Schools of Effective Instruction

Summary

The Schools of Effective Instruction component of the Blueprint for Success is based on Larry Lezotte's research on effective schools. According to Lezotte, "An Effective School is a school that can, in measured student achievement terms, demonstrate the joint presence of quality and equity. Said another way, an Effective School is a school that can, in measured student achievement terms and reflective of its 'learning for all' mission, demonstrate high overall levels of achievement and no gaps in the distribution of that achievement across major subsets of the student population."

Lezotte's Seven Correlates -- strong instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, safe and orderly schools, climate of high expectations for success, frequent monitoring of student progress, positive home-school relations, and opportunity to learn/time on task -- will be integrated into the Effective Schools of Instruction implementation plan.

Strong instructional leaders are proactive and seek help building team leadership and a culture conducive to learning and professional growth. In the effective school, the principal and others act as instructional leaders and effectively and persistently communicate and model the mission of the school to staff, parents, and students.

Having a clear and focused mission means everyone knows where they are going and why. A clear focus assists in aligning programs and activities for school improvement. To effectively determine a specific focus, school leadership and stakeholders use a collaborative process to target a few school goals and then build consensus around them.

A safe and orderly school is defined as a school climate and culture characterized by reasonable expectations for behavior, consistent and fair application of rules and regulations, and caring, responsive relationships among adults and students. Classrooms are warm and inviting, and learning activities are purposeful, engaging, and significant. Personalized learning environments are created to increase positive relationships among students and between students and their teachers. Students feel that they belong in the school community, and children are valued and honored; their heritage and background are viewed as "assets," not deficiencies.

In a climate of high expectations, the mantra "all students can learn" must be followed by instructional practices and teacher behavior that demonstrate that teachers believe in the students,

believe in their own efficacy to teach students to high standards, and will persist in teaching them. Teaching advanced skills and teaching for understanding together with basic skills are required for all students to achieve at high levels.

Frequent monitoring of teaching and learning requires paying attention both to student learning results and to the effectiveness of school and classroom procedures. Learning is monitored by tracking a variety of assessment results such as test scores, student developed products, performances, and other evidence of learning. Teaching is monitored by teachers themselves through self-reflection and by supervisors for program and teacher evaluation. Assessment results are used for planning instruction for individual students as well as for schoolwide decision making and planning. Classroom and school practices are modified based on the data.

Family and community involvement is a general term used to describe a myriad of activities, projects, and programs that bring parents, businesses, and other stakeholders together to support student learning and schools. Families and other adults can be involved in the education of young people through a variety of activities that demonstrate the importance of education and show support and encouragement of students learning. These are legitimate approaches for involvement and do not necessarily require adults spending time at the school site.

Opportunity to learn and student time on task simply says that students tend to learn most the lessons they spend time on. Time on task implies that each of the teachers in the school has a clear understanding of what the essential learner objectives are, grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject. Once it is clear what students should be learning, they should be given time to learn it. In the effective school, teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction on the essential skills. Students of all abilities, races, gender, and socioeconomic status have equal opportunities to learn.

Correlate One:
STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Strong instructional leaders are proactive and seek help along with building team leadership and a culture conducive to learning and professional growth. In the effective school, the principal and others act as instructional leaders and effectively and persistently communicate the mission of the school to staff, parents, and students. In addition the principal and others understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program (Lezotte, 2002). As Ron Edmonds articulated, "There may be schools out there that have strong instructional leaders, but are not yet effective; however, we have never yet found an effective school that did not have a strong instructional leader as the principal."

Definitions and Explanation

The definition of instructional leadership is varied and multi-dimensional. Instructional leadership includes the following:

- Actions to improve teaching and learning (Acheson, 1985; De Bevoise, 1984; Greenfield, 1987; De Bevoise, 1984; Marsh, 1992; Sheppard, 1996),
- Mobilizing resources to improve teaching and learning (Keefe & Jenkins, 1991; Persell & Cookson, 1982),
- Activities to improve teaching and learning (Hallinger, 1985b; Mazzarella, 1983), Interactions that improve teaching and learning (Acheson, 1985; Acheson & Smith, 1986; Andrews, Basom, & Basom, 1991; Paschal, 1999; Smith & Andrews, 1989),
- The undertaking of roles, responsibilities, and behaviors that directly and indirectly contribute to teaching and learning that in turn lead to an increase in student academic achievement (Adams, 2002).

Implementation Suggestions
Implementation begins with the following:

- Develop your instructional vision, mission, and goals
- Use "expectations" to change attitudes and behavior
- Have a plan for instructional improvement of each department and for student subgroups; avoid "Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail"
- Create "safe" learning environments in which others can take risk to improve
- Lead by example
- Focus first on students and their learning needs
- Support and empower teachers and staff
- Be the CLO (Chief Learning Officer) of your school
- Understand the change process
- Recognize and reward achievement
- Encourage and demand participation of key stakeholders
- Build an effective instructional leadership team with adequate training, focus, role definition, etc.
- Everyone is teaching and everyone is learning

- Mentoring and providing professional development by district and site administration
- Be visible in classrooms, hallways, school grounds, and at community activities supporting instructional goals
- Listen attentively and follow through on instructional program goals and commitments
- Model, Model, Model good instructional leadership
- Read, learn, and share effective practices, research findings, and inspiration
- Create a professional learning community
- Stay current about research and regularly engage in dialogue pertaining to student achievement and teaching and learning
- Create opportunities for staff to learn together through study groups and during professional development time
- Be positive and optimistic and demonstrate a belief in the efficacy of staff and students
- Delegate responsibilities and provide professional autonomy within the parameters of the mission and vision
- Analyze the data for instructional program strengths and weaknesses
- Communicate the importance of learning goals through consistent messages
- Engage adults in study groups to improve instruction
- Use regular meetings to allow staff to discuss and share their learning and their instructional practice
- Support appropriate curriculum mapping and instructional improvement efforts
- Ensure that the standards are communicated, taught, assessed, and re-taught if necessary

Correlate Two:
CLEAR AND FOCUSED MISSION

Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and for all to understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.

