INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

I&RS TEAM AS A CREATIVE RESOURCE

School staff often request assistance for problems either after they have exhausted their repertoire of correctional strategies or when they have encountered complex or intense problems that defy simple or conventional solutions. Since staff frequently have already tried many traditional approaches to correct the behavior(s) of concern or are overwhelmed by the scope of the apparent problems, the I&RS team serves as a resource that can either identify a variety of new strategies, ideas and perspectives for the resolution of the problem, or act as a vehicle for the creation of new and innovative strategies that are specifically designed to address the particulars of each case. It is questionable whether the adoption and institutionalization of an I&RS team is worth a school's effort if the team primarily adopts "cookbook" strategies for difficult problems or develops specialized plans that bear a marginal connection to the core and priority issues identified through an exhaustive review of the case information.

Since innovation is important for I&RS team success, teams must demonstrate to their peers their ability to be:

- Knowledgeable of current research-based practices for meeting the diverse needs of all students in the general education program.
- Adept and resourceful in assessing complex academic, behavior and health problems.
- Resourceful in designing, acquiring or adapting innovative strategies for correcting problems.
- Versatile in applying a variety of paradigms and approaches.
- Proficient in the skills of collaborative problem solving.
- Competent in consulting and collaborating with diverse groups of people.
- Excited by the benefits of fully using the IRS team process to help students, school staff and parents.

I&RS Team as a Creative Resource, continued

The benefits of using the team process to evidence the above characteristics are described below:

- ***Comprehensive Assessment of Problems*** – The team process increases the chance of an *accurate assessment* of problems due to the collection of comprehensive information from a broad base of school and community professionals who have diverse training, experience and credentials.

- ***Strategies Designed to Ameliorate Problems*** – Since a comprehensive analysis of problems is conducted, the strategies identified in the team's I&RS action plans are more likely to be specifically designed to address the documented priority problems. This coordinated approach reduces or eliminates interventions that are independently undertaken by a variety of professionals working on limited facets of the problem(s) or primarily on manifestations of the priority problem(s).

- ***Creative Strategies*** – The nature of the team problem-solving process *empowers participants* to think in *new and creative ways* for the resolution of both typical and unique educational problems. In many instances, the nature of students' problems requires the generation of new ideas if the team hopes to effect incrementally positive student outcomes.

- ***Support for Implementation of I&RS Action Plans*** – Since the I&RS process is designed to *support* staff members who request assistance for problems, it is axiomatic that staff support does not begin and end with the team problem-solving and follow-up meetings. Team meetings primarily serve to set in motion and monitor the *process* for problem resolution, rather than to actualize the goals set forth in the plans.

  Therefore, I&RS action plans developed by the team should include the *types of support* to be provided to implementers, *the persons responsible* for providing the support and an *explanation of the assistance* that will be provided. This means that, in addition to the person requesting assistance, the work has just begun for various team members, such as the case coordinator, and other school and community resources that are a part of the action plan.

I&RS Team as a Creative Resource, continued

Teams should *not* assume that staff either possess or that they should independently acquire or arrange for the resources, knowledge or skills that are necessary to implement applicable provisions of I&RS action plans, particularly in instances where staff have already used their supply of strategies and are asked to implement innovative ones. Support implies direct staff contact and help for the persons requesting assistance, as well as the provision of all materials, supplies, professional development opportunities and logistical arrangements (e.g., scheduling, locations, communication with families) that are necessary to implement I&RS action plans. Support means that the team has partnered with the requesting staff members and is equally invested in the development and successful implementation of the provisions of the I&RS action plan.

Consistent with the idea of providing full support, the persons requesting assistance are not the only ones identified in I&RS action plans as having responsibilities for the amelioration of identified problems. I&RS action plans include all resources that are required to oversee and rectify the priority problems, which includes the provision of support to the individuals requesting assistance. Sometimes support can take the form of providing relief to staff or parents who must continue to work with the presenting problems either prior to implementation of the process, while awaiting the results of tests (e.g., child study team evaluation) or the analysis of case information or before or after a student participates in a program outside of the school (e.g., substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, psychiatric placement, specialized tutoring).

- ***Brings Together School and Community Resources*** – While the school is not solely responsible for curing society's ills, it receives children who manifest society's problems. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the team to seek out and nurture relationships with as many facets of the community as possible to lay the groundwork for collaboration in problem identification, problem assessment, problem solving and service delivery. These relationships form the basis for either formal agreements, methods of operation or increased awareness of intervention resources and strategies that can expedite the problem-solving or referral processes and increase the chances of success for students, staff and families.

APPLIED RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES

In the recent past, there has been an explosion of research on how people learn and how the brain processes information, as well as strategies for translating this information into effective instructional practices. The I&RS team should remain versed in the research literature on learning, behavior and health, as well as effective techniques for teaching, learning, behavior and health management, in order to provide appropriate support and assistance to staff, students and parents.

To paraphrase John Dewey, the most mature person in any social setting is the one who is most adaptable to other people's needs. In some classrooms, approximately thirty students are adapting to the teacher, rather than the teacher adapting to them. The mature educator is able to go with the flow of a classroom, and the I&RS team should be well prepared to provide appropriate assistance to help make this happen.

Even the most flexible and multi-skilled educators will encounter complex or vexing educational dilemmas. It is anticipated that many of the educational problems presented to the I&RS team will result from students who grasp, understand and learn differently from the expected "norm." Therefore, the I&RS team must stand ready to accurately assess and plan for differences in student learning and behavior. Described below are examples of some of the more prominent areas of study that the team should be ready to apply to requests for assistance.

Multiple Intelligences

In his book, Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Howard Gardner defines intelligence as a three-way mental process:

- A set of skills that enable all humans to resolve genuine problems encountered in their daily lives;
- The ability to create an effective product or to offer a service that is valued in one's culture; and
- The potential for finding or creating novel problems that enable individuals to acquire new knowledge.

Gardner makes the case for an expansion of the concept of intelligence. His Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) is based on the idea that each of us has at least eight intelligences, or eight distinct cognitive abilities.

Multiple Intelligences, continued

Gardner views the intelligences as semi-autonomous, domain- specific competencies that work together, rather than in isolation. Some of the eight intelligences will demonstrate more cognitive "promise" than others within each of us, and even within one area of intelligence an individual might have a range of weaknesses and strengths. The following synopsis of the eight intelligence domains is not presented in any order of priority.

*Gardner's Eight Intelligences**

LEARNING DOMAINS/ INTELLIGENCES	CHARACTERISTICS	TYPICAL "ENDSTATES" OR PROFESSIONS
Verbal/Linguistic	Gardner's verbal linguistic intelligence is the ability to exhibit language development in its fullest form. This way of knowing and comprehending the world is the ability to use language to achieve a goal and enhance understanding. A core component of this traditional "IQ-type" of intelligence is sensitivity to meanings, rhythms and sounds, or sensitivity to the different functions of language. Young children with a dominance in this cognitive domain might exercise this facility by demanding story after story at bedtime. As students, they often think in words, and have highly developed verbal skills, and spell and write well. They like oral and silent reading exercises, playing word games, using a variety of reading and writing materials at learning centers, writing poetry and telling complicated jokes. They tend to be precise in expressing themselves and love learning new words. Their reading comprehension is well above the norm. As older youth, they have strong vocabularies, and can get so lost in a thick book that they may forget about dinner. They may subscribe to magazines or keep a diary or journal.	According to Gardner, professionals, or "endstates" who have highly developed skills in this important language domain include, authors, poets, journalists and lawyers. Examples of individuals with strength in this intelligence are Martin Luther King, Jr., Winston Churchill, William Jefferson Clinton and Woody Allen.

* Gardner has postulated a ninth intelligence: existential intelligence. This intelligence involves our capacity to think in spiritual and moral ways; our ability to process issues of individual existence, including the concepts of good vs. bad and right vs. wrong. Unlike Gardner's eight other intelligences, however, he has not yet identified an area of the brain responsible for this intelligence.

