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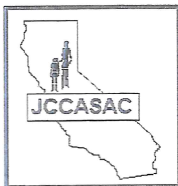

Message from the Editorial Board

As we approach the end of another school year, we cannot help but notice that the curious cloud of initialisms (NCLB, AYP, API, ASAM) that has been hovering for a couple of years has invaded further into our workplaces. We're scrambling to write plans for student achievement, certify teachers as "highly qualified," sort "90-day students," and find ways to help school boards understand that last year's students aren't with us anymore, and we have no control over the fact that the students who enrolled two weeks ago are far below grade level.

All this could lead a school administrator to lose focus. If we are satisfied with mere compliance and don't push through to program improvement, we will end up hurting programs, and even kids.

In this issue, we've included articles that illustrate the challenges we face in alternative education, as well as a special section, "Seeking Literacy," that highlights options available to increase student literacy, especially at the secondary level. We've also included our "Innovative Programs" section that showcases the creative work of our members across the state. Finally, we've included a book review, because in the midst of this whirlwind that is our work, it is important to stay abreast of current literature and research.

Getting back to focus, though: Implementing policy is not enough. Organizational soundness is not as important is educational efficacy. We need to ask ourselves, when faced with tough decisions, What is best for students? We must continue to provide places for our students to heal, grow, and learn. We need to leave no child behind. Really.

We hope you enjoy this edition of The Journal.

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

Message from the President

Jacqueline Flowers
Assistant Superintendent,
San Joaquin County Office of Education

Dear JCCASAC Colleagues:

It has been an honor to serve as President of the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative Administrators of California (JCCASAC) this past year. I accepted the challenge as a relative newcomer to court and community schools (seven years ago) so my learning curve has been pretty steep to say the least.

As we move into another challenging year for court and community schools in California, let us preserve and build on the support network we have developed within the organization. The answers to most of my questions come from you, the practitioners in the field. You have implemented some of the most daunting legislation in the history of education in such a way that at-risk students are served more effectively than ever. Each county is different in the programs it offers, yet we all learn and take back to our own counties, ideas that allow us to be in compliance, yet still provide the alternatives students need. We are fortunate, indeed, to have so many brilliant minds interpreting legislation and implementing programs in creative ways. It is clear to me that we can make a difference. The California Department of Education certainly believes that as well, and calls upon us regularly to provide direction and input to the policy makers. We must continue to have a voice in the policies that affect our students and we can do that through JCCASAC.

The message that has resounded for me loud and clear is that members of this organization care for, share with, and support other members in ways that are too numerous to list. You have taught me, guided me, advised me, agreed with me and disagreed with me, all of which contributed to a successful presidency in 2003-04. My heartfelt thanks go out to my executive board and all of you.

Message from the President-Elect

Jeanne Dukes
Director,
San Luis Obispo County Office of Education

It is an honor to serve as President-Elect of JCCASAC this year. It is an extraordinary organization. I am looking forward to representing my colleagues and our programs as President in the coming year.

JCCASAC has played a huge role in nurturing me as a Court/ Community School Administrator during the past ten years, and I guarantee that the collegiality and camaraderie of the group will support you too as together we confront the opportunities and challenges inherent in educating the most at-risk youth in California.

High stakes testing, standards, ASAM and accountability, accreditation, curriculum development, research-based instructional strategies, independent study, laws and requirements: These issues challenge the most dedicated professional to stay informed and keep the best interests of our students at heart.

Despite that, we soldier on. We are passionate about our students, our programs, and our craft. We strongly believe that all students can learn, and that the joy and humor evident in our relationships with our students and each other create solidarity and commitment to a mission in which we all believe.

JCCASAC, over the years, has provided opportunities to network and learn best practices, the wonderful Journal that honors our profession, a constantly-improving Website, and email list-serves to write, "Hey, how about this? I need help with that!" Emailing colleagues with questions quickly results in dozens of accurate and competent responses so that we are not operating alone.

I have been involved with the Journal for several years. Due to my County's commitment to the 2004 San Diego Conference, I was unable to participate this year. I miss it! I miss the exchange of ideas and the quick intelligence of the Journal Editorial Board. I am excited to read the new volume, and honored to be included on its pages.

I highly recommend that all County Office alternative education administrators get involved in JCCASAC! Go to our conferences, serve your colleagues as a Board member, participate in the development of the Journal, and get to know other administrators. Whether from Humboldt County, San Diego County or someplace in between, they will soon be your close friends and allies.

Our successes are magnified by our relationships with each other, as well as our daily work with students who need us and benefit so much from the alternatives we offer. Collaborate, share, participate, and serve. That's JCCASAC!

Hispanic Parent Involvement in a Community School: A Case Study

Chuck Whitecotton

Introduction

Research indicates that academic success is significantly related to parental involvement in schools (Liontos, 1998). According to the National Education Association (2000), a partnership between the school and family is critical in helping each child achieve academic success. However, a review of literature indicates that students from diverse cultures may have less parental involvement than the American norm (Inger, 1992; Schwartz, 2001) . Consequently, these students may be at-risk of underperformance in school (Tinkler, 2002).

A lack of parental involvement is particularly evident in Latino cultures. According to Inger (2001), Hispanic parents rarely get involved in their children's schools. Although reportedly nurturing and encouraging at home, close parent-child interaction rarely pertains to school or other educational activities among Hispanic families. Consequently, Hispanic parents may have little involvement with their children's schools.

This lack of parental involvement may lead to inadequate performance of Hispanic students at school. For example, according to the Institute for Urban and Minority Education (2001), Latino students are less likely to graduate from high school than any other culture of students. About 63% of Latinos graduate each year compared to 81% of African Americans and 89% of white students. Additionally, more than 70% of Hispanic students who are 15 - 17 years of age are enrolled below grade level. In 1996, Hispanic 17 year old students scored significantly lower than their white student counterparts in reading, math, and science. At the same time, almost 50% of Hispanic students attended urban schools and attended schools with twice as many poor classmates as those attended by white students. Finally, Hispanic students reportedly are less likely to have or use a computer at home or at school. In fact, approximately 18% of Latino students use a computer at home compared to 19% in African American and 52% of white students. In addition, 68% of Latino students use a computer at school compared to 70% of African Americans and 84% of white students.

This paper will examine parental involvement from the Latino perspective. Several interview questions were developed to explore the feelings of parents toward school involvement and how they perceive that they impact student success.

Subject

The subject chosen for this study was a mother of a high school student who was attending a community school. The subject immigrated to the United States from Mexico approximately 8 years ago. She did not speak English. She worked seasonal jobs and lived in the center of town in low-income apartments.

Setting

The interview took place at a continuation school in Northern California.

Referral

The subject in this investigation had a teenage son enrolled in a small community school within Northern California. This school serves students who are referred from surrounding districts for various reasons relating to expulsion, suspension, truancy, or credit deficiency. For this investigation, the subject's child was dismissed from a traditional school reportedly for fighting. This student was on formal probation for the incident as well.

Data Summary

The interview questions in this study were asked through a female, Hispanic interpreter. At times, it seemed that the interpreter became interested in the topic of the interview herself. There were several occasions when the interpreter offered her own opinion about the questions before asking the subject. In addition, it

Her son's involvement in the Sureño gang did not seem to bother her. Instead, she expressed the feelings that this was just a way for her son to protect her.

seemed that the interpreter may have editorialized some of the questions in order to elicit desired responses. Nevertheless, this interview seemed to capture the feelings of the subject on the topic of parental involvement in schools.

The first question asked the subject to describe why her child was referred to the community school program. According to the subject, her child was expelled from a traditional high school for fighting. In addition, she stated that her son spent time in juvenile hall, and then was referred to his current placement in the community school upon his release. The subject reportedly felt bad about what her son had done. However, she also expressed that he had justification for his behavior. According to the subject, her son only fought when he needed to protect himself. For example, she described an incident between her son and one of his Latino peers. When she came to pick up her son from school one day, another student began teasing her son and taunting her. As she was leaving with her son, the other student got into a car and began following them. Once away from the campus, the other student began "ramming" his car into the back of hers. Consequently, she felt that abusive actions such as this justified her son's confrontational behavior. Furthermore, she felt that her son was often'"picked on" and wished that people would just "leave him alone".

The feeling of being picked on was evident throughout the interview. For example, she expanded on this concept by distinguishing between certain types of Latino groups. In particular, she identified gang members known as "Norteño" as those who were Mexican people usually born in the United States. Gang members affiliated with "Sureño", on the other hand, were immigrants from Mexico. She stated that her son considered himself a Sureño.

Her son's involvement in the Sureño gang did not seem to bother her. Instead, she expressed the feeling that this was just a way for her son to protect her. She also said that she felt scared everyday. She felt that various people wanted to hurt her son and herself because they were considered recent immigrants from Mexico.

According to the subject, the Sureño identity is considered a lower group of people within the Mexican-American culture. According to the subject, most Mexicans believe that assimilating into the American culture is a sign that they have achieved success and power. Furthermore, she stated that many Mexican people gain this power by rejecting their heritage in favor of adopting a more American way of life. According to her, this often means giving up traditional practices such as pronunciation of names with accent or speaking Spanish.

Furthermore, according to this subject, language is the main barrier to assimilation and acceptance. She mentioned several times throughout the course of the interview that both she and her children were embarrassed by the need to speak Spanish in public, particularly when they had to do so in front of their friends or peers. In her view, being monolingual in Spanish identified to others that she and her family were part of a lower class.

In fact, this seemed to be the subject's biggest complaint about schools. She said that her son was often treated differently at school than other students. Because he spoke a different language and came from a different culture, she felt that instructors did not consider him as smart or capable as other students. Again, the subject felt that the school picked on her son. This problem appeared to be further compounded by his identification with a gang. According to the subject, her son began associating with members of a gang for protection. However, he reportedly became labeled as a troubled kid. Consequently, she felt that this labeling hindered her son from doing better in school.

When asked about how she helped her child study at home, she stated that she used to try to help her child when he was in grade school. However, because she had difficulty with the English language, she gradually removed herself from discussions about her son's academics. She also said that she relied heavily on her son to interpret where ever she went.

Communication with the school was a big factor. Since the subject only spoke Spanish, she felt inferior to other Latino parents who were bilingual. She appeared to feel intimidated by educators as well.

Consequently, she rarely communicated with school personnel. She did say that she wished more of the school notes and assignments were written in Spanish as well as English. This action, she said, would give her more confidence in helping her son with his schoolwork.

Her view that monolingual Spanish speakers were inferior to others was also a significant factor in keeping her from getting more involved in her son's schools. She said she didn't think she could really get involved in her son's education until she became proficient in English. Volunteering time at the school or attending teacher conferences without being able to speak English would only embarrass her son, thus causing more students to pick on him.

Finally, the subject did not have any particular suggestions about what should be emphasized in school curriculum. Her main concern seemed to be that she just wanted to see her son treated the same as everyone else. When asked how she would feel about a more multicultural curriculum, she was adamantly against it. She felt that inclusion of the Latino culture might again single out her son and make him more vulnerable to harassment by other students. She seemed fixated on having her son assimilate into the American culture by giving up his ethnic identity. Anything standing in the way of this process she seemed to consider a problem.

This assimilation seemed to be the ultimate goal for her son's education. She expressed several times that educational success to her was successful assimilation into the American culture and moving on to a good job. Because she felt her language barrier stigmatized her son, she felt she was standing in the way of her son's academic progress. As a result, she refused to get involved with her son's schools.

Analysis

The intent of this ethnographic study was to examine parental involvement in a community high school among Latino parents. The results of this study suggested one mindset that explains why there is little parental involvement.

This lack of parental involvement may be linked to the Racial/Cultural Identity Development model. This theory proposes five stages of cultural identity development when one culture is assimilating into another (Sue & Sue, 1990; Yeh & Hwang, 2000). These stages include: conformity; dissonance; resistance and immersion; introspection; integrative awareness. The first stage involves conformity. In this stage, a person displays preference for the dominant culture rather than their own. The next stage involves dissonance. In this stage, a person experiences confusion and conflict between the dominant culture and the person's native culture. The third stage leads to resistance and immersion. This is the active rejection of the dominant culture and the corresponding acceptance of the native culture and traditions. The next stage involves introspection. In this stage, people begin to question the values of both the native and dominant culture. Finally, the fifth stage results in integrative awareness. During this stage the conflicts from the previous stages are resolved and a new cultural identity is formed using elements from both the dominant and native culture.