Definition and Explanation
Identifying the core purpose of an organization is a critical element of effective school systems as well as successful businesses and other entities. Successful organizations require a sense of what its members are working toward (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Strategic planning, a business-world activity adopted in the education-world, has heightened attention to mission and vision in the last twenty years.

The school improvement literature has emphasized the importance of mission in the context of restructuring and educational reform. Effective systems with strong program adherence are more likely to positively impact student achievement than fragmented uncoordinated systems (Newmann, et al, 2001).

Shared emphasis in a school provides direction and purpose for teacher collaboration and increases certainty regarding teaching practice (Rosenholtz, 1989). A clear focus assists in aligning programs and activities for school improvement. A shared focus, developed collaboratively, in-

cludes a vision that captures the imagination and enthusiasm of members of the organization as well as specific goals, which concentrate attention, effort, and resources. A focused mission is expressed in a vivid, detailed word picture that describes the organization or the school as it would appear when its purpose is successfully accomplished. To effectively determine a specific focus, school leadership and stakeholders use collaborative processes to target a few school goals and then build consensus around them. High performing schools succeed in establishing a goal that resonates with the stakeholders.

Implementation Suggestions

Key stakeholders should engage in a process of developing a clear and focused mission specific to the school site. Developing an easily comprehensible mission statement, vision statement or statement of focus as the first tangible end product, promotes "marketability" and buy-in by the entire school community. A well-articulated statement supports the staffs' understanding and commitment to instructional goals and priorities, assessment and accountability and responsibility for students' learning. Attention to well crafted language will capture the imagination and collective energy of the school staff to meet outcome goals.

Effective schools must develop goals that emphasis learning is inclusive of every student. Content goals should meet accountability demands but must include higher levels of learning. (Teaching with the End in Mind) The concept of learning of all should emphasize a focus on "learning" rather than "teaching" when implementing effective practices.

An organized process for the development of a vision can be selected from the strategies included below. A school wide self-assessment should be a part of any initial process to assist the stakeholders in identifying accurately the areas most in need of the schools focus. In addition to the collection of data, KEYS (NEA) is a useful online assessment tool. A model for the process of revisiting and revising goals will provide for appropriate adjustments to the schools mission. This ensures that the follow-up staff development is targeted and effective. It should incorporate a reflection and adjustments to the core mission using established leading indicators then implement proven practices to have a positive impact on trailing indicators. (Adapted Double Loop Learning Model – Assembly Required, Lezotte, pg. 120.)

Several processes have been developed that will assist a school in developing a focused mission and goals. School improvement approaches share several components:
- Description of "what is" using an analysis of relevant data, i.e. a profile of the school
- Identification of gaps between "what is" and the aspirations described in the vision statement which articulates potential goal areas, i.e. a needs assessment
- Process for decision making to establish specific goals or focus involving stakeholders to generate ideas and to respond to ideas, to create ownership and commitment
- Communication of the goal or focus with the whole school community

Four specific approaches, using various activities, are briefly described below:
1. The approach described by DuFour and Eaker (1998) begins with a whole staff study to build a foundation of research and background. These authors, then, suggest several activities that can be used in building a shared focus. Stakeholders may be

asked to project themselves into the future and describe the school they would like to have, including the behaviors, attitudes, and interactions they would see. Sentence stems and questions provide prompts for this activity. For example, sentence stems used as prompts include:

    (1) "The kind of school I would like my own child to attend would. . ."

    (2) "I want my school to be a place where. . . ."

Questions as prompts include:

    (1) "What would you like to see our school become?"

    (2) "What could we accomplish in the next five years that would make us proud?"

2. Another approach suggested by Sagor (1996) uses "scenario writing" as a means for creating a shared vision for a school. To begin the process, teachers are asked to write a personal success story. Over a period of time, teachers pool their stories, review and refine them. These become a composite scenario that expresses a vision for a school and helps develop a common, schoolwide focus.

3. An approach for goal setting, suggested by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, is based on an analysis of school data. In Moving Forward (Woods, 2002) narrative statements are suggested as part of the process for selecting school goals and for building consensus. Narrative statements describe the school's data regarding student achievement and sometimes may include student behavior. A small group such as a school leadership team analyzes school data and writes the statements and selects the most important statements. Then individual staff members and finally the whole staff rate the degree of satisfaction they feel with the performance described in the narrative and the level of importance they attach to each. A process is used to reach consensus on those that are most important and with which there is least satisfaction with the current performance. This leads to a group decision on a goal area as a focus for the whole staff to improve student learning.

4. Actions Research is another approach that helps a school to determine a clear focus. Action research is a broad school renewal process, sometimes called inquiry or critical study that includes creating vision and goals, taking action, and reviewing progress, then renewing or revising efforts. Calhoun, Glickman, and Sagor have written practical guides for assisting schools in the process of school improvement using action research. Glickman (1993) describes three components of his school improvement model: a covenant, charter, and critical-study process. The covenant is developed through a democratic process involving all stakeholders and contains beliefs and agreements focused solely on teaching and learning. The covenant is a guide for future decision making. The charter is a governance structure for decision making. The critical study process is a plan for school improvement that uses the action research cycle.