Gardner's Eight Intelligences, continued

Logical/ Mathematical	Gardner's logical mathematical way of teaching, learning and knowing the universe is essentially the ability to demonstrate the intellectual powers of deduction and observation associated with math and science. These learners deal with inductive and deductive thinking, numbers and patterns; they think conceptually and abstractly and are able to see patterns and relationships that others often miss. They tend to be systematic and analytical, and always have a logical rationale or argument for what they are doing or thinking. Young learners learn to count easily and are always asking how things work. They enjoy manipulatives, puzzles, categorizing activities and working on timelines. In the middle school years they enjoy creating their own word problems and logic games. As older youth, they are skilled at many areas of mathematics, calculus and science.	Three likely groups of professionals, or "endstates" according to Gardner, who are best able to use and appreciate such abstract relationships are chemists, microbiologists, and technologists. The mathematician, Albert Einstein, was especially strong in this intelligence.
Visual/Spatial	Gardner describes visual spatial intelligence as the special ability to form a mental model that relies upon the sense of sight and the ability to visualize. Those who exhibit strength in this domain think in mental images and employ their imagination to develop real world pictures. These types of learners are often acutely aware of objects, shapes, colors and patterns in their environment. They enjoy drawing, painting and creating interesting designs, and like working with clay, colored construction paper and fabric. Jigsaw puzzles, reading maps and finding their way around new places intrigue them. They frequently daydream in class and are outstanding at performing tasks that require seeing with the mind's eye (e.g., visualizing, pretending, imagining). As seniors in school, they use overheads, posters, charts, graphs and analogies to present their assignments. They have strong opinions about matching colors, pleasing and appropriate textures and decorating.	Such learners become successful navigators, chess players, golf course designers, community planners, architects, designers and painters (e.g., Pablo Picasso).

Gardner's Eight Intelligences, continued

Bodily/Kinesthetic	The bodily/kinesthetic way of teaching, learning and knowing the world is characterized by the ability to use the physical movement and the wisdom of the body, or parts of the body, to create an innovative product, solve a practical problem or play a game. This domain includes the ability to handle objects skillfully, act gracefully, apprehend directly the actions of other people or other objects, and is marked by keen body awareness, as witnessed by skateboard, dance or gymnastic abilities. As young children, these types of learners like physical and creative movement activities. They appear to learn best by role playing, hugging, dancing, touching, smelling, tasting, creating and inventing things with their hands. They can often perform a task only after seeing someone else do it. Middle-aged learners often find it difficult to sit still for a long time, and become easily bored if they are not actively involved in what is going on around them. They learn well from the concrete or hands-on activities often associated with field trips, as well as doing crafts such as weaving, knitting, woodworking and model building. Older youth may be good dancers or leaders in team sports. They can also be particularly good at mimicking their teachers.	Athletes, surgeons and craft-people use all or part of their bodies in these highly skilled ways. Basketball stars Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan, baseball legend Roberto Clemente, golfer Tiger Woods, hockey player Wayne Gretzky, boxing luminary Muhammad Ali, football player Randall Cunningham, track and field standout, Carl Lewis and all-round athlete Jim Thorpe exemplify strength in this intelligence.
Musical/ Rhythmic	Gardner's musical rhythmic way of teaching, learning and knowing employs the brain to play important roles in perception and production of music. This way deals with recognizing tonal patterns, sounds, beats and rhythms, including the appreciation of music and sounds in the environment. Young children can be heard banging on pots, moving to the beat or singing nonsense songs in the bathroom. They are sensitive to sounds in the environment: the chirp of a cricket, rain on the roof, varying traffic patterns. They can often	Musical stars such as Luciano Pavarrotti, Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross, Puff Daddy, Bruce Springsteen, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Bonnie Raitt,

Gardner's Eight Intelligences, continued

Musical/ Rhythmic, continued	reproduce a melody or rhythmic pattern after hearing it only once. Older youth have a good memory for lyrics, like to compose songs and play instruments well. They may wince when someone sings off key.	Mariah Carey, Joni Mitchell, Shania Twain, Ella Fitzgerald and Tony Bennett all have demonstrated prowess in this intelligence.
Social/ Interpersonal	This intelligence is characterized by the capacity to value and respond appropriately to motivations, moods and objectives of others. This intelligence helps us appreciate differences in neighborhoods and around the world by enabling us to recognize and make distinctions among others' feelings and intentions. Stated simply, this intellectual way is the ability to understand and work well with others. Young children approaching this intelligence share and get along well with other children and hate to be left alone. They learn through person-to-person interaction. They generally have lots of friends and show a great deal of empathy for others, especially in understanding different types; are very good team members and skilled at drawing others into a discussion, as well as in conflict resolution and mediation. In the middle years, these young people tend to be natural leaders, easily picking up subtle social cues and knowing how to put someone at ease.	This way is best exhibited in parents, teachers, salespersons and politicians. President John F. Kennedy, the late television actress, Lucille Ball, and the evangelist Billy Graham have demonstrated strength in this intelligence.
Self/ Intrapersonal	This intelligence deals with the development and understanding of the self, including goals, feelings, anxieties, strengths and subsequently drawing from that awareness to guide personal behavior. Insight into oneself is the focal point here. This self-knowledge skill helps individuals to distinguish among feelings and build accurate mental models of themselves.	Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Virginia Satir, Carl Rogers, the Dali Lama, John Paul Sartre are all

Gardner's Eight Intelligences, continued

Self/ Intrapersonal, continued	At first look, the intra-personal intelligence learner appears to function in direct contrast with the interpersonal (i.e., the ability to understand and work with others). Viewed from a deeper perspective, both the self and the other blend together: without the self, the social lies alone in a vacuum, and vice versa. Young children who demonstrate cognitive "promise" in this intelligence can be left on their own to play happily. They may appear on the surface to be a bit stubborn. They like to work alone and sometimes shy away from others. They are self-reflective and self-aware, which keeps them in tune with their feelings, values, beliefs and meta-cognitive thinking processes. They are highly intuitive, inwardly motivated, strong-willed, self-confident and have definite, well-thought-out opinions on almost any issue; although they sometimes may give the impression of being "off the wall." During the middle years of school life, some students will come to these learners for advice and counsel, while others may view them as distant or weird. They appreciate a private time and place for thinking. These students learn best on their own (e.g., completing personal diaries, independent assignments). Older children may keep a journal, express strong emotions and well-developed opinions, and seem unconcerned by other students' notions of what is "in" and "out." They learn best when learning tasks that involve self-study programs, personal autobiographies or portfolios.	examples of individuals who have demonstrated strength in this intelligence.
Naturalist/ Environmental	This intelligence involves sensitivity to the world of nature (e.g., living things, clouds, stones) or the ability to recognize patterns. Gardner defines it as an ability to recognize and classify elements of the natural world. We all distinguish among items, going back to our ancestors who needed to recognize carnivorous animals, poisonous snakes and flavorful and safe vegetation. Some children (e.g.,	This could be anyone from a molecular biologist to a traditional medicine man who uses herbal remedies. Examples of

Gardner's Eight Intelligences, continued

Naturalist/ Environmental, continued	experts on dinosaurs), adolescents (e.g., experts on military aircraft) and adults (e.g., hunters, botanists, anatomists) excel at this pursuit. Young children may be fascinated by all kinds of creatures, including ants crawling along a picnic blanket. In school, these learners notice characteristics and patterns, innately sense appropriate categories based on characteristics they observe and group items accordingly. Older children enjoy learning and discerning the names and characteristics of trees and flowers. A child strong in this intelligence skillfully sorts and classifies rocks, insects, shells, dinosaurs or sports cards. An adult can shrewdly distinguish differences among consumer products (e.g., automobile engines, sneakers, jewelry, makeup, foods) or analyze variations, for example, in fingerprints, voiceprints or eyeprints.	naturalists include George Washington Carver, Charles Darwin and Rachel Carson.

Only two of the eight intelligences, verbal linguistic abilities and logical mathematical skills, encompass the majority of the traditional three "R's:" reading, writing and arithmetic. Additionally, these two intelligences comprise practically all of what is considered in most standardized intelligence tests. Sound teaching procedures, however, can captivate, improve, expand and amplify all of the intelligences.