Based on the responses of the interview, it appears that the subject may have been in the first stage of developing a racial/ cultural identity. In this stage, conformity to American culture is critical. Many of the subject's responses indicated that she wanted her son to reject his heritage in favor of assimilating

Interview Protocol

- *Why was your child referred to a community school?*
- *What do you think of your child's behavior?*
- *What type of interaction do you have with your child at home?*
- *What do you do at home to help your child study?*
- *How well does your child achieve in school?*
- *How would you know your child is successful in school?*
- *What concerns do you have about your child's education?*
- *What would you like to see emphasized in your child's school curriculum?*
- *How do you communicate with your child's school?*
- *How often do you get involved in your child's school?*
- *What areas would you be willing to help with at your child's school?*
- *What keeps you from getting more involved with your child's school?*
- *Do you have any questions for me?*

Perceptions of Alternative Education Site and Program Administrators Regarding Their Own Professional Development

Chet Jensen, Ed.D.

Abstract

Dynamic, forward-thinking, child-centered administrators facilitate a myriad of professional development opportunities for teachers and classified staff, but their own professional development is a low priority. This study solicited the opinions and perceptions of administrators from alternative education programs in California. This study determined that: (1) several highly-valued professional development opportunities were not being attended in significant numbers, (2) training on effective teacher hiring practices was identified as an important need, (3) structural modifications are needed (such as delegation of job duties and the administrators' work day) to ensure access to professional development, (4) time and money are critical elements in providing effective professional development for administrators, and (5) professional development should be conducted during the career-cycle of the administrator.

Introduction

An effective principal is essential for systemic school reform and improved academic achievement of children. The research is replete with examples of successful schools lead by dynamic, forward-thinking, child-centered administrators. These same administrators facilitate a myriad of professional development opportunities for their faculties. Sadly, their own formal professional growth needs are a low priority and pale in comparison with the opportunities provided to teachers.

Public school accountability was the catalyst for numerous state-funded training programs. The goal of these programs was to enhance the performance of teachers and principals. However, employer commitment and actual employee participation appeared to be less than enthusiastic.

The Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the perceptions of alternative education site (program) administrators in California regarding their own professional development and the perceived value of these experiences in relation to actual practice. The narrative begins with a review of the literature regarding: (1) the status of professional development for administrators, (2) quality indicators of successful programs, and (3) the emergence of standards-based frameworks to guide the development and implementation of programs. Next, the research survey will be described. Finally, the findings will be analyzed and recommendations will be made to assist policy-makers and agency decision-makers in planning the professional development of site and program managers.

Related Literature

Sparks (2000) describes the professional development of principals as, "...the neglected stepchild of state and district professional development efforts" (para. 10). Frequently, professional development for administrators is nothing more than self-initiated attendance at occasional conferences, monthly breakfast gatherings with colleagues, and token appearances during teacher inservice days. According to Sparks, principal development, "...turns participants into passive recipients of information rather

than active participants in solving important educational problems" (para. 2).

The National Staff Development Council [NSDC] (2001) points to the critical connection between students' academic success and effective school leadership. Raising standards, strengthening professional development, refocusing schools on student achievement, and holding schools accountable for results are certainly laudable goals. However, "...only one area of policy focus—strengthening school leadership—can exert control over all of these challenges simultaneously" (Sparks, 2001, para. 1).

The principalship is the cornerstone of successful schools, regardless of geography, program type, or political persuasion. The literature identifies a rich, international research agenda focused on the relationship of on-going professional development for administrators and systemic institutional change (International Confederation of Principals, 2003; Bennett & Mar, 2003; Dempster, 2001).

The literature describes research-based strategies for delivering enhanced professional development services to administrators. NDSC (2001) recommends regularly scheduled professional encounters, such as: (1) study groups, (2) school visitations, and (3) on-site coaching. Stewart (2000) emphasizes ongoing collaboration and frequent professional conversations between practitioners and mentors. Evans and Mohr (1999) suggest face-to-face interaction utilizing both large and small group settings. Program content should be child-focused, standards-driven, and void of managerial trivia. In sum, effective professional development programs for administrators are: (1) long-term, (2) job-embedded, (3) reflective, (4) student-centered, and (5) peer-supported (Educational Research Service, 1999).

Formalized mentoring schemes provide a means of matching experienced and novice administrators in a collaborative, two-way model of professional development. Malone (2001) warns that matching a new administrator with the right mentor is critical and recommends that mentors exhibit the ability to coach, sponsor, and serve as a role model. The fact remains that not all experienced principals make good mentors. Crocker and Harris (2002) found that mentor-neophyte mismatch and weak mentor preparation resulted in the poor performance of a professional development project in Texas.

However, Community School District 2 in New York City successfully infused a strong mentoring component in its professional growth program for site administrators (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Willen, 2001). The program utilizes the superintendent and deputy superintendent, as well as the talents of recognized school leaders, some of whom are released from their site duties in order to serve their colleagues on a full-time basis. Ideally, formalized mentoring structures should be sustained throughout the career cycle to allow mentors to gain new understandings and generate enthusiasm about their profession (Lashway, 2002).

Notable professional growth programs for administrators are found in North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, California, and New Mexico (Norton, 2001; Richardson, 2000; Peterson, 2002; Malone, 2001). National efforts include Annenberg Principals (Annenberg Institute of School Reform), National Principals' Academies, the Harvard Principals' Center, and the Vanderbilt Principals' Center (Evans & Mohr, 1999; Peterson, 2002; Murphy & Hallinger, 1989). Comprehensive state programs include the California School Leadership Academy (CSLA), Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Academies, and AB75 Principals' Training.

Until recently, universities and colleges played a significant role in mentoring, supporting, and advising new administrators. Recent changes in certification requirements in California have increased the number of training options available to administrators. University-based professional credential (Tier 2) and advanced degree programs are now only one of many professional growth alternatives.

The foundation of a quality program is a standards-based framework, such as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium [ISLLC] (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). These standards delineate what school leaders should be able to do, such

Formalized mentoring schemes provide a means of matching experienced and novice administrators in a collaboarative, two-way model of professional development.

as: (1) facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community; (2) advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; (3) ensure management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; (4) collaborate with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources; (5) act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and (6) understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. An almost identical set of standards for school leaders was recently adopted in California. All certification programs must now be aligned with the California Professional Standards for School Leaders [CPSSL] (California Department of Education, 2001).

Quality professional learning for administrators: (1) validates teaching and learning as the central activities of the school; (2) engages all school leaders in well-planned, integrated, career-long learning to improve student achievement; (3) promotes collaboration to achieve organizational goals while meeting individual needs; (4) models effective learning processes; and (5) incorporates measures of accountability that direct attention to valued learning outcomes (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2000). Clearly, in order to achieve world-class standards, districts must be ready to provide administrators with numerous opportunities to participate in quality professional development activities (NSDC, 2001).

Naturally, as site and program administrators engage in professional development, cost and time become significant impediments. Calls for increased funding for principals' learning opportunities abound (National Staff Development Council, 2003; International Confederation of Principals, 2003; Sparks, 2000). In terms of raw numbers, NSDC (2003) suggests that in an effort to reform education, it may be easier to simply, "...strengthen the knowledge and skills of 100,000 principals in one fell swoop than it is to significantly improve the performance of 3.5 million teachers or 53 million students" (para. 5). Unfortunately, budgetary realities continue to marginalize all ancillary support services, including professional growth programs for administrators.

Further, free time during the principal's workday is a premium. Allocation of release time and the redistribution of managerial duties must occur in order for principals to participate fully in mentoring, collaborating, and training activities. Evans and Mohr (1999) advise principals that "...it is not selfish to take time for their own learning" (p. 530). Clearly, support structures are needed to provide principals with the freedom to pursue their own professional growth and must be district-supported (both financially and philosophically) and job-embedded.

Finally, NSDC (2003) recommends that professional development be formally recognized and incorporated into the annual employment evaluation of principals. Interestingly, NSDC also suggests incentives be awarded to recognize principals' talents, skills and knowledge. Extrinsic rewards and sanctions are not a new concept in education, but are certainly controversial in terms of overall effectiveness and perceived fairness.

The preceding discourse leads the author to posit the primary research question of this study: Are alternative education administrators satisfied with the availability and content of professional development programs available to them?

METHODOLOGY

An online questionnaire was developed by the author. The questionnaire consisted of demographic information (Part I), belief statements regarding professional development for administrators (Part II), sources and perceived value of professional development for administrators (Part III), specific content and perceived importance of professional development for administrators (Part IV), and open-ended responses (Part V).

Part I requested information related to the respondents' years of service, credentials, and university degrees. In addition, data regarding the school, agency, and community were solicited. Part II consisted of ten belief statements. Respondents were requested to rate each statement on a 5-point interval scale, indicating their level of agreement with the statements. Part III listed 20 sources of professional development for administrators. Respondents were requested to state whether or not they had attended events sponsored by the listed agencies and, if so, to rate the value of the services on a 3-point interval scale. Part IV listed 18 program content topics. Respondents were requested to state whether or not they had participated in programs which offered instruction in these content areas and, if so, to rate the relative importance of these content areas in relation to their own administrative practice on a 5-point interval scale. Part V requested additional written information or comments

from the respondents.

Ninety-two requests to participate in the research study were e-mailed to the published membership of the Juvenile Court, Community, and Alternative School Administrators of California (JCCA-SAC). Individuals who held senior management or non-administrative positions were excluded from the sample population. Thirteen e-mail messages were returned as undeliverable and three respondents stated that they would be unable to participate in the research study. Of the sample population (76), thirty-three online surveys were completed and submitted, resulting in a return rate of 44.6%.

The questionnaire was housed on the California State University, Stanislaus server. Potential respondents received e-mail notification, which included an embedded link to the CSUS website. After completing the online questionnaire, respondents simply "clicked" on the submit button to complete the process. Data were tabulated using Microsoft Access. Paper, return envelopes, and postage were not required. All data were gathered during a ten-day period of time.

The reader is reminded that the sample population (alternative education site/program administrators) of this study is a sub-group of a larger study, which includes site administrators representing all fields of education in California. The small sample (n=33) from this study will be compared with the findings derived from the larger sample population in the more comprehensive study.

Data from Part I of the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics—numbers, frequency distributions, and percentages. Data from Parts II, III, and IV of the survey were analyzed using nonparametric inferential statistics to determine if sample distributions were consistent with theoretical values (Cronk, 1999). Initially, responses from Parts II and IV were analyzed utilizing the Chi-Square Goodness of Fit to determine if obtained responses differed significantly from an equal distribution of responses, thereby demonstrating a clear preference for a given statement, source, or content area. Statistical significance was determined when the obtained value was equal to or greater than the critical value of 9.49 (a=.05, df=4). The statistical significance of responses from Part III was determined when the obtained value was equal to or greater than the critical value of 5.99 (a=.05, df=2). Finally, descriptive statistics (means and rank ordering) were utilized to illustrate the respondents' perceived priorities in both resources and content.

Common themes emerged from the written comments in Part V. These comments were analyzed and discussed in the narrative.

Findings

Demographic information from Part I is illustrated in Table 1. Approximately 41.9% of the respondents were relatively new to the profession with five or fewer years of service. The vast majority of the respondents were fully-certified and held advanced degrees. Most of the respondents worked in either community or juvenile court

Table 1
Demographic Data (n=33)

# Years Served as Administrator	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 19	20+
Type of School/Program	Opportunity 0.00%	Community 59.4%	Continuation 0.00%	Juvenile Court 40.6%
Student Enrollment	<100 15.6%	101-500 50.00%	501-999 15.6%	1000> 18.8%
Type of Agency	Non-Public 0.0%	District 0.0%	County 100.0%	State 0.0%
Type of Community	Rural 21.9%	Suburban 6.3%	Urban 12.5%	Countywide 59.3%
Highest Degree Earned	Bachelor's 6.3%	Master's 87.4%	Ed. Specialist 0.0%	Doctorate 6.3%
Administrative Credential Held	Intern 3.2%	Preliminary 32.3%	Clear 64.5%	None 0.0%

schools. Each program or site served between 101 and 500 students and drew its student population from the entire county. The County Office of Education was the sole employer of all respondents.