The action research steps include:

1. Using data to set goals and student objectives,

2. Identifying activities and changes to be made to accomplish the goals and objectives,

3. Implementing the steps, which include professional development and attending to curriculum alignment, instructional and assessment practices and so on, and

4. Evaluation the results of actions that have been taken to determine next steps.

These steps constitute a cycle of school renewal.

Whatever approach is used initially, a process for building consensus is needed to narrow the focus. The inclusion of all stakeholder groups is critical to increase ownership of the vision and focus. The identification of a goal area is only the first step. Using the focus as a "lighthouse" for setting and maintaining a course of action is essential to create the conditions needed to increase student performance. The school improvement activities need to be aligned with the focus area to increase coherence in the system and the likelihood of improving student learning.

A dynamic plan to develop goals and areas of focus must be developed to begin the implementation process. It should include an ongoing timeline and guidelines for revisiting, assessing progress and establishing new goals.

Correlate Three:
SAFE AND ORDERLY SCHOOLS

The school has a safe, civil and healthy learning environment. Respect is modeled and opportunities have been taken to build positive rapport with students. Students feel respected, valued and connected with the staff. There is frequent communication about expectations and choices that can assist students to positively work and interact in society.

Definition and Explanation
A safe and orderly school can be defined as school climate and culture characterized by reasonable expectations for behavior, consistent and fair application of rules and regulations, and caring responsive relationships among adults and students. Classrooms are warm and inviting and learning activities are purposeful, engaging, and significant. Personalized learning environments are created to increase positive relationships among students and between students and their teachers. Students feel that they belong in the school community. In a safe and orderly school, children are valued and honored; their heritage and background are viewed as "assets," not deficiencies.

Research in several arenas is relevant to creating and maintaining safe and orderly school environments:
- Effective schools research provides characteristics of safe and orderly school environments that are "orderly without being rigid, quiet without being oppressive, and generally conducive to the instructional business at hand" (Edmonds, cited in Cotton, 2000, p. 6).
- Research on resiliency factors emphasizes the importance of adults in creating supportive environments that foster student resiliency and identify characteristics that foster increased academic success.
- Research on small classes and small schools describes personalized learning environments that increase students' sense of belonging and opportunities to participate actively in the school community.

- Research and professional literature suggest classroom and instructional models that engage students emotionally, intellectually, and socially.
- Research on classroom management and discipline identifies those practices that contribute to productive learning situations.

Implementation Suggestions

Taking stock of the school culture, as experienced by students, teachers, and staff, is an important starting point in creating and sustaining supportive learning environments. Conducting surveys that capture perceptions of students, staff, and families provides information on the current quality of school's environment. Examining other information related to attendance, disciplinary referrals, dropouts, and participation in school activities, etc. also reveals qualities of school climate. Research studies on topics such as those suggested above can be used by faculty study groups to develop a shared knowledge base. This collaborative work provides a foundation for the development of school improvement plans.

Practices In Effective Schools: Ideas synthesized from the research provide useful criteria for analyzing a school's environment and for planning improvements (Cotton, 2000). The School Improvement Research synthesis addresses a safe and orderly environment, classroom management, and supportive classroom environments. Typical qualities of safe and orderly schools, based on the correlates of effective schools research, include:
- "A visible and supportive principal,
- Broad-based agreement about standards for student behavior,
- High behavioral expectations that are clearly communicated to students,
- Input from students, especially older ones, into behavior policies,
- Consistent application of rules from day to day and from student to student,
- A warm school climate whose signature feature is a concern for students as individuals,
- Delegation of disciplinary authority to teachers,
- For seriously disruptive students, in-school suspensions accompanied by support" (Cotton, p. 6).

The research on resilience reflects the importance of school personnel and school procedures in creating "protective factors" that help students learn to cope with adverse conditions. Schools help foster resilient students when they exhibit caring and support with strong personal relationships, positive and high expectations with the necessary support for students to achieve these expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation in school (Benard, p. 100). One research report suggests qualities of instruction that support resilience: "richer explanations, encouragement of extended student responses, encouragement of students' success, focus on the task's learning processes" (Waxman, et. al., 2002, p. 37). "Turnaround" teachers, those that succeed with at-risk students, focus on the strengths of all students; they especially empower overwhelmed youth to see themselves as survivors rather than as victims. They help students process adversity in their lives, to see adversity as impermanent, and to see setbacks not as pervasive but as surmountable or temporary. Turnaround teachers are student-centered, using students' strengths, interests, goals and dreams as the starting point for learning and thereby tapping students' intrinsic motivation for learning" (p. 40).

Positive Learning Climate: Teachers can create classroom environments that effectively support children's learning. Effective strategies are summarized in the research synthesis (Cotton) and exemplified in the instructional model "Quantum Teaching." From the research synthesis teacher behaviors that build effective classroom climate include:

- "Communicating high expectations for student performance; letting students know that they are all believed capable of meeting basic objectives, and no one is expected to fail.
- Holding students accountable for completing assignments, turning in work, and participating in classroom discussions.
- Providing the time, instruction, and encouragement necessary to help lower achievers perform at acceptable levels; this includes giving them learning material and activities as interesting and varied as those provided for other students.
- Monitoring their own beliefs and behavior to make certain that high expectations are communicated to all students regardless of socioeconomic status, race, gender, or other personal characteristics.
- Paying attention to students' interests, problems, and accomplishments.
- Encouraging effort, focusing on the positive aspects of students' answers, products, and behavior.
- Communicating interest and caring to students, both verbally and through such nonverbal means as giving undivided attention, maintaining eye contact, smiling, and nodding, to build rapport with students.
- Exhibiting democratic leadership and encouraging students to express and defend their views on significant issues.
- Sharing anecdotes and incidents from their personal experience and using humor as appropriate" (p. 17).