The work of Gardner is particularly applicable to the work of I&RS teams as they identify student's strengths and talents and consider appropriate remedial strategies for diverse learning, behavior and health problems. Capitalizing on students' native intelligences for accomplishing classroom assignments and educational objectives can make the difference between success and failure.

In the face of increasing cultural diversity in New Jersey schools, educators can also benefit from new ways of understanding how students think. Gardner's MIT provides a means for distinguishing among the many ways students solve problems and create products, which can help teams identify students' cognitive strengths. This information can guide teams in the development of classroom plans and educational strategies that address differences among cultures and their varied means for expressing assorted intelligences.

Four Stages of Learning, continued

Four Stages of Learning

In her book, Taming the Dragons: Real Help for Real School Problems, Susan Setley asserts that students who struggle with their schoolwork tend to show three patterns in their learning: they learn inefficiently, inconsistently and incompletely.

The cerebral cortex is where higher cognitive processing occurs. When we educate students, we are essentially changing the structure and the chemistry in students' neurons in their cerebral cortexes, growing receptive surfaces (dendrites) of nerve cells. The more students use what they learn, the more the neural pathway and the knowledge become permanent.

However memories are formed, we know that repeated, successful use strengthens them. The completion of these supposed paths through the brain would be what we think of as learning. The more solidly we establish learning, the more easily students will perform the task or recall the knowledge.

Students who learn inconsistently or inefficiently seem to build fragile pathways to the information they need. They use several partly-built paths to the information, but none of them are used consistently enough to retrieve the information quickly, easily and confidently; or, they might fragment the information, and store it completely in several places instead of establishing one reliable site.

Complete learning, that is learning that stays with us for long periods of time, takes place in stages or steps. At each of these steps, referred to by Setley as the Four Stages of Learning, we master a task a little more thoroughly, until we finally know it extremely well. Setley identifies the four steps, which are described below, as follows: *Exposure Stage, Guided Learning Stage, Independence Stage and Mastery Stage*.

Four Stages of Learning

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Exposure	This stage is encountered any time a concept is completely new to students. If we could examine the pathway for this information, and if the preliminary research is correct, we might find that at the beginning of learning a new task, in the Exposure Stage, the nerves are completely unconnected, with visible gaps between the cells.	In the case of long division, for example, when the teacher first explains it to students, most get confused.
Guided Learning	In this stage, students still can not solve the problems without help and guidance from the teacher. It is hard work, and they often need the teacher's help since they make a variety of mistakes. Students remain dependent on the teacher for success, so complete learning has not yet taken place. The connection between the dendrites might not yet be strong or dependable; knowledge is learned inadequately and incompletely. If students do not progress to the Independence Stage, little useful learning has taken place.	Students begin to catch on, and with encouragement, support and clues from the teacher, they can attempt to solve assigned problems.
Independence	With review, guidance and hard work, students reach the Independence Stage, when students begin to think of the task as "easy," and gain confidence in their abilities. If the pathway for a skill weakens, students may drop back to the Guided Learning Stage, once again unable to do the work independently. This is why, for example, elementary school math textbooks begin the school year with a thorough review of the previous year's skills. The review maintains independent skills and prevents students from slipping back to stage two.	Students can do most of the problems on their own, most of the time.

Four Stages of Learning, continued

Mastery	Mastery comes with more practice. Students' understanding is automatic. They can do the steps of a task or skill without stopping to think what to do next. Communication between the cells is rapid and consistent. Students literally know the information without "thinking." Students would need occasional review, however, or eventually they might forget a portion or all of the skill. Mastery is the final goal of education. Students rarely forget anything they have learned this well.	Students have so thoroughly and completely learned to do long division that they can perform it for the remainder of their lives with no clues, no help or no review.

Students who experience difficulty in learning an individual or a complex set of tasks or skills may have a learning style that interferes with their progress through the Four Stages of Learning. Struggling students move more slowly, often getting stuck at the second stage, rarely having the powerful experience of considering any of their schoolwork as "easy."

Students who labor and can not easily do their schoolwork rarely feel "smart." For them, getting to the Independence Stage is a liberating experience. The I&RS team is in a position to help staff develop plans that will move students through the guided learning stage to independence, and eventually to mastery.

Managing the Conditions of Learning

For effective schooling to occur, students should experience success in each of the variables described below. Since it is educators' jobs to provide opportunities for students' success in these areas, the I&RS team should be prepared to assess and plan for them as part of their ongoing procedures to support requests for assistance. Teams can also use these to guide teacher interviews or observations of the problem.

Curricular Variables: Instructional Level

- How developmentally-appropriate is the level of curricular material?
- How appropriate is the pace of instruction?
- How is task relevant practice provided?
- How appropriate is the mode of task presentation?
- How appropriate is the mode of student response?
- How appropriate is the scope and sequence of tasks?
- How appropriate is the criterion for student success?

Instructional Variables: Instructional Level

- How appropriate is the direct instruction time?
- How appropriate is the allocation of engaged time?
- How appropriate is the degree of task structure (e,g., grouping)?
- How appropriate is the guided and independent practice?
- How appropriate are the opportunities for meaningful responses?
- How appropriate are the amounts and types of feedback?
- How appropriate are the cues and prompts?

Student Performance Variables

- How appropriate is the *time allocation for academic learning* on the following variables:
  a) time on task,
  b) task completion, and
  c) task comprehension?

- How appropriate are the following *student strategies*:
  a) organizational skills (i.e., approach to the task),
  b) metacognitive skills (i.e., learning to learn), and
  c) work habits (i.e., perseverance)?

- How appropriate is the student's *behavior* and *affect* on the following variables:
  a) Functional behavioral strategies,
  b) Coping skills strategies, and
  c) Social skills (i.e., skill vs. performance deficits)?

Environmental Variables

- How do the belief systems of students, parents and educators contribute to success or failure?
- How appropriate are the communication patterns among the student, parents and educators?
- How do stressors in the home, school and community affect success or failure?
- How do the student's support systems affect success or failure?

Cognitive/ Learning Styles

Cognitive styles and learning styles refer to the preferred way an individual processes information or the different ways in which children and adults think and learn. Each of us develops a preferred and consistent set of behaviors or approaches to learning.

Unlike theories of individual differences in abilities (e.g., Gardner), which describe peak performance, learning *styles* describe a person's typical mode of thinking, remembering or problem solving. Furthermore, styles are usually considered to be bipolar dimensions, whereas abilities are unipolar (i.e., ranging from zero to a maximum value). Having more of an ability is usually considered beneficial, while having a particular cognitive style simply denotes a tendency to behave in a certain manner. Cognitive style is usually referred to as a personality dimension that influences attitudes, values and social interaction.

To further our understanding of the learning process, Litzinger and Osif (1993) broke it down into several processes:

- ***Cognition*** – How one *acquires* knowledge.

- ***Conceptualization*** – How one *processes* information. There are those who are always looking for connections among unrelated events. For others, each event triggers a multitude of new ideas.

- ***Affective*** – People's motivation, decision-making styles, values and emotional preferences will also help to define their learning styles.

Why is Learning Style Important?

Understanding students' cognitive and/or learning style(s) can be useful to the I&RS Team in planning strategies or methods that will be most effective in helping educators facilitate student learning, growth and achievement. Information about students' learning styles (as well as educators' learning, facilitation and instructional styles) is important to both the educator and the student for the following reasons:

- Low satisfaction or poor performance in a course or particular activity may be misinterpreted as lack of knowledge or ability, when it is actually difficulty with a particular style of learning.

Cognitive/Learning Styles, continued

- Individual learning preferences, although clearly not related to aptitude, are significantly related to personal motivation and performance.

- Educators with an understanding of their students' learning styles are better able to appropriately adapt their teaching methods.

- Educators who introduce a variety of appropriate teaching methods into their classes are more likely to motivate and engage students in learning.

- Students who learn about their own style become better learners, achieve higher grades, become more motivated and have more positive attitudes about their studies, have greater self-confidence and have more skill in applying their knowledge in courses.

- Information about learning styles can help educators become more sensitive to the diversity of students.

- Information about learning styles can serve as a guide to the design of learning experiences that either match, or mismatch, students' styles, depending upon whether the educator's purpose is efficiency of students' learning or the development of skills with a style of learning in which students can improve.