Part II of the survey asked respondents to rate their level of agreement regarding ten personal belief statements on a 5-point interval scale (5=Agree, 4=Somewhat Agree, 3=No Opinion, 2=Somewhat Disagree, 1=Disagree). Mean responses were ranked in descending order from the highest level to the lowest level of agreement (See Table 2).

The respondents clearly agreed with the statement regarding the importance of the professional development of administrators (M=4.875). Specific allocations of money (M=4.531) and time (M=4.531) were seen as important elements of a successful professional development program. Ideally, respondents felt that professional development goals should be determined by the individual (M=4.094) and could be used as a component of the evaluation process (M=4.063). Curiously, respondents rated the commitment of their employers (M=3.656) to the concept of professional development of administrators significantly lower than their own (M=4.875). Respondents generally were neutral or disagreed with the notions of employer-established goals (M=3.625) and tying job promotions (M=3.438), stipends (M=3.438), and merit pay (M=3.290) to the achievement of professional development goals.

Part III of the survey asked respondents to indicate whether or not they had participated in professional development activities from a list of twenty possible sources. Next, respondents were requested to rate the perceived level of value of these services in relation to their own administrative practice. The relative value of each source was rated on a 3-point interval scale (3=High, 2=Medium, 1=Low). The percentage of respondents utilizing the listed sources of professional development was ranked in descending order from the highest level to the lowest level of participation. Next, the mean perceived value of each source was ranked in descending order from the highest level to the lowest (See Table 3).

The most commonly utilized sources for professional development were self-directed activities (100.0%) and informal collaboration with colleagues (96.9%). The most-frequently attended programs were sponsored by the County Office of Education (96.8%), state and national conferences (93.7%), the California Department of Education (93.7%), and professional associations (90.6%). Conversely, the least-utilized resources for professional development included sabbaticals (38.7%), AB75 Principals' Training (48.3%), the internet (58.1%), the U.S. Department of Education (61.3%), and the California School Leadership Academy (64.3%).

In terms of value, respondents rated the following sources of professional development the highest: informal networking (M=2.677); AB75 Principals' Training (M=2.429); state and national conferences (M=2.300); California School Leadership Academy

TABLE 2
RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS (RANK ORDERED)
(N=33)

Statement	Mean
Personal commitment to professional development	4.875*
State funds allocated for professional development of administrators	4.531*
Release time provided for professional development of administrators	4.531*
Professional development goals established by individual	4.094*
Summary evaluation based on achievement of professional development goals	4.063*
Employer commitment to professional development	3.656*
Professional development goals established by employer	3.625*
Job promotions based on achievement of professional development goals	3.438*
Stipends paid for professional development activities	3.438
Merit pay awarded on achievement of professional development goals	3.29

*p <.05

TABLE 3
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(SOURCES AND PERCEIVED VALUE)

Source	Rank	%	Rank	Mean
Self-directed reading and study	1	100	9	2.156*
Informal networking	2	96.9	1	2.677*
County Office-provided training	3	96.8	12	2.133
State/national conferences	4 (tie)	93.7	3 (tie)	2.300*
California Department of Education	4 (tie)	93.7	19	1.767*
Professional association meetings	6	90.6	7	2.241*
University/college (advanced degree)	7	87.5	8	2.214
ACSA	8 (tie)	81.2	6	2.269*
Law Firm	8 (tie)	81.2	13	2.115
Consortia of multiple agencies	10	80	14 (tie)	2.000*
School-sponsored training	11	77.4	16	1.958
District-sponsored leadership program	12 (tie)	75	10 (tie)	2.167*
University/college (Tier 2)	12 (tie)	75	10 (tie)	2.167
Formal mentoring/coaching program	14	70	5	2.286
District-sponsored training	15	66.7	14 (tie)	2.000*
California School Leadership Academy	16	64.5	3 (tie)	2.3
U.S. Department of Education	17	61.3	20	1.368*
Internet	18	58.1	18	1.833*
AB75 (principal training)	19	48.3	2	2.429*
Sabbatical	20	38.7	17	1.917

*$p < .05$

(M=2.300); and formal mentoring/coaching experiences (M=2.286). Conversely, the sources with the lowest value ratings included: U.S. Department of Education (M=1.368); California Department of Education (M=1.767); and the internet (M=1.833).

Surprisingly, one well-attended source of professional development rated extremely low in terms of relative value to the attendees—the California Department of Education—with a 93.7% attendance rate and value rating of M=1.767. Conversely, two highly-rated sources of professional development—AB 75 Principals' Training and the California School Leadership Academy—were ranked as two of the most underutilized resources (M=2.429 and 48.3% and M=2.300 and 64.5%, respectively).

Informal networking with colleagues and state and national conferences ranked highest in terms of both participation and relative value. Curiously, online options were underutilized and valued less than other sources of professional development, regardless of its widespread availability and recent technological enhancements.

Part IV of the survey asked respondents to indicate whether or not they had participated in professional development activities from eighteen specific skill (content) areas. Respondents were then requested to rate the importance of these topics in relation to their own administrative practice. The relative importance of each content area was rated on a 5-point interval scale (5=Very Important, 4=Important, 3=No Opinion, 2=Limited Importance, and 1=Unimportant). The percentage of respondents attending professional development, which included specific content inclusion, was ranked in descending order from the highest level to the lowest level of participation. The mean level of importance of these topics was ranked in descending order from the highest level to the lowest level of perceived importance (See Table 4).

All of the respondents had attended professional development sessions focused on educational

Table 4
Content Priorities
(Participation and Importance)

Content	Rank	%	Rank	Mean
Educational leadership	1 (tie)	100	3	4.469*
State content standards	1 (tie)	100	13	4.219*
Teacher evaluation	3	96.4	1	4.781*
Employee discipline	4 (tie)	96.3	6	4.375*
Technology	4 (tie)	96.3	16	3.867*
Data-driven decision making	6 (tie)	88.8	8 (tie)	4.276*
Special education programs/services	6 (tie)	88.8	4	4.414*
Special education student discipline	8 (tie)	85.2	7	4.355*
Violence prevention	8 (tie)	85.2	5	4.379*
Student assessment	10 (tie)	81.5	12	4.226*
School and community relationships	10 (tie)	81.5	15	4.129*
Student discipline	12	80.8	8 (tie)	4.276*
Site/program budgets	13	77.7	8 (tie)	4.276*
Teacher qualifications (credentials-HQT)	14	74.1	14	4.138*
Union contract management	15	70.4	17	3.834*
Professional ethics	16 (tie)	66.7	11	4.267*
Teacher selection (hiring)	16 (tie)	66.7	2	4.556*
Media	18	59.3	18	3.667

*$p < .05$

leadership (100%) and state content standards (100%). Most of the respondents had participated in activities aligned with teacher evaluation (96.4%), employee discipline (96.3%), and technology (96.3%). The topics least featured during professional development workshops were media (59.3%), teacher selection (66.7%), and professional ethics (66.7%).

Respondents ranked teacher evaluation as the most important topic in terms of current practice (M=4.781), followed by teacher selection (M=4.556), educational leadership (M=4.469), special education programs (M=4.414), and violence prevention (M=4.379). It is not surprising that violence prevention is identified as an important topic considering the professional duties of the respondents in this study.

When attendance and importance of topic were compared, teacher selection (hiring practices) was highly-rated, but was one of the topics least frequently discussed in professional development sessions. Both teacher evaluation and educational leadership were highly-valued and were offered frequently as professional development topics.

Part V offered the opportunity for respondents to submit input in an open-ended format. In addition to the content areas listed in Part IV, respondents suggested the following topics (content areas) for consideration: (1) teacher intervention strategies prior to termination, (2) No Child Left Behind, (3) pro-activism, (4) personal goal-setting, (5) politics, (6) curriculum development, and (7) time management.

One respondent stated that professional development goals should be selected by both the employer and the individual. The respondent commented that "...if administrators were judged by the attainment of [self-selected] goals, I believe most would take fewer risks." Another respondent expressed the desire that "...all administrators should receive ongoing training in observation, diagnosis of problems, coaching, etc., as well as what effective instruction looks like...". A respondent lamented that precious time would be diverted from instructional services and assessing the

needs of kids to "HOUSSEing" [High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation] the staff pursuant to No Child Left Behind. Finally, several respondents commented on the following issues in relation to the unique environments in which they work: (1) the lack of media issues, (2) the difficulty of recruiting certified teachers, particularly in mathematics and science, and (3) the lack of young administrators being attracted to work in alternative settings.

Conclusion and Implications

Part I – Demographics

The typical respondent had accrued less than 20 years of experience as an administrator, was fully-certified, and held an advanced degree. The respondent worked for the County Office of Education in either a middle-sized (101 to 500 students) community or juvenile court school (or program), which served students from the entire county. The most notable anomaly, however, was the concentration of administrators who had served in their positions for five years or less. This finding suggested a rapid turnover of school leadership in alternative programs.

Part II – Respondent Perceptions of Professional Development

Respondents were almost unanimous in their support of quality professional development opportunities for administrators. A notable percentage of respondents also supported an appropriate level of funding and institutional release time to pursue these activities. Interestingly, the difference between the respondents' own opinions and their perception of their employers' opinions regarding professional development of administrators was striking. This difference may simply have been the result of poor communication rather than a lack of funds, time, or desire. Also, respondents clearly wanted to set their own professional development goals rather than to have goals imposed on them by their employers. In sum, there appeared to be a significant philosophical disconnect between employers and employees regarding commitment and actual practice.

The respondents also clearly did not support the concept of extra pay or job promotions resulting from their professional growth activities. However, respondents did appear to accept the notion of interlacing professional development with the formal evaluation process. This finding supports the work of Fink and Resnick (2001), who identified principals' evaluations as the desirable outcome of administrative capacity-building activities, including coaching, and mentoring.

Part III – Sources and Perceived Value of Professional Development

Respondents identified the most commonly accessed sources of professional development as: (1) self-directed study and professional reading, (2) informal networking and collegial support, (3) county offices of education, (4) state and national conferences, and (5) the California Department of Education. The National Staff Development Council [NSDC] (Sparks, 2001) recommended that ongoing study groups meet regularly to discuss, brain-storm, and problem-solve significant issues. This finding suggests that networking and collaborating was occurring, however, the frequency and intensity of these informal gatherings were unknown. This finding also suggested that the selection of service providers may be more "happen-chance" or, conversely, may be entirely employer-directed, rather than being an integral part of a comprehensive plan of professional development.

The perceived value of these services raised several interesting questions when compared with the reported levels of participation. The most valued resources were: (1) informal networking and collegial support, (2) AB75 Principals' Training, (3) California School Leadership Academy, (4) state and national conferences, and (5) formal mentoring/coaching programs. There are similarities between two highly-valued activities and their corresponding rates of participation—informal networking and state and national conferences. However, this finding also points to a serious deficit between the perceived value of and the level of participation in three popular and highly-successful programs—AB75 Principals' Training, California School Leadership Academy, and formalized mentoring/coaching experiences. Certainly, fiscal uncertainty in California has severely restricted respondents' access to some of these opportunities. However, the lower levels of participation from the sample population remain troubling.

Conversely, a commonly-accessed source of professional development rated lower on the value scale—the California Department of Education. The Department's work ranges from providing technical assistance to serving as compliance monitors. No one likes to attend a workshop and be told that they were "doing it all wrong." Nevertheless, this finding suggests a review of the quality of all State presentations may be warranted.

Part IV – Content and Importance of Professional Development

According to the respondents, the most common content strands were: (1) educational leadership, (2) state content standards, (3) teacher evaluation, (4) employee discipline, and (5) technology. However, the strands most relevant to the respondents were: (1) teacher evaluation, (2) teacher selection, (3) educational leadership, (4) special education programs, and (5) violence prevention. Two notable findings surfaced. One, technology remains a frequent subject of workshops and training sessions. However, its relative importance to administrative practice is no longer acute. Perhaps, practitioners are now feeling more comfortable using technology, particularly in the front office (such as attendance accounting and disciplinary recordkeeping) and in electronic communication with staff. This finding suggests that employees may be saturated with technology training. Two, respondents clearly identified a need to be skilled in selecting prospective teachers. The availability of instruction in this area is limited (in fact, it was next-to-last on the rank-ordered list of topics). This finding suggests a need to inculcate administrators with effective interviewing, observing, and selecting techniques, so that only the best teachers are offered employment and serve the needs of children.