An instructional model based on years of experience with thousands of at-risk students has been called "Quantum Teaching." The model promotes beginning instruction by first entering the students' world "Theirs to Ours, Ours to Theirs" (similar to the Get, Give, Merge, Go strategy).

Basic Tenets of the Model Include:
- using all aspects of the classroom environment to reinforce messages about learning,
- providing learning experiences before "labeling" with the specific vocabulary,
- acknowledging every learning effort,
- removing all threats,
- believing in students,
- building rapport, knowing students well,
- engaging students' emotions,
- modeling, listening, reframing negative situations to find the positive, and
- promoting integrity, commitment, and responsibility.

The authors DePorter, Reardon, and Singer-Nourie (1999) provide teacher-friendly suggestions for implementing these strategies in ways that promote students' learning. The model suggests ways for teachers to create positive, productive learning environments. The model advocates use of practices based on theories of accelerated learning, multiple intelligences, neuro-linguistic

programming, inquiry learning, and experiential learning, among others.

Classroom Management: Last, research on classroom management and discipline suggests certain practices that contribute to positive classroom climate and to improved student achievement. Selected examples of good practice, from the synthesis by Cotton, include:

- "Classroom rules and procedures that are specific and clearly explained at the beginning of the school year and periodically reinforced thereafter, especially with children in grades K-3.
- Beginning classes quickly and purposefully, with assignments, activities, materials and supplies ready for students when they arrive.
- Standards that are consistent or identical with the building code of conduct and that are applied consistently and equitably.
- Involvement of older children in establishing classroom standards and sanctions.
- Teaching and reinforcing positive, pro-social behaviors and skills, especially with students who have a history of behavior problems.
- Focusing on students' inappropriate behavior when taking disciplinary action—not on their personalities or histories" (Cotton, p. 7).

Correlate Four:
CLIMATE OF HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Teachers and staff believe and demonstrate that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skill and they also believe that they have the capability to help all students achieve that mastery. They recognize that some students must overcome significant barriers, but these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study, which it delivered through a variety of well thought out and well developed strategies.

Definition and Explanation
Standards and expectations are terms used to address several concepts:

- The content standards are the learning targets.
- The performance standards, answers the question, *"how good is good enough?"*
- Expectations are shown through a confidence that students will meet both the content and performance standards that have been set.
- The standards movement has served to clarify the academic purpose for schools. Performance levels have established the desirable quality of achievement for students to meet.
- Research, beginning with studies in the late 1960's, describes the impact of teachers' expectations on student performance. Teacher expectations may be described according to three general types:
    1. teacher's perceptions of student's current level,
    2. teacher's prediction about the amount of academic progress a student will make over a given time, and
    3. degree to which a teacher "over- or underestimates a student's present level of performance" (Bamburg, 1994).

Some have called the concept of teacher expectations the "Pygmalion" effect or "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Good and Brophy, 2000). Student behavior is impacted by opinions and perceptions that others have for them which in turn become self-fulfilling prophecies. Good and Brophy describe the process as follows:

1. "The teacher expects different, specific behavior and achievement from particular students.
2. Because of these different expectations, the teacher behaves differently toward various students.
3. This treatment tells students what behavior and achievement the teacher expects from them and how they are expected to behave and perform.
4. If this treatment is consistent over time, and if students do not resist or change it in some way, it will likely affect their self-concepts, achievement, motivation, levels of aspiration, classroom conduct and interactions with the teacher.
5. These effects generally will complement and reinforce the teacher's expectations, so that students will come to conform to these expectations more than they might have otherwise.
6. With time, students' achievement and behavior will conform more and more closely to that originally expected of them. High-expectations students will be led to achieve at high levels, while low-expectations students will not gain as much as they could have (p. 79)."

Teachers tend to have lower expectations for students of color and poor students than for white students and more affluent students. Students of color and poor students are more often assigned to remedial or low track classes. Ferguson (in Jencks & Phillips, 1998) notes that black students are more impacted by teacher perceptions than are white students. Students are aware of the differences in the way teachers treat students believed to be high and low achievers. Some students see the differential treatments as biased and inappropriate (Good & Brophy, 2000).

Implementation Suggestions

Teachers' behavior generally corresponds with their perceptions of the students' abilities. School staff can set high expectations for performance and behavior for students and work collaboratively to review and improve their own instructional practices. Teachers must examine their practices to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all students. A variety of strategies can be used to assist teachers in this process. Peer observations, although risky in some school environments, help to "mirror" classroom behavior so a teacher can make adjustments if necessary. Video taping class instruction can provide feedback as well. Listening to students is also revealing as teachers, or a third party, may use surveys to ask for their perceptions of classroom activities and environment. The following steps might be used to examine the level of expectations held for a class. Teachers can:

- Focus, individually or as part of a team, on questioning strategies, which are important instructional tools that often reflect expectations.
- Read and discuss the research in a study group setting and work together to improve their use of the strategies.
- Reflect on instructional practice related to expectations.

Research findings by Good & Brophy (2000) provide examples of differential teacher treatment of high and low achievers drawn from reviews of the research literature. The following questions, based on the research findings, guide teachers in reflecting on their practice.

Am I . . .