- Information about learning styles can assist in working with at risk students, since they have a greater chance of dropping out of school or engaging in self-destructive behavior.

Field Independence versus Field Dependence

A number of cognitive styles have been identified and studied over the years. Field independence versus field dependence is one of the most widely known styles. It refers to a tendency to approach the environment in a particular, as opposed to a global manner.

At a perceptual level, field independent personalities are able to distinguish figures as discrete from their backgrounds. Field dependent individuals experience events in an undifferentiated way, and have a greater social orientation relative to field independent personalities.

Cognitive/Learning Styles, continued

Several studies have identified a number of major connections between this cognitive style and learning. For example, field independent individuals are likely to learn more effectively under conditions of intrinsic motivation (e.g., self-study) and are less influenced by social reinforcement.

Scanning

This cognitive style focuses on differences in the extent and intensity of attention resulting in variations in the vividness of experience and the span of awareness.

Leveling versus Sharpening

These cognitive styles emphasize individual variations in remembering that pertain to the distinctiveness of memories (i.e., sharpening) and the tendency to merge similar events (i.e., leveling).

Reflection versus Impulsivity

This style has to do with individual consistencies in the speed and adequacy with which alternative hypotheses are formed and responses made.

Conceptual Differentiation

This style focuses on differences in the tendency to categorize perceived similarities among stimuli, in terms of separate concepts or dimensions.

David Kolb's Theory of Learning Styles

Kolb proposes a theory of experiential learning that involves the following four principle stages that can be seen as a continuum running from concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC) and active experimentation (AE). Under Kolb's theory, the CE/AC and AE/RO dimensions are polar opposites, as far as learning styles are concerned.

Kolb's Theory of Learning Styles, continued

Kolb's theory is based on the view that learning is a series of experiences with cognitive additions, rather than as a series of pure cognitive processes. Kolb's theory sets forth that learning is a circular process in which concrete experience (CE) is followed by reflection and observation (RO), which in turn leads to the formulation of abstract concepts and generalization (AC), the implications of which are tested in new situations through active experimentation (AE).

A description of Kolb's learning styles are provided below, as well as suggested instructional strategies for teaching to each style:

LEARNING STYLE	DESCRIPTION	STRAEGIES FOR TEACHING TO STYLES
Concrete Experience (CE)	Being involved in a new experience.	Offer laboratories, fieldwork, observations or trigger films.
Reflective Observation (RO)	Watching others or developing observations about one's own experience.	Use logs, journals or brainstorming.
Abstract Conceptualization (AC)	Creating theories to explain observations.	Use lectures, papers and analogies.
Active Experimentation (AE)	Using theories to solve problems and make decisions.	Employ simulations, case studies and homework.

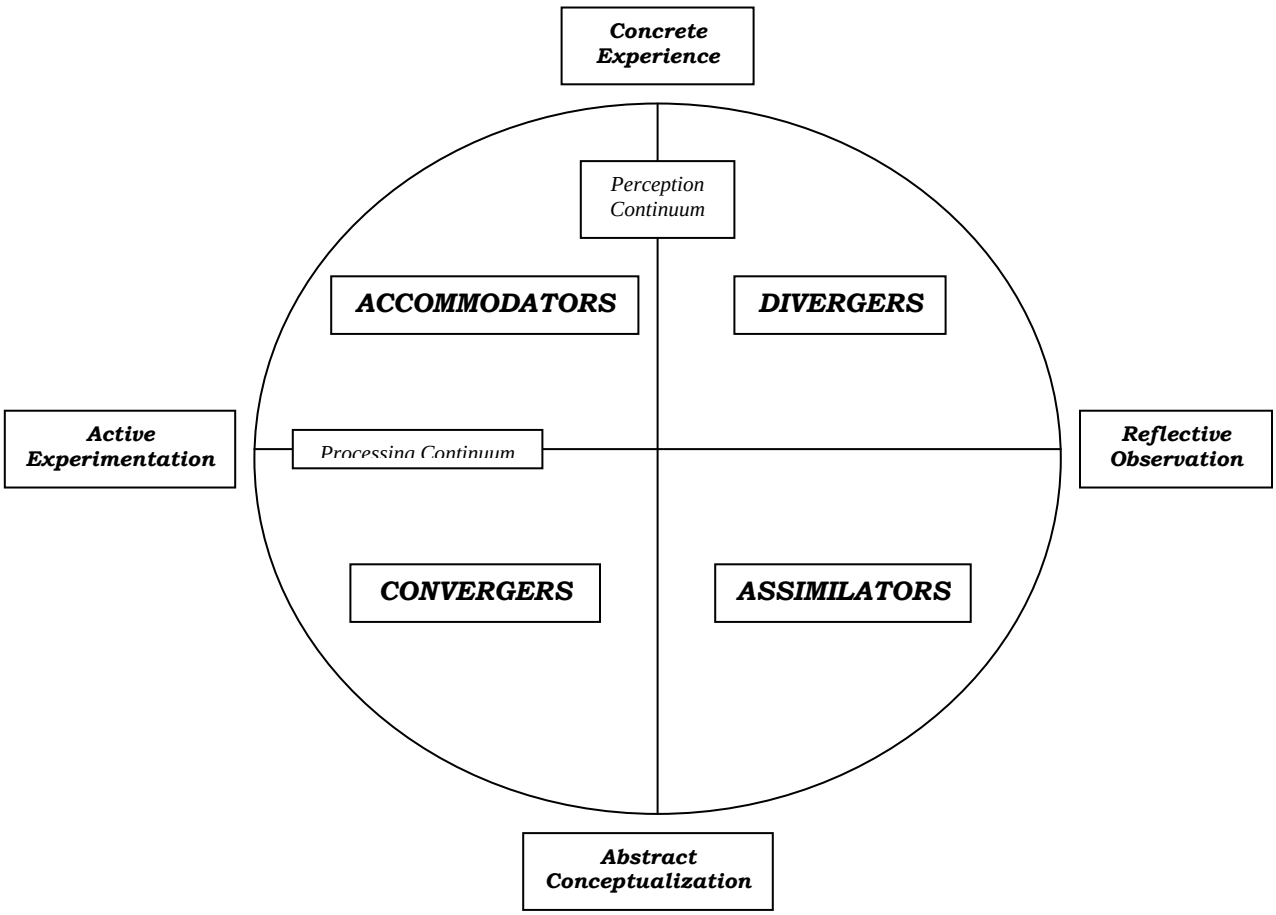
Kolb's Theory of Learning Styles, continued

While Kolb's theory describes an integrated process in which all stages of the continuum have to be completed over time, it also contends that people are rarely fully effective in all stages. Usually people come to prefer, and rely on, one style above the others. I&RS teams should be familiar with and able to apply information on student's learning styles when creating instructional materials, strategies and techniques for identified problems.

Kolb produced variants of his main stages, and by combining different parts of the four stages identified four main styles of learners: divergers, assimilators, convergers and accommodators, depending upon their position on the two opposite dimensions (i.e., CE/AE, AE/RO). For example, an accommodator prefers concrete experiences and active experimentation (AE, CE).

Kolb's Learning Styles

(Diagram from Litzinger and Osif 1993)



Kolb's Theory of Learning Styles, continued

LEARNING STYLE	DESCRIPTION	INSTRUCTIONAL INSIGHTS
Accommodators (CE/AE)	Accommodators are motivated by the question, "What would happen if I did this?" They look for significance in the learning experience and consider what they can do, as well as what others have done previously. These people are good with complexity and are able to see relationships among aspects of a system.	Educators working with this type of student might expect devil's advocate type questions, such as "What if?" and "Why not?" Case studies and experimentation are useful tools.
Assimilators (AC/RO)	Assimilators are motivated to answer the question, "What is there to know?" They like accurate, organized delivery of information and they tend to respect the knowledge of the expert. They are not comfortable randomly exploring a system, and they like to get the 'right' answer to the problem. These learners tend to be less 'instructor intensive' than other learning styles. They will carefully follow prepared exercises, provided a resource person is clearly available and able to answer questions.	Methods that suit assimilators include: Lectures or audio/video presentations, followed by demonstrations; or exploration of a subject in a laboratory, followed by a tutorial (which they will probably stick to quite closely) and for which answers should be provided.
Convergers (AC/AE)	Convergers are motivated to discover the relevancy or the "how" of a situation. For convergers, the application and usefulness of information is increased by understanding detailed information about the system's operation.	Instructional methods for convergers, above all, should be interactive. Computer-assisted instruction is a possibility. Problem sets or workbooks can be provided for students to explore.
Divergers (CE/RO)	Divergers are motivated to discover the relevancy or the "why" of a situation. They like to reason from concrete specific information presented to them in a detailed, systematic and logical manner.	It is best to mingle with these students, answering questions and making suggestions. Ready reference guides provide handy, organized summaries for this kind of learner. Flexibility and the ability to think on your feet are assets.