Part V – Open-Ended Responses

Respondents expressed varied opinions regarding: (1) goal-setting, (2) instructional leadership, (3) recruitment of qualified teachers and administrators, and (4) governmental mandates. The most notable concern was teacher evaluation and the critical need for administrators to fully understand effective instruction, student assessment, and intervention strategies and to be able to effectively coach and support teachers in the classroom. This finding suggests that a formalized, continuous coaching and mentoring program for administrators (both neophyte and veteran) was highly-valued by practitioners, particularly in this era of school accountability.

Summary

The findings of this study should encourage decision-makers to commit the needed capital, both in terms of time and money, to implement a long-term, career-cycle professional development program for all administrators. Several important goals were identified by alternative education site and program administrators: (1) to provide increased training opportunities regarding teacher selection and employment; (2) to increase the number of administrators approved to participate in AB75 Principals' Training and the Leadership Initiative [formally the California School Leadership Academy]; (3) to identify appropriate funding mechanisms to support on-going administrator training—grants and categorical funding—should be explored; and (4) to restructure the administrator's workday and specific job responsibilities, in order to provide the time necessary to participate in valued learning experiences and to collaborate with colleagues and district leadership.

These systemic reforms deserve more than just "lip-service," but rather a concerted effort on the part of district and county office decision-makers and state policy-makers to reform and improve the professional development of administrators. The author firmly believes that the same level of time and attention given to teachers' professional growth and collaboration must also be provided to site and program administrators. As Sparks (2001) eloquently stated, "...[w]ithout a sustained focus on improving the quality of school leadership, this nation's reform efforts will falter....[a]nd the ultimate losers will be our children" (para 7).

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Disappearing Principals

Katherine S. Cushing, Judith A. Kerrins & Thomas Johnstone

"Seeking school principals. Qualifications: Must be faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound; must communicate in multiple languages. Ability to be in more than one place simultaneously, to perform miracles and to walk on water highly desirable. Blue uniform with tights and cape will be furnished by employer."

Most principals know the above job description and attendant expectations, though intended to be humorous, are not too far off the mark from the day-in and day-out life of a principal. The demands of students, teachers and parents could keep any principal actively engaged in leadership work at his or her site from sun-up to beyond sun down.

Principals are responsible for implementing curriculum mandates that include getting all students — including English Language Learners and students with identified learning handicaps—— to achieve high standards, and for student performance on high-stakes assessments that could result in the eventual closing of the school.

Add to that the current budget crisis and inadequate funding for many instructional positions and educational programs, as well as the many new requirements of the federal—*No Child Left Behind* legislation, and it's easy to understand why many principals report they are working 60- and 70-hour work weeks and still not getting the job done!

It's also easy to understand why even qualified candidates might be hesitant to seek principal positions. When Michelle Hunter talks about her first year as an elementary principal in Glendora, she says that she was trying to do everything and do it well, yet she describes the time and the work as a "blur."

Guy Roubian, Upland High School principal, says he""disappeared" into his job and his family became used to not seeing him.

The time demands of school leadership are enormous; the rewards, these principals and others tell us, are all intrinsic: they come from dong the job well and seeing kids learn (examples of Herzberg's notions of job satisfaction and McGregor's *Theory Y* at their best).

Which leads us to the question: what really is the explanation for the shortage of credentialed applicants for principal positions across the state and nation that we've been hearing about for the past few years (Adams, 1999; Argetsinger, 2000; ERS, 1998).

Too Few Rewards

Directors of human resources express concern that fewer people are applying for administrative positions than in years past. They worry about having to reopen positions, re-advertise and re-interview if no qualified applicant is found.

This phenomenon is especially interesting because data indicate there isn't a shortage of credentialed prospective administrators in California. Data released by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing indicates that during the 1999-2000 school year 3,442 new administrative credentials were issued in California, representing about 41 percent of the total number of public school principal positions in the state.

During the previous year (1998-99) another 2,571 new administrative credentials were issued'— bringing the two-year total to 6,013, or enough to fill about 72 percent of the principal positions in the state (Birch, 2001).

Yet, human resources directors and school superintendents tell us that they just don't have the applicant pool they had in previous years.

A colleague who teaches prospective administrators explains the shortage this way: "My students want their credential so they can do curriculum work in the central office. Most state they would never want to be a school

principal because it's too demanding with too few rewards."

Superintendents and HR directors across the state identify four major reasons why they believe qualified individuals aren't applying for principal positions, three of which can be summed up as follows: poor working conditions. In other words,'"it's the job, stupid."

Low pay

First, they speak to the low pay of beginning principal positions. This issue is multifaceted. The pay differential between a beginning principal and an experienced teacher is not great, if it exists at all. Michelle (our principal who remembers her first year as a "blur") reports that accepting a principalship actually cost her money because of the additional hours of day care her children needed.

If salaries are calculated on an hourly or even daily basis, the discrepancy between teacher and principal salaries appears even greater — considering principals typically work longer school days, longer school weeks and longer school years. The amount of pay for the amount of work simply doesn't match up well.

Finally, highly effective principals are in demand for other, often better-paying positions — both within and outside the education system.

Job stress

Second, principals speak of stress related to the job of school principal. Stress comes from many arenas, including public criticism and high accountability demands (consider the impact of the API and soon the AYP on stress levels of principals and teachers).

Stress comes from high levels of responsibility while authority and flexibility are simultaneously reduced via union contracts and fiscal and legal requirements. It comes from being the first head to roll if reform demands and targets aren't met; and from perceiving the job as, for the most part, thankless.

Job stress manifests itself in many ways. Health issues such as high blood pressure and weight gain are prevalent among principals who have been on the job for a few years.

Long hours

Third, superintendents and human resources directors report the *long hours and time commitment required* of principals is another reason why some prospective principals aren't applying for the job. Guy, our principal who "disappeared" from his family, reports he typically spends four to five nights a week at school for one event or another, and often has games or other events that he must supervise or attend on weekends.

The issue is not only that the days are longer or that work is required on weekends, but the school year is significantly longer, too, and that takes a toll on principals' personal lives including, again, family and health-related issues (see Kerrins, Cushing, Johnstone, 2001).

So what can we do?

Solutions to what's really causing the shortage of applicants for administrative positions won't be simple to identify or implement, despite the misplaced belief that passing a test rather than completing a credential program will significantly increase the candidate pool. Nor will the solutions be the same from site to site, district to district or across the state.

In times of budget crises, simply increasing salaries won't be an option. And even if it were, the effects of increased remuneration — absent other substantive changes that address working conditions — probably wouldn't last for long.

Systemic support for principals

In our review of these issues, we've found that districts are exploring systemic ways to provide additional support to site administrators, including:

- additional released time and assignment of additional responsibilities, including instructional supervision, for high school teachers in leadership positions (such as department chairs);
- the notion of co-principals, where leadership, responsibility and accountability are shared among two individuals (in a more equal way than is traditionally done with a principal and assistant principal who is usually in charge of discipline); and
- rethinking the job responsibilities of principals and allowing them to designate the more technical aspects of the job (scheduling, routine correspondence, etc.) to an administrative assistant or secretary.

Other actions likely to foster principals' skill development and resiliency include providing time management classes and strategies, reducing the amount of and increasing the timeline for paperwork requirements, mentoring support, ongoing and supportive feedback from supervisors, opportunities to observe one another and participate in job-alike discussions and problem-solving, greater

technological resources and support, and built-in time for reflection.

District personnel must work with community members and legislators to help them better understand the role and demands of school principals, and to provide the legislative policies and personal support that will result in the job being do-able, and perceived as worth doing.

While both Michelle and Guy clearly articulated the demands and difficulties of the principalship, both remained committed to the work they do. Michelle said,'"The most gratifying part of this job is seeing students grow and helping teachers learn and grow. I'm still a teacher, only I have a different classroom. Now I'm a teacher of teachers."

We must find ways to encourage individuals with this attitude and perspective into leadership roles at the school site. Then we must do everything in our power to help them be successful. If we can do this, we won't need to be concerned about a principal shortage.

School districts, legislators and school board members should ask themselves the following questions: Are we identifying and mentoring prospective leaders into leadership roles? Have we identified various models and provided the support necessary for individuals to perform well — and thrive — in site leadership roles?

Are our demands and expectations for those in principal positions realistic and doable? Does our compensation package better reflect our job description and expectations for individuals in leadership roles and principal positions? Have we recognized the stress and health concerns often brought on by the job, and provided support in dealing with these issues?

If these questions are responded to in the affirmative, then we know we are on our way to reducing the shortage of quality administrative applicants for the principalship and ensuring that the necessary support is there for a rewarding career called "school principal."

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Credits

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Apprenticing Adolescents to Reading in Subject-Area Classrooms

Ruth Schoenbach, Jane Braunger, Cynthia Greenleaf & Cindy Litman

When middle and high school teachers reconceptualize students' classroom experience as a "cognitive apprenticeship," they begin to see the power of modeling their own strategies for reading and making sense of challenging texts in their disciplines.

Despite the increasing pressures for content coverage in the current high-stakes testing environment, a small but growing number of middle and high school teachers across the country are taking the time to teach about reading in their disciplines. They are learning to recognize their own complex discipline-specific reading processes and are helping their students do the same, implementing an approach we call Reading Apprenticeship.(r) These teachers' efforts have made a significant difference in attitudes and outcomes for many of their students, particularly for those who are reading well below grade level and who have "given up on reading."[1]

Creating Communities of Inquiry Among Teachers and Students

Since 1995, we and our colleagues in the Strategic Literacy Initiative at WestEd have worked with several hundred middle and high school social studies, math, English, and science teachers in a research and professional development program focused on "apprenticing" students to reading in those disciplines. In this way the students can become more engaged and confident readers of challenging academic texts. The teachers with whom we work are increasingly concerned about the gap between students' ability to read assigned texts and the standards they are expected to meet. However, few middle and high school teachers see their own abilities to read subject-area texts as a powerful resource for helping students approach these texts independently, confidently, and successfully. Because most secondary content teachers have not spent much time thinking about the mental processes by which they make sense of texts in their fields, this knowledge is invisible and therefore unavailable to most of them.

Although researchers have demonstrated positive effects on student achievement when teachers engage students in subject-area work through increased classroom conversation and, specifically, talk about how we read in subject areas,[2] this kind of talk is rare. Helping teachers become more aware of the literacies they bring to their subject-area expertise can open up powerful resources for teachers' and students' learning.[3] In professional development networks across the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as through national institutes for teacher and curriculum leaders, we and our colleagues have been helping teachers to establish a routine in their subject-area classrooms of discussing their own and their students' resourceful problem solving with texts.

The Reading Apprenticeship Framework

The Reading Apprenticeship approach is an instructional framework embedded in the process of teaching subject-area content, rather than an instructional add-on or additional curriculum.[4] Reading Apprenticeship helps students become better readers by:

- engaging students in more reading;
- making the teacher's discipline-based reading processes and knowledge visible to students;
- making the students' reading processes, knowledge, and understandings visible to the teacher and to one another;
- helping students gain insight into their own reading processes as a means of gaining strategic control over these processes; and
- helping students acquire a repertoire of problem-solving strategies for deepening comprehension of texts in various academic disciplines.

At heart, Reading Apprenticeship is a partnership of expertise, drawing on what teachers know and do as readers in their disciplines and on adolescents' unique and often underestimated strengths as learners. In any apprenticeship, an expert practitioner or mentor consciously models, directs, supports, and shapes an apprentice's growing repertoire of practice. The apprentice actively engages in the task, learning by doing with appropriate support and gradually moving toward skillful independence in the desired practice. Any number of learning contexts offer examples, from water skiing to cooking, from conducting an orchestra to performing surgery.

Some researchers studying novice and expert performance on a variety of mental tasks have adopted the metaphor of "cognitive apprenticeship" to describe a type of teaching designed to assist students in acquiring more proficient cognitive processes for such valued tasks as reading comprehension, composing, and mathematical problem solving.[5] If students are to become skilled readers of academic texts, the invisible processes involved in comprehending such texts must be made visible and accessible to them as they actually engage in meaningful literacy activities. Clearly, the best mentors for student apprentices learning discipline-based literacy practices are those teachers who have mastered these very practices — subject-area teachers. In Reading Apprenticeship classrooms, teachers reconceptualize subject-area learning as an apprenticeship in discipline-based practices of thinking, talking, reading, and writing.[6] In a Reading Apprenticeship classroom, then, the curriculum includes more than just what we read. It includes how we read and why we read in the ways we do.