1. "waiting less time for low achievers to answer" questions than for high achievers?
2. "giving lows answers or calling on someone else rather than trying to improve their responses by giving clues or repeating or rephrasing questions?"
3. using "inappropriate reinforcement: rewarding inappropriate behavior or incorrect answers by lows?"
4. "failing to give feedback to the public responses of lows?"
5. "calling on lows less often to respond to questions, or asking them only easier, nonanalytic questions?"
6. "seating lows farther away from the teacher?"
7. "demanding less from lows (e.g. teach less, gratuitous praise, excessive offers of help)?"
8. "interacting with lows more privately than publicly, and monitoring and structuring their activities more closely?"
9. making differences in "administration or grading of tests or assignments, in which highs but not lows are given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases?"
10. engaging in "less friendly interaction with lows, including less smiling and fewer other nonverbal indicators of support?"
11. using "less eye contact and other nonverbal communication of attention and responsiveness (forward lean, positive head nodding) in interaction with lows?"
12. using less of the "effective but time-consuming instructional methods with lows when time is limited?"
13. "exposing lows to an impoverished curriculum (overly limited and repetitive content, emphasis on factual recitation rather than on lesson-extending discussion, emphasis on drill and practice tasks rather than application and higher-level thinking tasks)?" (p. 85-86).

Three suggestions from Good & Brophy are helpful in avoiding negative expectation effects:

- Consider students' full range of abilities when developing expectations, including different types of intellectual abilities.
- Keep expectations flexible and current. Teachers need to keep expectations in perspective to be sure interpretations of what they notice in classrooms are accurate.
- Emphasize the positive by providing feedback, diagnosis, re-teaching, and "stretching the students' minds by stimulating them and encouraging them to achieve as much as they can" (p.108-109).

High standards and expectations require more than lip service. The mantra "all students can learn" must be followed by instructional practices and teacher behavior that demonstrate that teachers believe in the students, believe in their own efficacy to teach students to high standards, and will persist in teaching them. Teaching advanced skills and teaching for understanding together with basic skills are required for all students to achieve at high levels.

Correlate Five:
FREQUENT MONITORING OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

A steady cycle of different assessments identify students who need help. More support and instructional time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours, to students who need more help. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.

Definition and Explanation
Monitoring, broadly defined, is "analyzing what we are doing against the results we are getting" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 6). Monitoring requires regularly reviewing and refining the processes that most "directly contribute to designated results" (p. 7). Measures used in monitoring provide feedback to teacher and learner, as well as other stakeholders that are essential for making changes to ensure continual learning progress.

Monitoring teaching and learning requires paying attention both to student learning results and to the effectiveness of school and classroom procedures. Learning is monitored by tracking a variety of assessment results such as test scores, student developed products, performances, and other evidence of learning. Teaching is monitored by teachers themselves through self-reflection and by supervisors for program and teacher evaluation. Information about the effectiveness of instructional processes, educational programs, and materials is gathered through instructional artifacts, observations, dialogue, examination of student work, and so on. Assessment results are used for planning instruction for individual students as well as for school-wide decision making and planning. Classroom and school practices are modified based on the data.

Effective monitoring should be "low stakes" and occur frequently. In other words, monitoring provides feedback primarily for purposes of improvement, not for making major decisions about a student's future or a teacher's career. In a supportive school environment focused on continual improvement, feedback allows teachers to make procedural corrections, reteach, and encourage student efforts, as well as to change their practices. "Errors are treated as learning opportunities, not test failures, and should lead to additional instruction and practice opportunities." Students should be given multiple opportunities to learn to encourage their persistence in overcoming initial failures (Good & Brophy, 2000, p. 229, 230).

Implementation Suggestions
School districts, schools, and teachers need to develop systems for gathering information on student learning and teaching practices at the classroom and school levels. The data then should be routinely collected and analyzed and instructional methods and activities modified accordingly. A number of school improvement experts provide suggestions for using data to increase student learning. Schmoker (1999) outlines an approach that can be relatively easily implemented and has potential to produce early results to "jumpstart" school improvement. He suggests these steps:
- Teachers work in teams to determine a baseline of student achievement in a goal area using teacher-made and textbook published tests as well as data from district and state tests.
- Teachers select an instructional strategy and use it in their classrooms.

- Teachers assess student work at relatively short intervals. These assessments provide immediate and ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of the instructional strategy. Such monitoring becomes motivating as effective instruction improves learning. This progress creates "zest" or enthusiasm for continuing the hard work of improving student learning.

Formal and informal assessments are used for monitoring teaching and learning. Several authors provide helpful ideas.

Monitoring student learning: A variety of measurement tools are available for monitoring student learning. Methods that are used must match the learning targets and the purposes for which the tests will be used. Several reasons given for measuring student learning include:
- Making sure students "do not fall through the cracks."
- Assessing individual or group achievement.
- Diagnosing learning problems.
- Certifying or graduating students.
- Guiding curriculum development and revision.
- Improving instruction.
- Being accountable.
- Understanding which programs are getting the results we want.
- Knowing if we are achieving our standards.
- Knowing how we compare to others in the nation. (Bernhardt, 1998, p. 63)

Sample measurement tools include:
- Classroom observations, walk throughs or anecdotal records.
- Portfolios of student work.
- Teacher-made tests and rubrics.
- Grades.
- Benchmarks or criterion-referenced measures (often developed by state, district, or textbook publishers).
- Authentic and performance assessments.
- Norm referenced large-scale tests. Tests may be norm referenced to compare students with peers or criterion referenced to assess specific instructional objectives.