Learning Styles and the 4MAT System: A Cycle of Learning

The 4MAT system for creating lesson plans for teaching to learning styles with right/left mode techniques, developed by Bernice McCarthy, is based on a number of premises:

- First, different individuals perceive and process experience in different and preferred ways, which comprise individuals' unique learning styles.

- Essential to quality learning is an awareness in learners of their own preferred mode, becoming comfortable with their own ways of learning, and being helped to develop a learning repertoire, which is developed through experience with alternative modes.

- The fact that students may have preferred and most comfortable modes does not mean they can not function effectively in others. In fact, students who have the flexibility to move easily from one mode to another to accommodate the requirements of a situation are at a definite advantage over those who limit themselves to only one style of thinking and learning.

Descriptions of the four learning styles identified by McCarthy follow:

LEARNING TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL MODES
Type 1: Innovative Learners	Their primary interest is in personal meaning. They need to have reasons for learning; ideally, reasons that connect with personal experience and establish the usefulness of information in daily life.	They are capable of learning effectively from cooperative learning, brainstorming and integration of content areas (e.g., health with science, math with the arts, language arts with social studies).
Type 2: Analytic Learners	They are predominantly interested in acquiring facts in order to deepen their understanding of concepts and processes.	They are capable of learning effectively from lectures, and enjoy independent research, analysis of data and hearing what "the experts" have to say.

Learning Styles and the 4MAT System, continued

Type 3: Common Sense Learners	These learners are mainly interested in how things work; they want to "get in and try it."	Concrete, experiential learning activities work best for them, such as manipulatives, hands-on tasks and kinesthetic experiences.
Type 4: Dynamic Learners	These learners are principally interested in self-directed discovery. They rely heavily on their own intuition, and seek to teach both themselves and others.	Any type of independent study is effective for these learners. They also enjoy simulations, role plays and games.

McCarthy argues that all styles should be addressed within the curriculum, so that more than one type of student may be permitted to both "shine" and "stretch." That is, every lesson should contain something for everyone, so each student not only finds their mode of greatest comfort, but also is challenged to adapt less comfortable, but equally valuable modes.

The instructional sequence suggested by McCarthy teaches to the four styles using both right- and left-brain processing techniques. This integration of styles and processing modes ensures that we are educating the "whole brain" (i.e., engaging both hemispheres of the brain).

Neurolinguistics/Psycholinguistics

Consideration of one aspect of neurolinguistics can also assist in assessing students' and educators' learning styles. Specifically, our tendencies toward the use of visual, auditory or kinesthetic/tactile dimensions in language and thought are strong indicators of predominant learning style.

The chart below, adapted from Accelerated Learning, by Colin Rose, provides an example of how language and other cognitive processes can illuminate ones' primary leaning style. By reading the text in the left column, and answering the questions in the successive three columns on how you respond to each situation, you can determine your learning style. Your answers may fall into all three columns, but one column will likely contain the most answers, which indicates your main learning style.

Learning Styles Assessment

When you...	VISUAL	AUDITORY	KINESTHETIC/ TACTILE
SPELL	Do you try to see the word?	Do you sound out the word or use a phonetic approach?	Do you write the word down to find whether it feels right?
TALK	Do you sparingly, but dislike listening for too long? Do you favor words such as *see*, *picture* and *imagine*?	Do you enjoy listening, but are impatient to talk? Do you use words such as *hear*, *tune* and *think*?	Do you gesture and use expressive movements? Do you use *words such as* feel, *touch* and *hold*?
CONCENTRATE	Do you become distracted by untidiness or movement?	Do you become distracted by sounds or noises?	Do you become distracted by activity around you?
MEET SOMEONE AGAIN	Do you forget names, but remember faces or remember where you met?	Do you forget faces, but remember names or remember what you talked about?	Do you remember best what you did together?
CONTACT PEOPLE ON BUSINESS	Do you prefer direct, face-to-face, personal meetings?	Do you prefer the telephone?	Do you talk with them while walking or participating in an activity?
READ	Do you like descriptive scenes or pause to imagine the actions?	Do you enjoy dialogue and conversation or hearing the characters talk?	Do you prefer action stories or are not a keen reader?
DO SOMETHING NEW AT WORK	Do you like to see demonstrations, diagrams, slides or posters?	Do you prefer verbal instructions or talking about it with someone else?	Do you prefer to jump right in and try it?
PUT SOMETHING TOGETHER	Do you look at the directions and the picture?	Do you prefer to have the directions explained to you?	Do you ignore the directions and figure it out as you go along?
NEED HELP WITH A COMPUTER APPLICATION	Do you seek out pictures or diagrams?	Do you call the help desk, ask a neighbor or growl at the computer?	Do you keep trying to do it or try it on another computer?

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Another construct that can be useful in determining one's learning style is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), developed by Katharine C. Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers, which sets forth four style dimensions. The MBTI instrument provides data on four sets of preferences, resulting in sixteen learning styles, or types. A type is the combination of an individual's four preferences (e.g., ESTJ or extraverted-sensing-thinking-judger). The four dimensions are described below, along with ideas for teaching to each polarity of the four dimensions.

STYLE DIMENSION	**INSTRUCTIONAL INSIGHTS**	**STYLE DIMENSION**	**INSTRUCTIONAL INSIGHTS**
Extraversion (E)		***Introversion (I)***	
This preference tells us how people "charge their batteries." Extroverts find energy in things and people. They prefer interaction with others and are action oriented. They are *interactors* and "on-the-fly" thinkers. There is no impression without expression.	Extraverted students learn by explaining to others. They do not know whether they understand the subject until they try to explain it to themselves or others. Since they enjoy working in groups, consider in-class or outside-of-class group exercises and projects.	Introverts find energy in the inner world of ideas, concepts and abstractions. They can be sociable, but need quiet to recharge their batteries. They are *concentrators* and reflective thinkers. There is no impression without reflection.	To introverted students, disconnected chunks of facts are not knowledge; rather these facts are merely information. Knowledge to the introverted student means interconnecting material and seeing the "big picture." Teach these students how to "chunk," group or interconnect knowledge, to create a network or framework of facts.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, continued

Sensing (S)	***Sensing Insights***	***Intuition (N)***	***Intuition Insights***
Sensing people are detail-oriented. They want facts and trust them.	Sensing students prefer organized, linear and structured lessons. They are good at marshalling the facts of an exercise.	Intuitive people seek out patterns and relationships among the facts they have gathered. They trust hunches and their intuition, and look for the "big picture."	Intuitive students prefer the discovery learning approach, which helps them uncover general principles or theories. They must have the big picture, or an integrating framework, to understand a subject.
Thinking	***Thinking Insights***	***Feeling***	***Feeling Insights***
Thinking students value fairness. To them, nothing is fairer than focusing on the logic of a situation, and placing great weight on objective criteria in making a decision.	Thinking students like clear course and topic objectives, which are precise and action-oriented and avoid vague words or expressions, such as "students will appreciate…" or "students will be exposed to…"	Feeling students value harmony. They focus on human values and needs as they make decisions or arrive at judgments. They tend to be good at persuasion and facilitating differences among group members.	Feeling students like working in groups, especially harmonious groups.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, continued

Judging	***Judging Insights***	***Perceptive***	***Perceptive Insights***
Judging people are decisive, proactive and self-regimented. They focus on completing the task, only want to know the essentials and take action quickly. They plan their work and work their plan. Deadlines are sacred. Their motto is "Just do it!"	Teach the structured skills of note taking and test taking to help judging students learn more effectively. Judging students often reach closure too quickly when analyzing cases. Therefore, it can be helpful to play devil's advocate to challenge thinking and offer alternative conclusions.	Perceptive people are curious, adaptable and spontaneous. They start many tasks, want to know everything about each task and often find it difficult to complete a task; deadlines are meant to be stretched. Their motto is "On the other hand…"	Perceptive students often postpone doing an assignment until the very last minute. They are not lazy; much to the contrary, they seek information to the very last minute (and sometimes beyond). It can be helpful to divide a complex project or paper into a series of sub-assignments and provide deadlines for each sub-assignment. The division of tasks also provides the opportunity for continuous feedback to the student.