To help teachers construct this new conception of reading in the subject areas, we have developed an instructional framework, derived from a view of literacy as socially and cognitively complex and drawing on the core metaphor of cognitive apprenticeship described above. The Reading Apprenticeship framework involves teachers in orchestrating and integrating four interacting dimensions of classroom life that support reading development. These dimensions are woven into subject-area teaching through "metacognitive conversations" — investigations into the thinking processes that students and teachers employ as they read. (See www.wested.org/stratlit for a visual representation of the framework.)

1. The social dimension: building a reading inquiry community.

The social dimension of the Reading Apprenticeship framework involves developing a sense of safety in the classroom community and making good use of adolescents' interest in peer interactions. As students share confusions about and difficulties with texts, they learn that confusion is a starting place for making meaning with text. Through ongoing conversations rooted in text, they also learn to ask critical questions about content, purpose, and perspective.

At Oak Grove Middle School in Concord, California, Monica Figueroa's seventh-grade social studies students are beginning their study of ancient Africa. Individually, they read and take notes on their understandings and questions about a section from their textbook on the legend of Kings Sumanguru and Sundiata. Then, in small groups, they confirm what they know (Who won the battle? How does magic fit here?) and try to solve problems, some of which stem from the dramatic

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...no single strategy or mix of strategies provides the key leverage point to increase students' engagement with academic texts. Rather, it is the changed climate of a classroom community in which inquiry into reading in chemistry, or in U.S. history, or in world literature, or in geometry becomes a shared topic of conversation.

language in the legend (What does it mean to "fix someone with a gaze"? If an arrow "grazes" someone, is that serious?). Confusion and comprehension problems that remain are then taken up by the whole class before students move on to the next segment of text. When these students share comprehension difficulties as well as understandings and ways of solving comprehension problems, they build both content knowledge about historical legends and a repertoire of reading strategies. As the year proceeds, the students also develop critical reading skill to raise questions about the accuracy and completeness of information in the text.

2. The personal dimension: creating a sense of agency

The personal dimension in the Reading Apprenticeship framework involves addressing adolescents' interest in exploring new aspects of their own identities. Teachers help students recognize and work with the skills they use in out-of-school settings and support them as they strive to become more strategic and purposeful about their reading.

One way that John Mach, an English Language Development teacher at Dixon High School in Dixon, California, helps his students build fluency and stamina is with supported independent reading. As part of their daily sustained silent reading (SSR), Mach's students respond to metacognitive prompts in their reading logs that help them deepen their thinking about their own reading processes and about the ideas in the text they are reading. Early in the year, a prompt might be: "I started to think about ___," or "An image I had in my mind was ___." By midyear, students prepare book talks, based on their logs, and seek to interest others in a favorite SSR book. The prompts are expanded to include critical responses to the text: "If I could, I would change the part about ___," or "I finally understood ___." Over time, the students read more and select from a wider array of books for independent reading, thereby building confidence and range. They grow both as readers and as competent, confident speakers of English.

3. The cognitive dimension: developing a comprehension toolkit

The cognitive dimension in the Reading Apprenticeship framework involves developing students' repertoire of specific comprehension and problem-solving strategies, with an emphasis on group discussion of when and why particular cognitive strategies are useful.

When students in Lisa Krebs' English class at Dixon High School study *The Odyssey*, they no longer read to answer the teacher's questions. Instead, they learn techniques to support a close reading of a difficult text that is driven by their own questions. Especially in the beginning, the students tackle the epic in manageable chunks, using metacognitive routines such as "think- aloud" and "talking to the text" to monitor comprehension and solve problems as they occur.[7] They learn to discuss the text in response to their own questions, as well as in the context of Greek mythology. At one point, students wonder why Odysseus and his sailors must steer a course between the hazards of Scylla and Charybdis. Why not take a different route? The ensuing discussion brings out important distinctions between the constraints Greek mythology places on a hero's quest and the options a contemporary explorer might have, for example, in avoiding physical danger in a wilderness expedition.

4. The knowledge-building dimension: tapping and extending knowledge of content, text, and discourse

The knowledge-building dimension in the Reading Apprenticeship framework

involves identifying and expanding the knowledge students bring to a text, including knowledge about text structure, about topics and content, about word structure and meaning, and about discourse patterns and signals. The last of these refers to the particular ways ideas are organized and expressed in different disciplines and to the various genres within each discipline.

At Oak Grove Middle School, Dorothea Jordan taps into the knowledge of opposites that her seventh-grade pre-algebra students already possess. She uses that knowledge to help build the concept of positive and negative integers. Together, she and her students develop a chart with examples (up/down, young/old, east/west). As the students read word problems, they are thus able to be alert to clue words that signal positive and negative. In addition, they learn to represent the information graphically on a number line or in a diagram of positively and negatively charged particles. Jordan is helping students build a knowledge framework for transforming word problems into algebraic symbols.

Metacognitive Conversation

In a classroom community of readers, the metacognitive conversation is the central dynamic that animates and links the four dimensions of the Reading Apprenticeship framework. In a metacognitive conversation, teacher and students discuss their personal relationships to reading in the discipline, the cognitive strategies they use to solve comprehension problems, the structure and language of particular types of texts, and the kinds of knowledge required to make sense of reading materials.

At Skyline High School in Oakland, California, Willard Brown focuses explicitly on academic literacy in his chemistry classes throughout the year, emphasizing ways of reading, thinking, and talking that are particular to science. Rather than present a smorgasbord of activities, he concentrates on a handful of reading and discourse routines that he uses over and over again in different ways. The routines stress metacognition — thinking about one's thinking — and collaborative meaning making.

Brown has integrated Reading Apprenticeship approaches into his science teaching as part of an overall mission to enable a more diverse group of students to enroll and succeed in high-level science classes. About half the students at Skyline are African American, 20% are Latino, 20% are Asian American, and just over 5% are European American. An effort toward greater inclusiveness in Honors Chemistry at Skyline has resulted in classes containing students with diverse knowledge, skills, and experiences. Some enter the class as relatively skilled academic readers, while others struggle with academic texts.

Brown and other Reading Apprenticeship teachers judiciously incorporate a variety of cognitive strategies — such as visualizing, summarizing, questioning, connecting to other experiences or texts, and so on — to help students develop a repertoire of comprehension problem-solving tools. However, no single strategy or mix of strategies provides the key leverage point to increase students' engagement with academic texts. Rather, it is the changed climate of a classroom community in which inquiry into reading in chemistry, or in U.S. history, or in world literature, or in geometry becomes a shared topic of conversation.

Changing Classroom Practice

As teachers practice making the invisible processes of reading visible with colleagues in professional communities and as they practice looking at and listening closely to students' reading performance, they reformulate their assumptions about what reading is and about students' reading strengths and challenges. As part of this process, teachers begin to make powerful changes in the way they approach reading in their subject-area classes.

Demystifying reading. Early in the school year, teachers working to embed a Reading Apprenticeship approach in their subject-area classes talk explicitly with students about the ideas behind Reading Apprenticeship and invite students to bring in texts they choose for the teacher to do a "cold" think-aloud reading. In this process, the teacher literally thinks out loud as she reads, pausing after every sentence or phrase, as she works to make sense of a text that she is reading for the first time. Gayle Cribb, a social studies teacher at Dixon High School, describes the power of this method for her students:

> My students were completely amazed that I, as a mature, adult reader, would find some texts challenging. They delighted in watching me struggle to understand the texts they brought me, recognizing the feeling of being lost, but surprised by my patience and tenacity, by my vigorous search for handholds and willingness to stretch for any shred of meaning. Many found strategies like using the pictures, slowing down, breaking it into chunks, using

> my knowledge of Spanish, thinking about what the root of a word might mean, wondering about meanings in new contexts, flat-out guessing, etc., to be a complete revelation.

By making their own reading processes — the confusions, clarifications, and connections — visible, teachers demystify reading and underscore the idea that reading fluency and comprehension depend on the type of text one is reading and on the reader's experience with that type of text and its content. The teachers' willingness to take the risk involved in showing their students how they actually work to comprehend texts helps students realize that it is strategic effort and not magic that is involved in comprehension. Students are then engaged in "thinking aloud" or "talking to the text" themselves, to help them become aware of their own thinking processes and expand their problem-solving repertoires.

Returning reading to subject-area classrooms. Many well-intentioned teachers have been "teaching around the text" in an effort to make sure their students — many of whom are not prepared to read and understand their academic texts independently — can "get the concepts and content" of the curriculum. In its best form, this kind of compensatory teaching can result in a very engaging kind of classroom, with gifted teachers involving students in discussions about content. In its worst form, of course, students copy notes from chalkboards and study these to pass their course tests. In either form, however, students do not receive the support they need to develop as more sophisticated and independent readers and learners.

In Brown's chemistry class, the textbook plays a prominent role in student learning. The primary tool to support close reading of the textbook is a two-column reading log. In one column, students record what they "see" in the text — writing down passages from the text itself; in the other, they record their thinking — patterns they see, questions they have, connections they make to prior knowledge. The focus of the reading log changes from chapter to chapter, depending on the content, the demands of the text, and students' increasing academic literacy skills. Individual reading logs form the basis for classroom discussions during "preambles" — daily warm-ups that bring students' individual reading and thinking into the wider classroom community.

Providing access to disciplinary discourse. The primary goal of Reading Apprenticeship is to increase academic opportunities for adolescents who do not see themselves as readers of rigorous texts. We see this increased access as a vital means of working toward equity in academic achievement in secondary school and beyond. As teachers become more aware of the ways they and their disciplinary colleagues make sense of challenging texts — asking different kinds of questions in reading science, social studies, literature, or mathematics, for example — they are able to talk more descriptively and explicitly, as Brown does here:

> Sometimes you read something and you know, "Ha, they're going to talk about this next." It's called "foreshadowing," and that foreshadowing happens in science. There's a sense of a rhythm to science texts: they talk about this, then they're probably going to talk about the other thing.

Making the invisible visible in this way lets students in on how reading works in different disciplines and enables them to "break the codes" of academic language.[8] Brown and his colleagues see promising signs of movement toward equity goals: "The African American students are owning the sciences as part of their school and telling their friends and communicating that they can be successful in chemistry classes."

Covering content by discovering more powerful ways to read. One of the most vexing problems content-area teachers face as they work to embed the Reading Apprenticeship approach into their classes is content coverage. There are no easy solutions to this problem. Supporting students' disciplinary reading does take time, particularly

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if teachers focus on helping their students learn how to grapple with texts to gain understanding.

However, as teachers begin to see their students gain confidence and become more willing to struggle with reading and understanding challenging academic texts, they will become more confident that the classroom time it takes to model and engage students in thinking aloud through an opening paragraph or a challenging segment of a text is time well spent. In fact, many teachers have told us that, when they slow reading down at strategic times to model productive comprehension processes, their students gradually develop the capacity to read longer, even more challenging texts more independently and with greater understanding. Brown's experience makes this point concretely. "In the fall semester my class progressed less quickly through the textbook than some of my colleagues' classes that are not using Reading Apprenticeship or the like. By spring we have caught up or passed by because students are reading more independently."

Learning to see students differently. At the end of the year, one teacher who participated in professional development with the Strategic Literacy Initiative wrote:

> I no longer feel or think that any student is hopeless. Yes, there will still be strugglers, but these methods have given me a way to help students see exactly where they need to grow. Students are always thinking something as they read. I didn't believe that before. Reading Apprenticeship has helped me pull out that thinking to make it a valuable part of class discussion.

A number of teachers with whom we work initially despaired that their students would ever become strong readers of academic texts in their disciplines. Indeed, much of the popular media and even education journals had reinforced these teachers' impressions that students who are "reading below grade level" are hopelessly behind and can never "catch up."

One of the key professional development goals we hold for teachers is that they will gain new awareness of the complexity of their own and their colleagues' reading processes and theories. And we hope that they will also gain a parallel awareness of and ability to work constructively with their students' reading processes and theories. This includes being able to understand students' reading of a broad range of texts. Like adults, adolescents can struggle with certain texts while they read others of equivalent difficulty — e.g., *Wired* magazine, automotive technical manuals, passages from the Bible — with fluency and understanding. Teachers build bridges to academic literacy as they learn to tap the resources students bring from the multiple literacies in which they engage outside of school.[9] They also come to see that reading ability is situation-specific.