Assessment methods include selected response, essay, performance assessment, and personal communication including observations, according to Stiggins (1997). Some methods are most appropriate for classroom use; others work well for large-scale tests; some methods can serve both purposes.

Stiggins has laid out several principles for sound assessment and key decision points for planning and conducting appropriate assessments.
These principles include:
- Assessments require clear thinking and effective communication.
- Classroom assessment is key.
- Students are assessment users.

- Clear and appropriate targets are essential.
- High-quality assessment is a must.
- Understand personal implication (Stiggins, 1997).

Key decision points include:
- Determining learning targets and purposes.
- Selecting appropriate methods based on those.
- Deciding the specifics of the assessment: who will be tested, what content will be tested, and what specific test methods are appropriate.
- Developing test items.
- Administering and scoring the assessments.
- Monitoring teaching and school processes

Examining school and classroom processes requires collecting information on actual practices and comparing progress toward the school goals. Bernhardt poses guiding questions that help educators examine school processes and provide a basis for collecting and analyzing data and making needed changes for improving teaching and learning. She suggests that educators ask:

1. What do teachers want students to know and be able to do?
2. How are teachers enabling students to learn?

Conditions that schools and teachers can influence include instructional and learning strategies, instructional time and location, student-teacher ratio, organization of instructional components, assessments, philosophies and strategies of classroom management, and personal relationships among students and between students and teachers (Bernhardt, p. 96). Bernhardt suggests using rubrics to give schools an idea of where they started, where they are now, and where they want to be. These rubrics serve as school assessments and help focus a school staff on both the quality of instruction and the degree to which instructional processes are implemented.

Correlate Six:
HIGH LEVEL OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Families, as well as businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

Definition and Explanation
Family and community involvement is a general term used to describe a myriad of activities, projects, and programs that bring parents, family members, and other stakeholders together to support student learning and schools or to bring family, community, and business into the schools. Schools need to "build connections to families and communities as a means of deepening the relationships that support child development and of acquiring the knowledge about students needed to teach responsively" (Darling-Hammond, 1999). These connections traditionally have ranged from Parent Teacher Organization (e.g. PTA) meetings, back-to-school open houses, parent-teacher conferences, fund raising and chaperoning school events to in-class vol-

unteering parent education programs, and business partnerships. Currently, the literature has extended the definition to include other types of involvement such as shared decision making regarding student learning and home and community-based support of student learning. Families and other adults can be involved in the education of young people through a variety of activities that demonstrate the importance of education and show support and encouragement of students' learning. These are legitimate approaches for involvement and do not necessarily require adults spending time at the schoolhouse.

Many research studies over the years have reinforced the importance of the relationship of family and school to student achievement. These "overlapping spheres of influence" explain the shared responsibility of home, school, and community for the development and learning of students (Epstein, et al, 1997). The responsibility for initiating the partnerships lies primarily with schools and districts. Epstein asserts that "the strongest and most consistent predictors of parent involvement at school and home are the specific school programs and teacher practices that encourage and guide parent involvement" (cited in Lewis & Henderson, p. 18).

Epstein has developed a framework for school, family, and community partnerships based on the "overlapping spheres" concept. The framework includes six types of involvement for comprehensive partnerships: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community.

Need for Options: In diverse communities, family involvement will need to include options that accommodate family circumstances, provide choices, validate the family's culture and values, and explicitly emphasize the importance of family support of the student's learning. Families should have the opportunity to participate in defining and developing a school's involvement opportunities. The National PTA has published standards, with suggestions for implementation, to guide the development of parent/family involvement programs. The PTA standards, which are similar to Epstein's types of involvement, include the following:

- Communicating. Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
- Parenting. Parenting skills are promoted and supported.
- Student Learning. Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
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- Volunteering. Parents are welcome in the school and their support and assistance are sought.
- School Decision Making and Advocacy. Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
- Collaborating with Community. Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

Implementation Suggestions
Explicit policies and procedures are helpful to set expectations and to guide the development of family involvement and partnerships. The planning of programs for increasing involvement needs to include allocation of resources for both implementation and appropriate professional development to ensure that teachers and principals have the "know how" to effectively engage

families and communities. School-based practices based on research studies, some validated practices have been identified for engaging and working with parents and community members.

The following suggestions for schools and districts reflect those practices (Cotton, 2000):
- "Conduct vigorous outreach activities, especially in culturally diverse settings to involve representatives from all cultural groups in a community. Activities may include:
    - School family involvement plan
    - Multi-cultural events for families
    - Free family tickets to local events
    - Flyers dispersed to encourage free and low cost community activities
    - ELL classes for parents
    - Family literacy classes
    - DELAC and SCC meetings for input
    - Transportation provided for attendance
    - CAPS, Primetime, Sports, Field trips, Arts with parent participation
    - Assemblies
    - Community collaboration
    - Translation available
    - Leadership training
- Develop written policies that acknowledge the importance of parent/community involvement and providing ongoing support to parent involvement efforts. Policies may include:
    - School activities and functions communicated in home language
    - Parent handbook
    - Written calendar displayed outside the school
    - Family involvement plan with stated goals and opportunities
- Make special efforts to involve the parents of economically disadvantaged, racial/ethnic minority, and language minority students, who tend to be underrepresented among parents involved in the schools.
- Work with cultural minority parents and community members to help children cope with any differences in norms noted between the home and the school. Activities may include:
    - Nutrition classes provided on site
    - Scheduling of events to fit parents needs
    - Special interest classes offered
    - Tutoring for adult education classes
    - Agency lists made available for needs such as housing and wellness
    - Leadership training for interested parents
    - After school programs with parent involvement
    - After school communication
    - Family literacy classes
    - Staff development on diversity and poverty
    - Translation equipment
    - Monthly parent meetings on school standards
    - Parent involvement encouraged for on and off campus activities