The Myers-Briggs inventory can be a very useful tool for helping I&RS team members understand each other's styles of learning and working. The use of personal awareness instruments, such as Myers-Briggs, are excellent resources to use for the maintenance of even fully-functioning teams, as discussed in the section of this manual titled "Team Wellness/Maintenance."

Cooperative Team Learning

Cooperative team learning is an instructional strategy involving student's participation in small group activities that promote positive interaction. Cooperative learning

Cooperative Team Learning, continued

promotes academic achievement, is relatively easy to implement and is not expensive.

Research conducted by Robert Slavin reports that, among the benefits of cooperative learning strategies are students' improved behavior, improved attendance and increased liking of school. It also promotes student motivation, encourages group processes, fosters social and academic interaction among students, and rewards successful group participation. Cooperative learning has also been shown to improve relationships among students from different backgrounds.

Foyle and Lyman identify the following basic steps involved in successful implementation of cooperative learning activities. The I&RS team can use these and other criteria to develop appropriate strategies and/or to assess the efficacy of existing cooperative learning strategies.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

- The content to be taught is identified, and criteria for mastery are determined by the teacher.
- The most useful cooperative learning technique is identified, and the group size is determined by the teacher.
- Students are assigned to a group.
- The classroom is arranged to facilitate group interaction.
- Group processes are taught or reviewed, as needed, to assure that groups run smoothly.
- The teacher develops expectations for group learning and makes sure students understand the purposes of the learning that will take place. A time line for activities is made clear to students.
- The teacher presents initial material, as appropriate, using whatever technique he chooses.
- The teacher monitors student interaction in the groups and provides assistance and clarification, as needed. The teacher reviews group skills and facilitates problem solving, when necessary.
- Student outcomes are evaluated. Students must individually demonstrate mastery of important skills or concepts of the learning. Evaluation is based on observations of student performance or oral responses to questions; paper and pencil need not be used.
- Groups are rewarded for success (e.g., verbal praise by the teacher, recognition in the class newsletter, recognition on the bulletin board).

Cooperative Team Learning, continued

When the I&RS team identifies cooperative learning as a helpful strategy for a case, a plan should also be developed for the adoption of alternative instructional strategies and styles that accommodate the learning styles of the balance of students in the classroom, who may not readily adjust or take to the cooperative learning format.

Behavior Management and Student Discipline

As reported by Kathleen Cotton, in School-wide and Classroom Discipline, during most of its twenty-two year existence, the Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools has identified "lack of discipline" as a most serious problem facing the nation's educational system. As previously indicated in this manual, educators, parents and students alike are seriously concerned about disorder and danger (e.g., cheating, insubordination, truancy, intimidation, drug/alcohol use, robbery, physical assaults that require medical attention) in school environments.

In addition to these school discipline issues, American classrooms are frequently plagued by lesser kinds of problem behavior that disrupt the flow of classroom activities and interfere with learning. Research studies report that approximately one-half of classroom time is taken up with activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of lost instructional time.

At the same time, there are many schools that, regardless of their size, socioeconomic influences, student composition or geographic setting, have safe and orderly classrooms and grounds. As the research literature makes clear, these disciplined and smooth-running school environments are not products of chance.

Research on Classroom Management and Discipline

Described below is a synthesis of findings from research studies, as reported by Ms. Cotton, which have identified effective classroom- and school-level disciplinary practices.

For example, J.S. Kounin in his book, Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms, reviewed results of studies from the kindergarten to university levels, focusing particularly on findings from a study of 80 elementary classrooms. His work was undertaken to identify strategies

Research on Classroom Management and Discipline, continued

and processes used in effectively and ineffectively managed classrooms, whose findings have been consistently validated.

He defined effective managers as those teachers whose classrooms were orderly, had a minimum of student misbehavior and had high levels of time-on-task, and defined ineffective managers as those whose classrooms lacked these qualities. Kounin found that effective and ineffective managers did not differ greatly in their methods for dealing with disruption. Instead, effective managers were found to be much more skilled at *preventing disruptions* from occurring in the first place. Kounin identified the specific behaviors these effective managers engaged in to keep students focused on learning and to reduce the likelihood of classroom disruption:

- ***"Withitness"*** – Communicating to the children by his behavior that he knows what the students are doing, and what is going on in the classroom.
- ***Overlapping*** – Attending to different events simultaneously, without being totally diverted by a disruption or other activity.
- ***Smoothness and Momentum in Lessons*** – Conducting smooth and brisk pacing, and providing continuous activity signals or cues (e.g., standing near inattentive students, directing questions to potentially disruptive students).
- ***Group Alerting*** – Attempting to involve non-reciting students in recitation tasks and keeping all students "alerted" to the task at hand.
- ***Stimulating Seatwork*** – Providing students seatwork activities that have variety and offer challenge.

Research conducted during the past twenty years have underscored Kounin's findings and elaborated upon them to forge a more detailed list of behaviors that are associated with effective classroom management:

- ***High Expectations*** - Holding and communicating high expectations for student learning and behavior. Through the personal warmth and encouragement they express to students and the classroom requirements they establish, effective teachers/managers make sure that students know they are expected to learn well and behave appropriately.

Research on Classroom Management and Discipline, continued

- ***Establishing and Clearly Teaching Classroom Rules and Procedures*** - Effective managers teach behavioral rules and classroom routines in much the same way as they teach instructional content. These rules are frequently reviewed at the beginning of the school year and periodically thereafter. Classroom rules are posted in elementary schools.

- ***Specifying Consequences and Their Relationship to Student Behavior*** - Effective managers are careful to explain the connection between students' misbehavior and teacher-imposed sanctions. This connection is also taught and reviewed, as needed.

- ***Enforcing Classroom Rules Promptly, Consistently and Equitably*** - Effective managers respond quickly to misbehavior; respond the same way at different times; and impose consistent sanctions regardless of the gender, race or other personal characteristics of misbehaving students.

- ***Sharing with Students the Responsibility for Classroom Management*** – Effective managers work to inculcate in students a sense of belonging and self-discipline, rather than viewing discipline as something imposed from outside.

- ***Maintaining a Brisk Pace for Instruction and Making Smooth Transitions Between Activities*** – Effective managers keep things moving in their classrooms, which increases learning as well as reduces the likelihood of misbehavior.

- ***Monitoring Classroom Activities and Providing Feedback and Reinforcement*** – Effective managers observe and comment on student behavior. Appropriate behavior is reinforced through the provision of verbal, symbolic and tangible rewards.

The I&RS team can use this information to guide their classroom observations or as part of their student and teacher interviews during the information collection and assessment phases of the I&RS process. These learnings can also guide the development and implementation of I&RS action plans for discipline problems.