As Reading Apprenticeship teachers begin to see shifts in their students' sense of efficacy with academic texts, their beliefs about students' overall capacities often shift as well. For many teachers, the discovery that students are always thinking is a powerful leverage point for gaining access to their students' needs and to the gaps in their understanding.

For students, the growing awareness that reading is an interactive process, a process of sense-making between the reader and text, is not only empowering but enlightening. Students shift from saying, "I just don't get this," to describing more specifically where their comprehension breaks down. As one student said with a sense of surprise, "A big thing that changed for me this year was with history. . . . You know, in this class you keep stopping to summarize as you go along, make connections, visualize what you're reading, and all that, so after a while, it hits you, this stuff really happened." Students' increased interaction with texts can lead to deeper involvement in the subject area itself.

Getting There from Here

For teachers to make the kinds of changes these Reading Apprenticeship teachers have made, they need a professional community in which they, like their students, can practice inquiry into reading, have time to slow reading and thinking down, and feel safe sharing their thinking with others. Teachers also need collaborative opportunities to investigate students' reading and thinking processes, and they need practice in making sense of students' meaning-making with texts. Teachers in these kinds of professional communities become more patient with themselves and with their students — even as they raise their expectations. Teachers, like their students, become more willing to take the risks and expend the effort to take on the task of making discipline-based reading an essential aspect of the subject-area classroom.

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Intervention & Access: Staying Focused on the Core

Leslie McPeak

During the last decade, schools have paid considerable attention to the area of reading intervention. With efforts such as No Child Left Behind, Reading First and exit exams, the focus on intervention has intensified like never before. While there is common focus on the issue of intervention, the clarity of what intervention is and how best to approach it is lacking.

Case in point. Take a minute to consider what comes to mind when you think about intervention. If you are like most people, you probably thought about small group instruction, specialized materials and remediation based on assessed student needs.

What do those things have in common? Well, the simple fact is that they focus on the student. In essence, the message is that deficiencies lie within the student, thus the need for intervention. While all those things are appropriate and necessary when addressing intervention, they are not enough.

System in Need of Intervention

What we have is a most interesting paradox. On the one hand I acknowledge the need to diagnose and prescribe based on student needs; on the other, I'll argue— persuasively, I hope — that while many students may need intervention, this is a symptom of the fact that it is the system (or lack of) within the institution called school that is also in need of an intervention.

While an effective and comprehensive system's approach to literacy requires that a continuum of differentiated interventions and assistance be provided to students requiring such services, it is essential that such a system is rooted in data, ongoing professional development and assessment and monitoring. The model of delivery shown in the graphic does a wonderful job of building off of California's vision in reading while enhancing it to accommodate federal efforts in No Child Left Behind and in the reform occurring at the national level with special education.

Fundamental to this model is effective core instruction. Only by assuring a quality and effective "general health plan" (core) can we prevent the over-reliance on ambulances and emergency services (intervention).

It All Starts at the Core

Effective literacy reform must begin at the core level. Core is the adopted and articulated program used to assure grade-level standards instruction for all students. Students require the assurance of systematic, scientifically-based instruction to acquire the necessary skills required to be proficient readers and writers. California has addressed this by providing a list of approved materials that are both comprehensive and aligned to grade-level standards.

Classroom supports

Many students will need additional, differentiated support in attaining many of their grade-level standards. For that reason our new adoptions include what I refer to as "classroom supports." It is here that small-group, focused instruction is provided using universal access techniques and strategies that are differentiated on a continuum of intensity. Needed preview, review and practice is primarily focused at helping students within the classroom acquire the core curriculum.

Schoolwide interventions

While classroom supports are adequate for many of our students, teachers will still have students who lack foundational skills and underpinnings. This is usually manifested in performance many levels below current grade-level placement. For these students, while classroom supports are needed, they will not be sufficient. These students will need to avail themselves of intensive intervention services.

Through the use of diagnostic assessment, some students may access a targeted intervention service for something such as phoneme awareness or fluency, while others may require a more comprehensive intervention treatment plan for multiple areas of need. Due to the scope of services needed, intervention should be offered within a schoolwide setting so that groupings can occur through identified needs, versus each teacher trying to accommodate the wide range of needs in each class.

Within this model the school identifies scientifically-based intervention programs that can be offered to meet the assessed needs of their students. Clear benchmarks are established for the various services so that a coherent continuum of intensity is established. The rule of thumb is that the more intensive the need, the more intensive the intervention.

Even though we are currently experiencing what seems to be the most effective reading and language arts adoption California has had in its history, my concern is that the core programs, as they are used currently, are not differentiated enough to bring the needed changes that must be in place if we are to assure successful access and mastery for all students.

K-3 intervention

At the K-3 level, for instance, intervention is only at the classroom support level, being provided through curriculum-embedded components of the adopted series. The K-3 California road map in reading and language arts offers direction and guidance at the core level, as well as classroom supports aimed at students needing assistance to fully access the core. Teachers, however, have a fair number of students requiring intensive intervention as well.

The need for more intensive intervention at the K-3 level, within a comprehensive literacy delivery system, is also recognized by publishers themselves. For example, SRA, publisher of Open Court, has recently added an intensive program to complement Open Court, starting in second grade. They are also field-testing an intensive intervention program for kindergarten and first grade. Likewise, Houghton Mifflin has an intensive intervention program for second grade and beyond.

Once these components are well known and used in correlation with the state-approved reading adoptions, California schools will be in a better position to offer a continuum of service that includes a core reading program and strategic classroom supports, as well as an intensive intervention for students two or more years behind in reading performance.

Until such a system is in place, we have what Ed Kameenui has so eloquently coined, "The rhetoric of all, the reality of some and the unmistakable smell of mortality."

While some people will argue that we have moved Kameenui's "reality of some" to the "reality of most," we must deal with the fact that we will not reach the goal of leaving no child behind until we successfully meet the needs of all our students. Getting to 100 percent requires holding ourselves responsible for the bottom quartile. Assuming students will catch up when offered a quality core adoption with only classroom support is wishful thinking. Catching up is a low probability occurrence.

Secondary intervention

In California at grades 4-12 we have just the opposite problem. Whereas the K-3 model of literacy instruction does not include aligned intensive intervention support, at the 4-12 level intervention is defined only in terms of a comprehensive, intensive intervention requiring two to three hours daily. While there are many intermediate and secondary students who require

this level of support, even a greater number of students require a more targeted intervention. These students may be candidates for a scientifically-based intervention aimed at a particular skill, such as multi-syllabic word attack or fluency. Both of these intervention examples take approximately 45 minutes per day rather than two or three hours.

Why is this important? By focusing in on the one or two areas of identified need, students falling into this profile can receive targeted intervention while continuing to receive core English language arts instruction. This design allows students' needs to be addressed without denying them access to their core, grade-level standards.

Untangling the Issues

We must untangle the issue of accessing the core curriculum from the issue of intervention. In the preponderance of cases, it is not an either/or situation. We must stay focused on the goal of increasing student achievement so that all students become literate and proficient. Students need as much access to the core curriculum as possible.

For students struggling in reading, access must be within the context of scientifically-based core material, coupled with effective instructional strategies that ensure universal access and equity. Many students will also need access to effective intervention services and programs. Effective diagnostic assessment will be key in identifying what the issue(s) are facing individual students, and whether classroom supports will be enough or whether a targeted intervention or a comprehensive intervention will also be needed.

The point is that a comprehensive literacy approach will require all of these levels of service. We can not reach all children without taking care of each child. As Kameenui says, "the education of ALL children is not merely a vision, but it is warranted and attainable; that is, we have the means to do it." We simply need the will to provide the guidance and accountability to see that it happens.

While it is true that we are well on the road to large scale, sustainable improvements in the area of reading and language arts instruction, we must recognize that the complexities of traveling this path are many. Many competing distracters are conspiring to limit the effectiveness of our efforts. One such distracter is that in our attempt to design and implement a doable system, we have over-simplified the task of assuring success for all our students in the area of reading and language arts.

Differentiated Services

Many educators believe improved performance for all students requires implementing one of the state-approved language arts adoptions with quality professional development, support and monitoring. While these things are needed, they are not sufficient by themselves to result in dramatic achievement gains for all students. Such gains require that a continuum of differentiated services and supports be provided to students based on their assessed areas of needs, while assuring access to high quality, grade-level core instruction.

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Last Chance to Become Readers: Pre-referral Interventions

Judy K. Montgomery & Barbara J. Moore-Brown

About 45 fourth- and fifth-grade students were having serious reading problems. Time was running out. They were about to be referred for three or more hours each of testing and observation on the way toward special education.

Was this the appropriate next step for the struggling readers? Current educational research and theory says maybe not. Significant numbers of students in special education could have avoided a disability label, and costly special education services, if they had been given specific instruction in reading (Lyon, 1998). In fact, many projects across the country have been successful with short-term interventions for students prior to conducting assessments to determine eligibility (Berninger, 2003; Foorman et al., 1998).

No Child Left Behind, Reading First and IDEA clearly direct schools to offer extra assistance before turning to special education. This district decided to find out if pre-referral intervention would work for them.

In May of 2002, the El Rancho Unified School District's department of Special & Alternative Education was awarded a grant of $2,000 through Region 11 Coordinating Council California Reading Initiative and Special Education. The proposal was to develop and implement a prevention/ intervention program in literacy, specifically addressing students who were about to be referred for special education assessment for suspected learning disabilities.

Getting Started

The funding from the small state grant paid for the consultant services of a reading professor at a local university, who designed the intervention protocol and assisted the district director in development of the criteria for the program. Resource specialists and speech-language specialists were selected as the professionals to implement the program. A new assessment instrument, GRADE (2001), published by American Guidance Services, was used to assess the students, since this tool allowed for pre- and post-testing of students over a relatively short time period.

Teacher Training

A critical aspect of all intensive, explicit interventions is good teacher training and consistent instructional delivery (Berninger, 2003). AGS personnel trained elementary resource specialists, speech-language pathologists and school psychologists in the use of the GRADE. The faculty consultant trained the same staff in the intervention protocol. The protocol followed the precepts of the report "Put Reading First" (2001), incorporating the findings of the National Reading Panel on instructional effectiveness.

In this report, five building blocks of reading were identified: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and text comprehension. Based upon the concepts in "Put Reading First," the NRP report and "California Reading Initiative and Special Education" (CDE, 1999), the project provided struggling readers with an intense diet of intervention in all five of these building blocks.

Regardless of individual scores on the pre-test, each of the project students received explicit, systematic reading instruction in all of the five areas every day. This was significantly different than the conventional approach in special education, which has been to remediate a deficit area. Reading in upper elementary grades is often predominately text comprehension, with almost no explicit assistance with phonics or fluency.

Seventeen activities that targeted each of the five areas were developed and taught to the

resource/speech and language teaching teams. The teams had the freedom to arrange the daily hour of explicit instruction in any way that was meaningful for small groups of three to five students.

The last chance

Ten of the 12 elementary schools in the district participated. All were culturally diverse, low-performing urban schools in a district with a 98 percent Hispanic population. Five struggling fourth and fifth graders were selected and pre-assessed for the program at each site. Thirty-four students completed the program. Eighteen were identified as English Language Learners, 13 as English-only students and three had been designated fluent English. Reading instruction is often unavailable to upper elementary students, so we knew this might be their last chance to become readers before special education.

The resource specialist and speech-language pathologist teams at each site delivered the instruction for one hour per day for nine weeks, for a total of 45 hours of instruction. Students were pre-tested and post-tested on the GRADE, Level 2, which reflected the skill level at which the students were actually reading. Standard scores for Vocabulary and Comprehension subtests of Level 2 were recorded, as well as a total test score and Growth Scale Value to allow statistical analysis of the scores.

What happened?

Although the teaching teams sensed that children were progressing in the daily intensive interventions, they did not realize how much improvement was taking place.

Reading Intervention Program Activities

In each prevention/intervention session, each student will:

Phonemic awareness

1. Listen to three to five pages read aloud from a fiction book at grade level.
2. Engage in three PA activities orally, using words from the book.
3. Engage in a syllable activity, using words from the book (orally).