- TB and fingerprinting done on site at low or no costs.
- Collaboration with community events for site facility use
- PTA or PTO
- Home visits
- Parent check out library
- Training and employment thru CAPS and noon aides
- Stay Put Program
- PESA training

- Communicate repeatedly to parents that their involvement can greatly enhance their children's school performance regardless of their own level of education. Activities may include:
  - Develop a marketing campaign on site, post flyers in local businesses
  - School newsletters
  - Regularly scheduled parent family nights
  - Voice mail or electronic system for homework and school messages (i.e. Parlant)
  - Web sites and E-mail access for parents
  - Community school board and marquee
  - Parent conferences/student led conferences
  - SSC, DELAC, ELAC, PTA, DAC, PAC, Parent Boosters and etc.
  - Organized drive up/pick up
  - Yearly calendars and school information in parent packets
  - Radio used to dispersed information
  - Invitations to school events
  - Translation equipment

- Make parents of young children aware that the earlier they become involved in their child's education, the more it benefits his or her learning.
- Communicate to parents that students of all ages benefit from parent involvement.
- Encourage parents of young children to read to them, every day if possible, and for at least 10 minutes at a time. Activities may include:
  - Provide discarded school furniture for family home study areas
  - Books or supplies given for home use at low or no cost
  - Family literacy classes
  - Literacy extensions such as CAPS, Primetime, tutoring, intersession
  - Provide incentive programs to reward reading such as Six Flags, "Six Hours of Reading Club", Pizza Hut's "Book-It"
  - District reading festival
  - School incentives for reading
  - Attendance at Southern California Assistance Center Regional Parent Literacy Workshop (January 2004)

- Send home to parents information about upcoming classroom activities, examples of students' work, and suggestions for at-home learning activities.
- Offer parents different parent involvement options to choose from, based on their schedule and interest, e.g. helping their children learn at home, helping out in the classroom, providing transportation for field trips.

- Involve community members in schoolwide and classroom activities, giving presentations, serving as information resources, serving as reader/responders for students' published writing, etc.
- Encourage parents to provide a suitable place with necessary materials for children to study at home and to monitor the homework habits of children at least through the elementary grades.
- Be mindful that parents are busy people with limited time and refrain from asking them to devote unrealistic amounts of time to school-related activities.
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- Publish indicators of school quality and provide them to parents and community members periodically to foster communication and stimulate public action" (p. 19). Such as:
  - Home visits
  - Suitable study areas
  - School supplies for home use
  - Flyers encouraging community participation
  - Community council for input
  - Breakfast with the principal

Community-based involvement: Community partnerships may include formal and informal relationships between schools and districts and the business community. A range of programs can support student learning. Some examples of formal partnerships may be "adopting" a school or district through which a business may provide resources, e.g. people, equipment and/or money, to assist with school improvement. Informal relationships result when adults serve as role models or mentors such as "lunch buddies." This program encourages adults to regularly meet a student at school during lunch.

Children benefit from adults in schools and communities serving as models and mentors. Clark (1990) described community-based constructive learning activities such as professionally guided learning activities, leisure activities including reading, writing, and conversation, museums and recreational activities. Those that assisted students with their learning met these criteria; they provided opportunities for time devoted to the activity, promoted active thinking while doing the task, provided supportive input by knowledgeable adults and peers, and included standards, goals, and expectations related to the activity (cited in Henderson & Berla, p. 41).

Other suggestions for partnerships and involvement programs abound. The National PTA document provides suggestions for implementing the standards and gives examples of school programs. The Washington State PTA Family Involvement Guide also includes extensive suggestions for parents, families and schools; the sections are organized according to the National PTA standards. The School, Family, and Community Partnerships handbook provides descriptors of each of the six types of involvement, potential benefits, and sample action planning materials. Publications from the Center for Law and Education highlight research studies and also include stories of effective parent and community involvement (Lewis & Henderson). Other suggestions may include:
- Adoptions
- Mentors

- Volunteers
- Donations of services or materials
- Rebates from sales at community businesses
- Shared use of facilities
- Career job orientation
- Family nights
- Information and assistance
- Reading Festival and Rally
- Red Ribbon parade and breakfast
- Local baseball games
- Cultural events at Sturges and Orange Show
  Possible partners: Boy Scouts, America Reads, AmeriCorps, SCE Rolling Readers, Retirement groups, Service organizations, YMCA, Local colleges and Universities, Parks and Recreation, City.

Correlate Seven:
OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN/TIME ON TASK

In the effective school, teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in the essential curricular areas. For a high percentage of this time, students are actively engaged in whole-class or large group, teacher-directed, planned learning activities.

The teacher integrates and focuses the curriculum so that all students will be given the time to master those standards which are expected. Time must be flexible so that students will have the opportunity for mastery of each standard.).

Definition and Explanation
Opportunity to learn and student time on task simply says that students tend to learn most things that they spend time on. If you want students to master certain curricular objectives and goals, one of the first prerequisites is to assure that they spend time on them. In instance after instance students are held accountable for outcomes over which they were never taught. This is unfair and should be changed.

Time on task implies that each of the teachers in the school has a clear understanding of what the essential learner objectives are, grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject. Once we are clear on what students should be learning, they should be given time to learn it. This can be tricky because of the day-to-day interruptions in the classroom and in the school, which significantly detract from the ability to be effective for all students.