Ineffective Disciplinary Practices

Research investigations, which have yielded information on effective disciplinary practices, have also produced findings about ineffective practices. It is important for I&RS teams to be aware of the strategies research has shown to be ineffective, in part because this knowledge can assist them in planning I&RS action plans, making recommendations for school-wide improvements and identifying and redirecting colleagues

Ineffective Disciplinary Practices, continued

when these practices are used and believed to be contributing to educational problems. Practices that have been found to be ineffective are described below:

- ***Vague or Unenforceable Rules*** – The importance of clear rules becomes obvious when observing the ineffectiveness of rules such as: "Be in the right place at the right time;" and "Act like grown men and women."
- ***Educators Ignoring Misconduct*** – Both student behavior and attitudes are adversely affected when teachers ignore violations of school or classroom rules.
- ***Ambiguous or Inconsistent Educator Responses to Misbehavior*** – When educators are inconsistent in their enforcement of rules, or when they react in inappropriate ways (e.g., lowering students' grades in response to misbehavior), classroom discipline is generally poor.
- ***Punishment which is Excessive or Delivered without Support or Encouragement*** – Among the kinds of punishment that produce particularly negative student attitudes are public punishment.
- ***Corporal Punishment*** – The results of corporal punishment are unpredictable. Even when it is successful at inhibiting inappropriate behavior, corporal punishment still does not foster appropriate behavior. Corporal punishment is sometimes unintentionally reinforcing, since it brings attention from adults and peers. It often creates resentment and hostility, making it harder to create good working relationships in the future. Corporal punishment is related to undesirable outcomes, such as increased vandalism and dropping out.
- ***Out-of-school Suspension –*** Suspension does not help the suspended student, nor does it help the other students, because school staff simply get rid of troublesome students, rather than changing the school environment in such a way that will prevent or reduce discipline problems. According to William Wayson, the majority of suspensions occur over behaviors that are more irritating and annoying than truly serious. Wayson noted that discipline policies should be written and enforced in such a way that suspension, if used at all, is not used for these less serious infractions.

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems

Ms. Cotton's summary article cites that researchers have also found that effective managers intervened more quickly when disruptions occurred than did ineffective managers. In addition, managers that quickly intervened produced more immediate results.

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems, continued

Described below are examples of intervention approaches for dealing with classroom misconduct that are either supported by research or show promise in reducing behavior problems.

Behavior Modification

Many researchers have identified reinforcement (i.e., verbal, symbolic, tangible) as effective in improving the classroom conduct of misbehaving students. The provision of reinforcement does not appear to undermine students' intrinsic motivation, provided the reinforcement is contingent upon performance and given sparingly.

Another behavior modification technique supported by research is teaching self-control skills (i.e., modeling, plus teaching self-instruction, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement) to improve the conduct of misbehaving students. Contemporary behavior modification approaches involve students more actively in planning and shaping their own behavior through participation in the negotiation of contracts with their teachers, and through exposure to training designed to help them monitor their behavior more actively; to learn techniques of self-control and problem solving; and to set goals and reinforce themselves for meeting those goals.

- ***Group Contingencies*** – The use of structures in which rewards and punishments are meted out to groups based on the behavior of individuals within those groups have been found effective in remediating misbehavior.

- ***Pro-social Skills Training*** – Training in self-awareness, cooperation, values clarification and the development of helping skills has been successfully used to improve the behavior of misbehaving students.

- ***Peer Tutoring*** – Peer tutoring structures have been found to lower the incidence of misbehavior in classrooms. Depending on the situation, students with behavior problems may serve as either tutors or tutees.

Many educational program developers have responded to the prevalence of school discipline and behavioral management problems by preparing and marketing packaged programs that intend to bring about reductions in misconduct and resultant increases in school order. Described below

are some of the frameworks that teams can apply to the assessment of problem behaviors and the development of strategies for reducing or eliminating these behaviors. The information contained in these programs often is useful for parents of children who are a part of the I&RS team's caseload.

Goals of Misbehavior

Rudolf Dreikurs and Loren Grey, in their book, "Logical Consequences: A Handbook of Discipline," identified four categories of misbehavior and a schema for identifying and addressing these behaviors. Their schema is based on the work of the psychiatrist, Alfred Adler, who emphasized the importance of understanding the individual's reasons for maladaptive behavior and helping misbehaving students to alter their behavior, while at the same time finding ways to get their needs met.

Dreikurs and Grey use the phrase "goals of misbehavior" because they maintain that students' behavior *achieves* something for them; their behavior occurs for a *purpose*. As social beings, a primary goal in life is to *belong*. In the search to belong, young people select beliefs, feelings and behaviors that they believe will give them *significance*. According to the authors, misbehaving young people are *discouraged*; they do not believe they can or have the courage to belong in useful ways. As a result, they *seek significance or belonging through misbehavior*.

We discover the purpose for young people's misbehavior by observing its *results or consequences*. The key is to train oneself to look at the *results* of misbehavior, rather than just the misbehavior. Using the chart below as a guide, apply the following formula to begin redirecting children's behavior:

1) Observe your own reactions to a student's misbehavior. Your feelings point to their goal.

2) Observe the student's response to your attempts at correction. Their response to your behavior will also let you know what the student seeks.

3) Change your behavior by applying the principles identified in the far right column on the chart to the applicable behavior(s).

Goals of Misbehavior, continued

Adult's Feeling and Reaction	***Student's Response to Attempts at Correction***	***Student's Faulty Belief***	***Student's Goal***	***Alternatives for Adults***
FEELING: Annoyed. REACTION: Remind and coax.	Temporarily stops. Later resumes the same behavior or disturbs in another way.	"I belong only when I am being noticed or served."	**ATTENTION**	➢ Ignore misbehavior, when possible. ➢ Notice positive behavior. ➢ Give attention when not making a bid for it. ➢ Realize that reminding and coaxing are undue attention.
FEELING: Angry, provoked, as if one's authority is threatened. REACTION: Fight or give in.	Active (or passive) aggressive misbehavior or power struggle is intensified, or child submits with "defiant" compliance.	"I belong only when I am in control or when I am proving no one can boss me!"	**POWER**	➢ Withdraw from conflict, explaining your reason. ➢ Realize that fighting or giving in only increases the student's desire for power. ➢ Use power constructively by appealing for the student's help and cooperation.
FEELING: Deeply hurt. REACTION: Retaliate and get even.	Seeks further revenge by intensifying misbehavior or choosing another weapon.	"I belong only by hurting others as I feel I have been hurt (i.e., physical or verbal attacks). I can not be liked."	**REVENGE**	➢ Avoid feeling hurt. ➢ Avoid punishment and retaliation. ➢ Build trusting relationship. ➢ Convince the student that he is loved.
FEELING: Despair, hopeless, discouraged. REACTION: Agree that nothing can be done. Give up.	Passively responds or fails to respond to whatever is done. Shows no improvement.	"I belong only by convincing others not to expect anything from me. I am unable. I am helpless."	**DISPLAY OF INADEQUACY**	➢ Stop all criticism. ➢ Encourage any and all positive attempts, no matter how small. ➢ Focus on assets. ➢ Above all, do not pity and do not give up.

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems, continued

The Goals of Positive Behavior

In their book, The Parent's Handbook: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting, Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay postulate an ancillary schema to Dreikurs work for developing and reinforcing positive behavior.

Student's Belief	***Student's Goal***	***Student's Behavior***	***Adult Response to Encourage Goal***
"I belong by contributing."	**ATTENTION CONTRIBUTION INVOLVEMENT**	Helps. Volunteers.	➢ Let the student know that the contribution counts and that you appreciate it.
"I can decide and be responsible for my behavior."	**POWER RESPONSIBILITY AUTONOMY**	Shows self-discipline. Does own work. Resourceful.	➢ Encourage decision making. ➢ Allow the student to experience both positive and negative outcomes. ➢ Express confidence in the student.
"I am interested in cooperating."	**JUSTICE FAIRNESS**	Returns kindness for hurt. Ignores belittling remarks.	➢ Acknowledge with appreciation the child's interest in cooperating.
"I can withdraw from conflict."	**WITHDRAWAL FROM CONFLICT REFUSAL TO FIGHT ACCEPTANCE OF OTHERS' OPINION**	Ignores provocation. Withdraws from power contest to decide own behavior.	➢ Recognize the child's efforts to act in a mature manner.

Reality Therapy

William Glasser's Schools Without Failure explains skills for teachers to use to help students make positive choices by making clear the connection between student behavior and consequences. Class meetings, clearly communicated rules and the use of plans and contracts are featured in his approach.