Phonics

4. List (write or say) all the words in the selection by number of syllables. Keep the list for further activities.
5. Complete a Making Words activity for three polysyllabic words from fiction book, selected by teacher. Complete three made by other students in class.
6. Create and then "do" the WordWall with assistance and direction for phonics activities (word families, phonograms, inflective endings, prefixes, suffixes).

Fluency

7. Read at independent reading level (95 percent accuracy) for five minutes. The book, magazine or story is self-selected if possible. Use his/her comprehension bookmark made earlier, updated as necessary.
8. Complete one "Reading Sounds Like Talking" activity with the group and with a partner.

Vocabulary

9. Make a list of compound words from the Read Aloud book selection. Make up a game of compounds with index cards. Play the game.

Fluency

10. Read a list of familiar words (horizontally) from the independent reading book at the rate of one per second. Count the number read correctly in one minute. Keep data on chart.
11. Read a list of less familiar words (horizontally) from the guided reading (Read Aloud) book rapidly and accurately. Skip any word not known and teacher will provide it. Count up the number read correctly in one minute. Keep date on chart.
12. "Chunk" 5 sentences from his/her independent reader. "Chunk" three more in a group activity from the book read aloud.

Text comprehension

13. Listen to a trade book (story) read aloud. Complete story grammar marker orally, then in written form.

Fluency and sight vocabulary

14. Read a list of instant words (240). Add any two that were difficult to the WordWall. Remove any words no longer needed from the WordWall.
15. Select three challenging words for the Making Words activity for someone else in the group. Make it up and "bag it" for the next day.

Text comprehension

16. Read one paragraph of a grade-level text (any subject) for a specific purpose stated by the teacher. Read until answer is found. Write answer on a brightly colored sticky or book flag and place in book.

Reading and writing for meaning

17. Make a seven-page "little book" every day and enter the information needed.

They were all pleasantly surprised to find that the mean difference in pre- and post-test scores was 16.6 points in Growth Scale Value. A paired t- test analysis of mean differences from pre- to post-testing showed that the change was highly statistically significant ($t = -6.5$, $df = 33$, $p < .01$). Overall, the students experienced a significant increase in reading achievement.

Looking at reading levels of a nationally representative sample of second graders from the standardization of the GRADE as a comparison group, it was possible to have a "control group." The conventional statistical format of a control group gave us a point of reference to evaluate our progress.

The target students median gain on the GSV was 20.5 points. This exceeded expectations for student change in reading (20 points) in one year of instruction at this level. The target group made one year of reading gains in six months. Further analysis of these results has shown that 11 of the 34 students (33 percent) scored at the ceiling of the vocabulary subtest in Level 2, and therefore could not even show their more advanced skills on GRADE, Level 2.

In fact, not all of the gain was able to be measured since many students reached a ceiling on Level 2 on the post-test and could have easily scored higher on Level 3. GSV can be calculated and compared across levels, so this oversight can be rectified the next time we conduct the program.

What does it mean?

Using a norm-referenced diagnostic reading assessment to measure change, students at great risk for reading failure who participated in the reading intervention, administered by well-trained resource specialists and speech language pathologists, made one year's growth in reading in nine weeks, compared to a representative sample. The amount of reading improvement of these students was statistically significant at the .01 level.

During the course of the study, we also collected student interview information and data regarding perceptions of the specialists. A qualitative analysis will be completed on the student information and a quantitative analysis will be completed on the specialist information.

Our schools participated in a second nine-week round of the project during the winter and spring of 2003. Teaching teams have reported that it is much easier to implement the program the second time because they know it well and can make better transitions from one activity to the next.

Challenges

The greatest challenge was to ensure that all of the sites were following through on each aspect of the program. It was a comprehensive program — pre-testing, scheduling groups, conducting the intervention every day or noting any missed days, and finally post-testing.

We handled this challenge by asking one of the speech-language pathologists to function as the project coordinator. She called and followed up, and organized the process from school to school.

We also had concerns from the teacher teams that what they were doing was a departure from their usual special education service delivery model. Some found it very difficult to schedule the time, and others needed encouragement to continue for nine weeks to give the students the consistency and repetition that is necessary to learn.

What other benefits occurred?

Student interviews indicated that the fourth and fifth graders became more aware of themselves as readers. Anecdotal reports from teachers indicated that the students became more confident in their abilities. Both their skills and their self-esteem increased. Identified students on the caseloads of the resource teachers and SLPs also benefited collaterally, as the specialists reported using some of the explicit interventions with these students.

Resource and SLPs learned about reading interventions together, and learned about each other's skills. Many were collaborative with their special education partner for the first time. Several remarked how they were able to observe students in this intensive intervention and gain more information about skill development than they would have gained from testing the same child.

As a group, the implementers remarked on how they became convinced that students do need more practice with skills than we usually allow time for. Repetition and routine literally supported the students toward reading improvement. Students began to take responsibility for some activities they were able to do with ease. They directed reading activities as the groups met each day and they learned what to expect and how to be successful.

So, would you do it all over again?

We were very pleased with the results of our study. To achieve student growth at the >. 01 level of significance in nine weeks is highly

reassuring. While this was a viable alternative to special education, two of the 34 students ultimately did qualify for the special education program.

We believe that the program design was a solid foundation for a prevention/intervention program. It was based on scientific reading research and demonstrated effectiveness in both student learning and educator collaboration in our schools. It was indeed the last, best chance for these upper elementary students to be readers.

In an elementary principal's meeting in spring, the principals asked to keep the program the following year. The superintendent wanted to expand it. So do we. We will be organizing our training and working with general and special education staff to provide pre-referral intervention again next year.

We think we accomplished a lot with $2,000.

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Credits

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The Use of Radio Drama in a Community School Program

Kern County

Cameron Weckerly

Program Description

Community Learning Center Tech launched its Radio Drama/Internet Radio Class in September, 2003. Radio Drama is centered around production of "old-time" radio programming in the mold of H.G. Wells's *War of the Worlds* or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes*.

Production of this kind entails one group of students reading scripts in character while another group of students simultaneously performs "Foley" or live sound effects. The programs are recorded "live" onto hard-disk with little or no editing. Finished productions are available to the listening audience on the Internet using ShoutCast technology. Students who become competent with the recording technology are also allowed access to the studio after school, to work on music projects with Mr. Weckerley, the Radio Drama program's teacher. These programs align with standards in the areas of music, drama, language arts and social studies and provide context for the students in all these areas.

Radio drama lends itself for use in alternative education settings for a number of reasons. First, its natural ability to tap into the unique properties of story-telling, engages people across generational, cultural and educational lines. Seventeen-year-old gang members have been absolutely captivated by an 85-year old story-teller of a different, race, gender, and culture.

Second, story telling almost inevitably leads to truth-telling. When people are telling stories they are far less likely to edit themselves. This is particularly true if they are telling personal stories. Third, it engages students in a multi-modal learning environment that reaches across the curriculum. Students learn new vocabulary and information about history and the social milieu of various cultures, etc., almost by osmosis when they are working on their part of the script. Some other excellent reasons are outlined by Joe McHugh in his excellent article, "Why Radio Drama." "Another unique aspect of the radio drama format is that readers are not cast by appearance, race, or even gender, but by voice alone. This opens up an intriguing array of opportunities for a teacher when deciding which students will play which parts. One strategy for developing empathy and tolerance, for instance, is to cast an Hispanic or Anglo youth as an Asian or African American, or a gang member to play a police officer or worried parent. In this way, the student identifies with the character and experiences the character's perspective from the inside, emotionally as well as intellectually.""[1]

Case Histories

Lester is one of those students who defies categorization and causes Alternative Education teachers to shake their heads. He has been in and out of the community school programs most of his career and seems to constantly be in some kind of trouble. Lester came to the radio drama program at CLC Tech through the back door, so to speak, when he started hanging around with the after-school music students. His natural talent was easily recognizable, but he had

trouble expressing himself because of his habit of speaking so quickly as to be incomprehensible. Upon his first attempts to audition for a part, he performed dismally as he stumbled over words and spoke in a monotone voice. As Lester did not have a reputation for being a scholarly student, it surprised Mr. Weckerly, the music production teacher, when Lester requested that he be allowed to take the script home and rehearse before his next audition. With a few days of diligent practice, Lester not only successfully auditioned for a part, but his perseverance and dedication allowed his natural ability to shine and captivate the listening audience. His success with the radio drama has spilled over to his academic subjects, as his general education teachers currently report, that his enthusiasm for school has increased and his verbal skills have also improved.

Brandon is one of those students who is difficult to "read" as he hardly spoke when he enrolled at CLC Tech, which is where he was sent after a teacher in his high school district interpreted something he had said as a terrorist threat. That, however, is the magic of radio drama. Once Brandon was introduced to the program, and became comfortable with the other students and the teacher, he was incessant about reading for parts and contributing to the production. He became a leader on the set, and offered many wonderful and creative ideas to the program. The following is a bit of Brandon's experience, as told in his own words.

"Mr. Cameron Weckerly, our radio drama teacher, began to assign parts and rolls to the students for our play, ""It was a Dark and Stormy Night." I wanted to work with "Foley" (sound affects) because I had very little charisma and I was very shy. But after the student who was playing Igor really wasn't putting a lot of effort into his character, the rest of the students began to say his line in order to show how it was supposed to be done. When I said the line though, everyone looked at me. Then Mr. Weckerly said, "Brandon, you have a new job!" He assigned me the part of Igor. After a few rehearsals, we finally recorded the play and put it on the Internet. It was so exciting. We did a few new plays after that. We all had a great time laughing, talking, and joking. It became the highlight of the day. Throughout the morning, I was always looking forward to that class. But all good things come to an end. At least that was the case for me. "

In a follow-up Brandon recently wrote:

"The radio drama class gave me a chance to escape from my shell of isolation and into a real life character with the gift of social improvement. And that's what I will always remember. I will only return to CLC Tech to visit Mr. Weckerly and all of my other teachers. I have no plan of being kicked out of high school. I like it at my new school and I will stay with a sense of pride that CLC Tech gave to me"

In the case of CLC-TECH, radio drama has been an effective addition to the program. Many CLC students do not function well in a traditional school setting because their brains do not process in a visual/linear fashion. Not only does radio drama suit non-linear thinkers, but it also connects simultaneous left-brain/right-brain thinking. Much like playing music, performance in a radio drama requires students to decode while performing and adding expression as well as being aware of the other elements of the production going on simultaneously. Joe McHugh concludes, "...the radio drama combines a story-based approach with a participatory activity that, depending on the script, can effectively integrate the language arts, history, science, health and arts curricula. It provides teachers with an effective teaching tool that can greatly aid them in the difficult work of motivating and informing their students."[2]

Mr. Weckerly couldn't agree more with this view.

[1] http://callingcrane.com/radiodramas.html Used by permission

[2] Ibid.

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A Collaborative Approach to Educating and Treating Juveniles with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Juvenile Hall: A Report on the Mental Health Therapeutic Unit in Juvenile Hall

Alameda County

Charlene-Lewis Blackwell, Ed.D, Stephen A. Karass, Madeleine Nelson, and Nina H. Ramsey

Program Description

Educating and treating juveniles in the criminal justice system presents unique challenges. Studies show that over one-half of all juveniles in the system have moderate to severe learning and behavioral disabilities such as dyslexia, learning disorders, attention deficit disorder, attention hyperactive deficit disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder, among others.

The number of juveniles with diagnosed emotional and behavioral disorders, including clinical mental health diagnoses, is much smaller, but because of the pervasive behaviors associated with disorders, there is a potential for these juveniles to hurt themselves or others. Acutely psychotic juveniles are hospitalized even though in custody. The others, not actively psychotic and housed in the locked juvenile facility, are in need of specialized education and individual mental health treatment.

Already predisposed to impulsive and aggressive behavior, they may refuse to get out of bed, refuse to shower, refuse to leave the shower, erupt in anger or withdraw in silence from all contact. They have poor social interaction skills and difficulty managing intense emotional states. Many have been in several foster/group or residential placements or admitted to acute hospital settings. Most have been neglected, abused, and/or exploited.

Historically, the criminal justice system has been ill equipped to care for these juveniles either housing them in the general population or isolating them. In recent years juvenile justice has made some essential changes to the way it treats mentally ill juveniles primarily by recognizing they need individualized and specialized treatment in a safe, secure setting.

