that of a teaching assistant at a local pre-school.

Then, it hit me! Last year as an implementer of the Summer Jobs for Youth program, I hired George for a clerical job at the community center. The center had a summer program for young children and needed assistance with supervision of the youngsters, so I loaned them George. He was wonderful and truly found his calling. Because of the experience gained in his summer job, he applied for and was awarded the full-time teaching assistant position.

This is an example of the little things we as teachers do that we do not even recognize at the time as important or life changing, or even a real life "success story."

Submitted by: Irene Burton
Teacher, El Modena Outreach Program
Orange County Department of Education, Division of Alternative Education

The Wonders of Alternative Education

By Nancy Nguyen

For a typical student, going to school and getting an education is not a problem. It's a time in life when your social life is the only thing that is probably competing with your attendance. I sometimes envy their freedom. Instead, I am a teen parent having difficulty finding time to get an education. I lost my motivation for school until I started alternative education. It gave me the support that I was lacking, and a sense of accomplishment. First of all, I received the support I needed in order for me to finish school. I was able to have a teacher come to my house and work with me. I was able to save all the hassle and time finding a babysitter. The support I got helped motivate me and got me back on my feet.

Second, I got a chance to get a fulfilling education that I could not have gotten at an adult school. I had the chance to really talk to a teacher on a one-on-one basis. I got help in the areas that I needed in order to be successful.

Last, but not least, I achieved a sense of accomplishment. I finally saw an end to all the hard work I did all those years of school. I received a high school diploma, not an adult school diploma or a GED. It means a great deal to me. It completes something.

In conclusion, alternative education has done a great deal for me. It gave me the support that I lacked, a fulfilling education, and a sense of accomplishment. Once you get your willpower in gear and start using self-motivation, progress comes more and more easily and readily strengthens your resolve even further.

Nancy Nguyen graduated from the North PAR Outreach Program, Orange County Department of Education, Division of Alternative Education, on February 13, 2001. Above is her writing proficiency essay which was submitted with permission from her teacher, Bill Fisher.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Student Success Story

TURNING AROUND: The story of Michelle Woodruff

by Jeannie Griffith
San Joaquin County Office of Education

Steven Covey has written that "the person who is truly effective has the humility and reverence to recognize his own perceptual limitations and appreciate the rich resources available through interaction with the hearts and minds of other human beings." Michelle Woodruff is a student who personifies this concept. She has overcome incredible personal and academic setbacks in order to become a successful, effective adult.

Michelle faced personal and academic challenges during her first two years of high school. As her mother struggled to pay bills by working two jobs, Michelle became increasingly less engaged in school and more interested in partying. She began drinking and using drugs. She was eventually dropped from her comprehensive school because of her frequent truancy, and didn't attend school at all for several months.

When Michelle entered San Joaquin County's community schools in September of 1997, she had only 45 credits – less than half of what she needed to begin her Junior year. She chose to attend one.Competition, a small community school with forty students, two teachers and a part-time counselor. Determined to change her negative pattern, she became involved in every activity the school offered. She met students who were facing the same personal and academic challenges, and began to meet new, more positive friends. She became a peer helper, working with students at her own school as well as traveling to other schools to speak to younger, at-risk youth to influence them to stay in school and avoid drugs and alcohol.

In addition to helping others, Michelle began to excel academically. The teachers pushed her hard to perform and she rose to meet their expectations. Because she lacked credits to graduate on time, she began taking college classes in the evenings. She completed six college units while attending one.Competition. She also joined the school's academic decathlon team, studying such difficult subjects as political science, art, neurology and opera.

After graduating from one.Competition in May of 1999, she went on to attend San Joaquin Delta Community College. While attending college she has worked several jobs, including a shift supervisor position at Starbucks and a position working with autistic children at Therapeutic Pathways in Sacramento. She also found time to spend several weeks with her father in Oregon, who was recently paralyzed in an accident.

She is currently one class away from achieving an associate degree. Her work with autistic children and the time she has spent with her paralyzed father have influenced her to enter the health care field. She plans to work as a therapy health technician, where she will soon enter an externship either in a school for special needs students or in a hospital working with rehabilitating patients.

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Innovative Program

Custody To Campus Program

Stanislaus County Office of Education

POPULATION SERVED:
Minors in Juvenile Hall who have received their high school diploma or GED.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:
The Stanislaus County Probation Department, the Juvenile Hall Service League, California State University-Stanislaus, Stanislaus County Office of Education, and Modesto Junior College are entered into a partnership that enables minors in Juvenile Hall, who have received their high school diploma or GED, eligibility for enrollment in the Custody to Campus program. Through the program, the minors are eligible to earn college credits from Modesto Junior College for coursework completed via alternative instruction.