Day to day interruptions include:
- Erosion of time. Adding more non-academic issues to the academic curriculum (e.g. Character Education, Sex Education, Drug Education, etc.) Schools are expected to "parent our students" ... they are required to do a lot more.

- The school day. The teacher is often required to wear many hats. The impact of school funding, fewer teachers and more responsibilities ... this causes a reduction in productivity in the classroom. Too much in too little time.
- The school calendar. No school is ever in session the total hours scheduled (e.g. crisis and emergency situations; storms, floods, etc.). Absenteeism, personal and family issues, legitimate illnesses, early vacations lead to a serious loss of learning time. Some schools within the district have moved to seven periods per day and three lunches to alleviate overcrowding.
- Instructional time. Not all the time is available for classroom instruction. Time is absorbed by class changes and recesses. Meeting State Standards for reading and math takes from teaching time in other curricular subjects. The needs of students vary ... demanding individualization, especially for slow and average learners (e.g. pull-out programs, in school suspensions, standardized testing, assemblies, fire and earthquake drills).
- Teacher time on task. Not all regularly scheduled class time is devoted to academic instruction. Teachers lose time for clerical duties such as collecting milk money and taking attendance. Research studies show as much as 18 percent of class time may be consumed by discipline matters. The simplest reprimand may further consume time by creating a break in the momentum of the lesson, causing the whole class to become off-task. Beginning the class a few minutes after the scheduled starting time or stopping the lesson a few minutes before dismissal robs more learning time, as much as ten minutes of the class period. By poor preparation, a teacher can consume more time on non-instructional activities (e.g. hunting for misplaced papers and materials, clarifying directions, setting up audio-visual equipment). Transition from one activity to another consumes many minutes over the course of a year.
- The pace of instruction. The pace of instruction represents how fast a teacher covers the content during the time allotted to a content area. In the same span of time two teachers may cover different amounts of content. The faster pace may benefit middle and upper students, but harm the lower portion of the class. Observational studies have found that teachers typically move on when approximately 80 percent of the class has grasped a concept or skill. Conscientious teachers have always made attempts to provide remedial instruction to the lagging 20 percent through individual tutoring, small group instruction, or homework assignments.
- Student time on task. Two teachers may allocate the same amount of time to instruction, but their students may be engaged in that instruction at vastly different rates (e.g. inattention, slow learners). The percentage of time on task has been reported to range from 50 to 90 percent with an average engagement rate of 70 percent of the available instructional time. However, 50 percent of the day may already be lost to non-instructional activities; therefore, the student time on task may be less than 70 percent of 50 percent or 350 hours out of the original 1080 hours per year! The teaching format also influences time on task. Not all engaged time is learning productive time. If students are attending to instruction that is ineffective, too easy or too difficult, they are gaining little. The goal must be to see high engagement in appropriate learning tasks.

Implementation Suggestions

In the effective school, teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in the essential skills. Students of all abilities, races, gender, and socioeconomic status have equal opportunities to learn.

1. Students must be individually assessed and given appropriate instruction based on the assessment.
2. The teacher must ensure flexible grouping on a regular basis.
3. There must be a variety of student entry points and student outcomes.
4. Multiple Intelligence strategies must be used along with real life applications.
5. Teacher planning, preparation and organization must maximize instructional time.
6. There must be compact learning for high ability students.
7. Results of progress must be consistently shared with students and parents.
8. A constant assessment of student performance followed by adjustment of instruction and teaching and reteaching must be a part of the educator's accountability.
9. Teacher must observe and keep records of students learning activities in relation to appropriateness of assignment, their individual needs and authentic engagement.
10. All students will master essential student skills as defined by District curriculum and State standards.

MARKETING

It is imperative that all stakeholders understand the commitment to develop and sustain Effective Schools. The following strategies will be used as part of the marketing plan:
1. Presentation to the Board about Effective Schools
2. Principals will be given a PowerPoint presentation on Effective Schools
3. Principals will invite their staff to apply to participate in the pilot
4. Applications will be reviewed and pilot schools selected
5. Town hall meetings, targeted to areas where pilot schools are located, will be held that describe what Effective Schools are and the role of all stakeholders
6. Assessment tools will be used
7. Banners, radio announcements, declarations, schoolwide meetings, press releases and ambassadors will be used to get the word out about the Effective Schools
8. A major kickoff breakfast will be held
9. Based on the assessment the school begins according to the data
10. Publicity is on going - concerted efforts to celebrate results, benchmarks and the meeting of targets will be continuous
11. A brochure will be published and a video will be produced annually
12. Follow up town hall meetings will be held to share evaluation of progress annually

STANDARDS

- Instructional Leadership
- Clear and Focused Mission
- Safe and Orderly Environment
- Climate of High Expectations
- Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress
- Positive Home-School Relations
- Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task

CURRICULUM

All schools will use the state and District-adopted standards based curriculum. All Effective Schools will review in depth *Effective Schools Research* by Larry Lezotte, *Assembly Required* by Larry Lezotte and Kathleen Mckee, and *Working on the Work* by Phillip C. Schlechty.

FACILITIES

As we reviewed the essential components of Effective Schools, it was duly noted that facilities would be a challenge in addressing the correlate of Opportunity to Learn, and Time on Task. An effective school would have space for learning centers that provided all students with supportive opportunities to learn curriculum. Smaller class sizes, labs, special tutorials and opportunities for direct monitoring have a direct impact on space. Portables or new structures would need to be in the equation if current overcrowded schools are not reduced. Additionally, the committee felt

that cases at both Elementary and Middle School, multi-track year round schools were not con-
ducive to effective schools.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a site-specific concern.

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