Day Treatment Program

On September 23, 2002, Alameda County Probation, Alameda County Juvenile Justice Medical Services, Alameda County Office of Education and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services' Guidance Clinic opened a unit in Juvenile Hall for detained males and females who exhibit severe emotional and behavioral problems and have special educational needs.

The unit is self-contained: Juveniles eat, go to school and attend therapy in the living area. A multidisciplinary staff of teachers, psychologists, counselors and institutional staff provide a structured, safe, therapeutic,

predictable environment for these detainees and wards.

A point and level behavioral management system is used in which points are earned for participating in school and therapeutic sessions, managing difficult situations or appropriately expressing themselves. Staff assess each juvenile on a weekly basis to determine if they are receiving the appropriate level of services and structure.

The therapeutic atmosphere envelops the unit from the 8:15 a.m. community meeting to the evening group on goals. The programming is integrated with classroom teaching, therapeutic services and case management services for those leaving for placements or home. All juveniles on medication participate in a medication group facilitated by a psychiatric nurse. On weekends, Mental Health Staffing is provided from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Detainees in the Juvenile Hall remain in custody an average of 29 days; however, the average number of days spent in the Mental Health Therapeutic Unit is 20 days. This may be because it takes a few days to identify the behavior of the juveniles and also because once in the unit they stabilize sufficiently to return to the general population.

School Instructional Program

At 8:30 a.m. the school-based day-treatment program begins with a community meeting. From there the group of up to 20 males and females are divided by gender to attend class and group sessions throughout the day. Each school day ends with a briefing, wherein staff review the day's problems and set goals for the next day.

Instruction is provided by teachers with credentials in Special Education and General Education. The teacher/student ratio is 1/10, an optimum model for quality intervention and instruction. Each classroom has a teacher, instructional assistant, probation counselor and a mental health therapist. A voluntary reading specialist provides additional tutoring in literacy.

The instructional day comprises both academic and therapeutic activities geared toward maximizing positive student behaviors as well as advancing each student's academic skills. All courses are taught for grade and credit. The academic courses include English/language arts, math, physical education, music, art, health education and life skills.

The English/Language Arts program uses a unique model known as Character Based Literacy that promotes reading and reading comprehension. It also provides new opportunities for self-discovery and problem solving that can be used by the juvenile after his or her release.

Character Based Literacy

Character Based Literacy uses a cognitive behavior model validated by research as the most effective tool for use with high risk delinquent and criminally oriented offenders. Cognitive behavior treatment models offer substantive alternatives to the negative pattern of behavior in which juveniles with serious mental health problems and disordered thinking patterns often become involved.

To address the thinking and cognitive distortions held by the juveniles, teachers first define the concepts of responsibility, self-direction, self-control, courage, change, respect, integrity, justice and moderation. The teachers then assist the juveniles in developing positive values around these concepts and appropriate skills to effect change. The literature, reading material and language arts curriculum reinforce the positive values and skill behaviors of the concepts.

The school staff also coordinate the services of outside professional programs, such as Narcotic Anonymous, a writing program called The Beat Within and a legal forum put on by the University of California Bolt Law School, Youth Law Center.

Guidance Clinic Therappeutic Program

The Guidance Clinic provides a primary case manager who writes each juvenile's treatment plan, coordinates individual, family or group therapy and provides written comments to Probation on the youth's status. The Guidance Clinic also provides a primary therapist for detainees and wards with acute clinical issues. This primary therapist meets with the minor a minimum of one hour a week and, when therapeutically indicated, provides family therapy. The primary therapist also participates in case staffing and consults with the primary case manager in writing the treatment plan.

A psycho-diagnostic evaluation is completed for juveniles upon a referral by the staff. Approximately fifty percent of the juveniles in the program have had a psycho-diagnostic evaluation within the past year performed by either the Guidance Clinic or an outside agency.

All juveniles participate in three groups a day, rotating through anger management, art therapy, music therapy, stress management, gender issues, life

skills and substance abuse counseling.

The criteria for admission to the Mental Health Therapeutic Unit are:

- 12 to 18 years old
- Prior history of severe emotional disorder
- Detained by the Court
- Likely to be detained for over 30 days
- Demonstrate poor social skills, difficulty handling or managing behavior
- Demonstrate a high level of emotional disturbance
- Prior history of Guidance Clinic services
- Require high level of institutional staff time
- Need a small, structured therapeutic setting

Extreme ideation or gestures demonstrating a danger to self will result in a transfer to an acute facility. Extreme assaultive and violent behavior demonstrating a danger to others will result in the juvenile's removal from the Unit to a more secure setting.

Referrals for screening are accepted from an interagency committee of Juvenile Hall staff, Medical Services, Buena Vista Education Center personnel and Guidance Clinic staff. Each department brings pertinent information to the screening such as medical history, past psychological and psychiatric evaluations, Probation intake and dispositional reports and prior placement discharge summaries. Once accepted, juveniles are moved into the Unit within 24 hours.

Goals of the Mental Health Therapeutic Unit

The goals of the program are multi-faceted and broad in their scope. The overarching goal is to provide a safe, structured and therapeutic living unit for detainees and wards with special educational needs and emotional and behavioral disorders by providing high quality individualized and specialized care. This might include medication in combination with implementing methodologies designed to reduce overall tendencies toward anger, aggression, depression, anxiety, impulsiveness and violence. The staff are committed to the integrated educational and therapeutic process designed to raise the juveniles' academic level and meet the stated goals and objectives of the Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan.

The recognition of the need for this type of program by juvenile justice has paved the way for this collaborative endeavor. Teachers, psychological and institutional staff all work to assist the juveniles in gaining an understanding of their emotions, control of their behavior and a sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency. This partnership between education, mental health and criminal justice makes for a qualitative program that meets these goals and prepares the juveniles for transition to community placement or home.

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The Legal Education Awareness Program: Law Education for At-Risk Children

Los Angeles County

FRANK JANOWICZ

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Legal Education Awareness Program (LEAP) is a teaching tool designed to assist participants in understanding California criminal law and related issues. The goal of the curriculum is to prevent and reduce criminal behavior by learning skills necessary for effective citizenship. Chapter topics include: police procedures, role of the probation department, legal categories for juveniles, the Three Strikes law, incarceration, gangs and subcultures, criminal categories, sealing juvenile records, and parent information.

Students learn that laws must balance rights with responsibilities. They become aware of the balance between the will of the majority and the rights of the minority, and the need for order with the need for basic freedom. They begin to understand why reasonable people sometimes disagree over how the law can protect the rights of some without violating the rights of others. Finally, they learn that laws can be based on moral, economic, political, or social values, and as values change, so do the laws.

LEAP has been used to educate children, parents, teachers and counselors at Central Juvenile Hall in Los Angeles, as well as a number of other organizations, including the California Youth Authority. It has been approved by the California Department of Education (CDE) for "compliance with social content requirements" of Education Code Sections 60040-60044, as well as the State Board of Education's Guidelines, which are outlined in the CDE document, *Standards for Evaluating Instructional Materials for Social Content*. It fulfills the minimum standards by the CDE for the High-Risk Youth Education and Public Safety Program for Senate Bill 1095, chapter 340, statutes of 1997.

Frank D. Janowicz, teacher and author of the LEAP curriculum, is a trainer, activist, consultant, and former Los Angeles Policeman.

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Review: *Strategies That Work*

Authors: Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
Publisher: Stenhouse Publishers, Portland, Maine, 2000

Summary of Content

What can educators do in order to assure that learning takes place at school is a question that has plagued great teachers from Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Dewey, and Drucker, to Booker T. Washington and Marva Collins. *Strategies That Work* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis has made a fine effort to provide answers to the questions posed throughout the centuries.

The book consists of three parts, and a list of strategy lessons, plus a bibliography and index.

Part I, "Foundation of Meaning," contains five chapters that explore: (1) strategic thinking, (2) strategic reading, (3) strategy instruction and practice, (4) teaching with short text, and (5) book selection. The authors state,"Strategic readers address their thinking in an inner conversation that helps them make sense of what they read" (pg. 5). *Strategies That Work* provides a basis for sound meaning as well as lessons for the reader.

Part II, "Strategy Lessons and More," describes the relationship between meaning and the process of putting "meanings" to work to enhance understanding. It encourages also the use of multiple techniques to gain access to what we want to know. Chapters six to twelve include:

(1) Making connections: A bridge from the new to the known;
(2) Questioning: The strategies that propel readers forward;
(3) Visualizing and inferring: Strategies that enhance understanding
(4) Synthesizing information: The evolutions of thought
(5) Strategy instruction in context: Three classroom portraits; and
(6) Assessing comprehension: How do we know?

The section also provides many resources that can be used by the classroom teacher to develop lessons.

Part III summarizes the overall focus of the book by providing outstanding strategies for social studies, literature, visual and performing arts, and science.

Evaluation Comments

Court school educators are constantly exploring ways to meet the academic needs of students in community day schools, residential placement, and juvenile halls. Each setting provides unique and challenging hurdles to educating at-risk youth.

Juvenile halls offer a challenge to educators to meet the academic needs of youth who may be there for only a few days. *Strategies That Work* provides model lessons throughout that can be used as long term or short term lessons. The examples given have been compiled from the teaching experience of modern day educators. A good example is the lesson "Showing Evolving Thinking." This lesson summarizes the content and adds personal responses as a demonstration of how the court school educator, through extrapolation and use of

micro-teaching, can develop and utilize a lesson that provides content for a day or three weeks. This study provides practical tools for short-term remediation and academic enrichment in courses from Social Studies through Science. But more importantly the reviewers believe it provides an incentive for educators, regular or alternative, to continue seeking ways to improve student achievement.

One basic criticism of the book *Strategies That Work* is that a whole discipline, mathematics, is omitted. Mathematics is a major content area that can not be ignored, given the focus on mathematics, particularly algebra in California. In the author's own summarization they have left out mathematics: "We can't imagine teaching science, history, social studies, and the arts without picture books and short text" (p. 196). However, the reviewers note that math teachers in alternative education settings may be able to utilize some of the instructional strategies presented in this book.

Conclusion

Strategies That Work is a valuable tool for educators regardless of the setting. It is a welcome resource for court and alternative school educators. The information contained within this study gives practical examples along with theory and philosophy on for improving educational practices in the court and alternative school settings.

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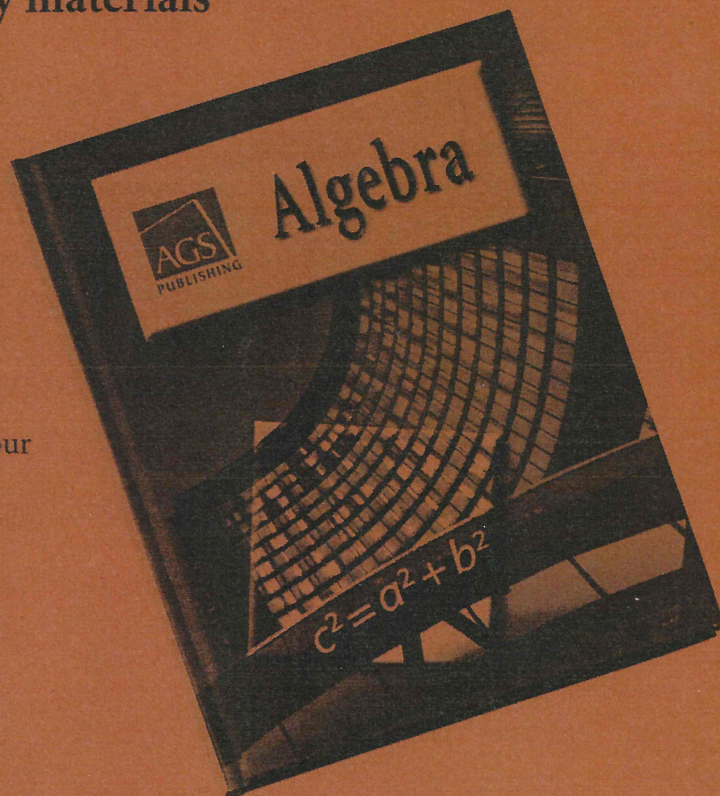

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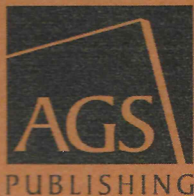

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