Teachers in the Court School serve as proxies for the Modesto Junior College curricula. Courses range from business to philosophy to psychology and center around satisfying the general education requirements toward obtaining associate's and/or bachelor's degrees. The college provides the course syllabi, the materials, and the videotapes (when necessary). The Custody To Campus students work independently during the regularly scheduled Court School instructional day. In some cases, students in the Custody To Campus are allowed opportunities to study during non-instructional day time periods (i.e., following dinner, etc.). Students are assessed with similar instruments as those used on the main campus or its satellites and are awarded college units based on successful completion of specified courses.

CONTACT:
Jeff S. Tilton Sr., Ed.D.
Principal, Alternative Educational Programs
Stanislaus County Office of Education
1100 H Street
Modesto, CA 95354

(209) 558-4508
jtilton@stan-co.k12.ca.us

SUBMITTED BY:
Jeff Tilton

The Journal of Court, Community, and Alternative Schools

Innovative Program

Healthy Start

Stanislaus County Office of Education

POPULATION SERVED:
Students in grades 6-12 and their respective families

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:
Petersen Alternative Center for Education (PACE) is the lone court/community school program in California with an operational Healthy Start program. PACE's Healthy Start program is complemented with a plethora of community partnerships as it implements the following comprehensive school-integrated services and activities:

- Academic/Education (tutoring, mentoring, dropout prevention, adult education, and staff training)
- Youth Development Services (tutoring, employment, community services, recreation, and sports)
- Family Support (child protection, parenting education, English as a Second Language [ESL], citizenship classes, child care, case management, and family advocacy)
- Basic Needs (supplemental food, nutrition education services, clothing, shelter/housing, transportation, and legal assistance)
- Medical/Health Care (vision, hearing, dental, CHDP, acute care, preventive health care, and health insurance)
- Mental Health Care and Counseling (therapy, support groups, and substance abuse prevention)
- Employment (career counseling, job placement, job preparation and development)

In comparison to most California Healthy Start sites, PACE serves a unique, at-risk student population. Students lack the academic and/or social competencies needed to succeed in a traditional educational setting. Statistically, 19% of its students are on formal probation and 70% are referred by home districts, most for non-attendance (46%) or chronic behavioral problems. Substance abuse and gang affiliation are a concern. PACE provides a self-contained structured setting that allows for individualized academic planning and instruction. Educators, health/social providers and law enforcement officials working with PACE families have observed that they experience multiple social and economic stresses that ultimately impact their students' potential for success.

The PACE Healthy Start program is designed to serve children, their family members, and the community. The goals of the PACE Healthy Start are:
1. Create a safe campus climate and positive campus culture;
2. Promote an ethic of community service;
3. Develop leadership and other personal skills that assure life-long success; and,
4. Strengthen families so that students can be supported in their goals.

CONTACT:
Jo Ann Harris
Coordinator, Petersen Alternative Center for Education (PACE) Healthy Start
Stanislaus County Office of Education
1100 H Street
Modesto, CA 95354

(209) 558-4508
jharris@stan-co.k12.ca.us

SUBMITTED BY:
Jeff Tilton

Your Complete Source for Technology Education

DEPCO, Inc. provides technology educators with hands-on curriculum, a powerful management system, quality equipment, reliable support, and in-depth training.

High-Quality Technology Learning Units:
Career Experiences TLU's are perfect for students who are served by county court, community and alternative schools. Our modular format allows students to explore a wide variety of career-related subjects and gain job-specific skills.

Electronic Classroom Management System:
DEPCO's *Millennium 3000* is an impressive system that gives instructors complete classroom control with easy and effective monitoring, scheduling, electronic testing and much more.

Affordable & Stylish Furniture:
Our line of *Furniture* options - our Series 200, 300, 500 and 801 – complete the DEPCO lab.

Real-World Industrial Manufacturing Lab:
DEPCO's *Manufacturing Processes Lab* gives students an opportunity to explore industrial manufacturing while gaining real-world skills.

The Newest Video Technology:
Our *Non-Linear Video Production* is quality project-based curriculum, combined with a stand-alone, non-linear editing system, and our high-tech workstation. Students receive the ultimate digital video experience.

DEPCO, Inc.
We give experiences.

1-800-767-1062 • www.depcoinc.com

Teacher Training:
DEPCO, Inc is dedicated to helping technology, video, and CAD instructors to be as effective in the classroom as possible. That's why we offer *Professional Development* workshops in various areas of technology. Our workshops include:

Technology Inservice
Linear Video Production Training
Non-Linear Video Production Training
Autodesk® Product Training:
AutoCAD® 101 & 102 | AutoCAD 2000® Update
AutoCAD® Architectural Desktop™ 101
Mechanical Desktop® 101 & 102
Inventor™ | Studio VIZ® 101 | Studio MAX® 101

Contact your DEPCO representative for more information:

KLEIN
Educational Systems
800-698-3249 • www.kleinedu.com

Copyright 2001
JCCASAC
400 - 4/01
Spring 2001 - Vol. 14
Printed by
San Joaquin County Office of Education's
one. Teacher Resource
(209) 468-4915