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems, continued

The skills are based on Glasser's publication, Reality Therapy: A New Approach to Psychiatry. It is grounded in teacher's respect for students, and instilling a sense of responsibility in them. Program components include developing and sharing clear rules, providing daily opportunities for success, as well as in-school suspension for non-compliant students.

Assertive Discipline

Lee Canter is one of many authors who suggest strategies for behavior management and classroom discipline. His work is designed to provide practical approaches for behavior management that help educators spend valuable time educating, rather than disciplining.

The strategies are intended to help educators create safe, positive learning environments where students behave responsibly and feel good about themselves. Canter's methods emphasize a comprehensive model for providing structure in the classroom and providing appropriate types of attention for each student.

Specifically, assertive discipline focuses on the right of the teacher to define and enforce standards for student behavior. Clear expectations, rules and a penalty system with increasingly serious sanctions are major features.

Teacher Effectiveness Training

In his book, Teacher Effectiveness Training, Thomas Gordon differentiates between teacher-owned, student-owned and shared problems or conflicts in the teacher-student relationship, and sets forth specific skills for dealing with each of the three problems in the student-teacher relationship. Teachers and students are taught listening, message sending, problem-solving and negotiation techniques as appropriate to the locus of problem ownership.

School Discipline Summary

While no one program appears to have all of the answers to school discipline issues, each of the approaches described above include components that have been validated as effective. ***As pointed out in Ms. Cotton' article, however, the research on the discipline practices of effective schools indicates that these schools generally***

Remediating Classroom Discipline Problems, continued

did not use packaged programs; instead, they either developed their own programs or modified commercially available programs to meet the needs of a particular situation.

This finding, once again, underscores the imperative for I&RS teams to use their ingenuity and apply their knowledge of the local school community to design strategies that will work for and make sense to them. It truly seems that the adage, "we support what we create," strongly applies to the work of the I&RS team.

Moral and Ethical Reasoning

In his book, The Honor Level System: Discipline by Design, Budd Churchward applies the theories of Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg has studied the stages of moral and ethical reasoning in people from the United States, Taiwan, Mexico, Turkey and Yucatan, and found that everyone, regardless of culture, race or gender, goes through predictable and describable stages of moral reasoning. The progression from stage to stage is the same, but the rate varies for each individual.

It is because the development of each child's moral reasoning occurs at a different pace that Churchward emphasizes the need to be prepared to address discipline in classrooms at different levels. Churchward describes the different levels of self-discipline and provides strategies for moving students along the road to self-discipline.

Curriculum-based Assessment

As explained in an article titled Curriculum-based Assessment: An Introduction, by James A. Tucker, which was published in the Journal of Exceptional Children, curriculum-based assessment (CBA) is a relatively new term for a teaching practice that is as old as education itself: using the material to be learned as the basis for assessing the degree to which it has been learned. CBA holds that each student's needs are best defined in terms of the context of his local educational program.

As a term in modern usage, CBA first appeared as the title for one of three training modules for school psychologists published by the National School Psychology Inservice Training Network (Gickling, 1981). In that publication, Gickling defines CBA as follows: A procedure for determining the instructional needs of a student based upon the student's ongoing performance within existing course content, adopted by local school systems.

Curriculum-based Assessment, continued

As a direct classroom assessment approach, it provides the most readily available and useful source of information. The CBA title, however, can be misleading, since it is oriented toward *instruction* as much as assessment. CBA focuses on how to collect, interpret and use data in order to impact directly upon instruction.

Tucker explains that CBA simply measures the level of achievement of a student in terms of the expected curricular outcomes of the school. Of course, gauging the degree of achievement in this manner can happen only when the expected curricular outcomes are known and measurable and where there is a method for the ongoing measurement of student progress in terms of those outcomes.

Student performance often is assessed using standardized tests. These measures may be necessary for making "diagnoses" or when they are required by governing authorities, but they do not provide sufficient or useful data for instructional planning. An intelligence test may help explain why a student does not achieve; but an intelligence test is not useful in determining where a student is relative to expected curriculum-based criteria, nor can it be used to develop a program within a curriculum, because the test does not relate to the course of study.

Jenkins and Pany (1978) have documented that the restricted sampling practices promoted by standardized tests have shown to be of limited use in helping teachers meet the daily instructional needs of most low-achieving students. One reason sited for this inefficiency is that many of the items on some prominent tests do not correspond well with the curriculum programs used in schools.

Since standardized tests normally are not based on a particular curriculum, they generally are not part of CBA. However, it is not only possible, but it can be beneficial for schools to standardize CBA so that local norms and variances are available for comparison.

CBA is truly "teaching to the test," because the materials used to assess progress are always drawn directly from the course of study. CBA provides a way of matching student ability to instruction, thereby reducing low achievement and poor student behavior responses in the school setting. For example, reading level and reading ability are assessed by having the student read material from the school's own curriculum. The assumption is made that the best way to find out whether a student can read certain material is to ask him or her to read

Curriculum-based Assessment, continued

it, and have a way of translating what is observed directly into effective instruction.

According to Gickling and Thompson, the primary reason that CBA has emerged as an alternative to traditional standardized assessment practices is the need to align assessment practices with what is taught in the classroom. Its focus is on providing help for those curriculum casualty students who are unable to keep pace with the routine instruction offered through developmental programs; instruction that moves too fast and demands too much in relation to their entry skills.

Tucker acknowledges that there are students who have real handicaps that are beyond the scope of regular education. He maintains, however, that their number is very low compared to the number of students that are referred for special education consideration. Students whom are found to have one of the very rare conditions that are beyond the experience of a classroom teacher should be referred for a comprehensive individual assessment of all of the factors that may be causing the difficulty. But when the problems being experienced by students are of a variety that lay within the common experience of most teachers, the solution that should be sought is an instructional one in the general education program. It may be premature to invoke the possibility of a serious "condition" for explaining students' lack of normal academic progress when proven instructional procedures have not been used to correct the difficulty.

Tucker asserts that one of the assumptions of CBA is that all teachers possess and use proven instructional methods. He also observes that much of the good practice that was once considered routine has been transferred to special education, leaving within general education fewer teachers who are trained in these principles and practices for working with a wider range of individual differences. As a result, when faced with students that do not perform within the frame of reference that they understand to be "normal," these teachers may refer the students to special education where staff have the skills for handling these exceptions to the norm. CBA allows schools to take a broader view of what is considered normal performance in the classroom.

Fortunately, most students do not require modifications to their curriculum to achieve in school. As stated in A Personal View of Curriculum-based Assessment, by Gickling and Thompson, from the Journal of Exceptional Children, for some students, however, the

Curriculum-based Assessment, continued

assigned curriculum becomes the fulcrum for failure. Without modification, it demands too much, moves too fast and contains too great a variance in the difficulty of assignments to match the entry skills and learning rates of these students. Routine diagnostic and prescriptive practices do not generally contain the precision to deal with these variance problems or to provide the instructional control that is initially needed for low-achieving students and students with mild leaning problems to achieve levels of task success similar to those enjoyed by their peers.

Gickling and Thompson explain that CBA is a form of direct assessment and application of data that provides teachers with the specificity to pinpoint where to begin instructional sequences and an instructional strategy for teaching those sequences to specific students. It provides a format for knowing how to assess the specific demands of students' learning tasks, as well as a gauge for controlling the level of task difficulty. This is done to provide more optimal learning experiences for students and to maintain this control over time by choosing, modifying and designing assignments to conform to established ratios of success.

Gickling and Thompson report that CBA can have an immediate impact upon instruction and performance. By altering specific ratios of known to challenging information within students' assignments, it is possible to control the students' task performance patterns in predictable ways, meaning that they could create either instructional, independent or frustrational learning conditions on a task-by-task basis for students.

By using CBA techniques, schools do not have to wait for test results to gauge the extent of a student's progress or problems, or for teachers and students to feel stifled by mid-year situations indicating lack of progress. Immediate attention can be drawn to specific instructional tasks to assess their suitability for producing high academic achievement. This process requires greater attention to students' entry skills when selecting or modifying curriculum, but the end results appear worth the effort: *higher time on task, higher task completion and higher comprehension rates.*

The I&RS team is ideally positioned to assist with the implementation of CBA principles and techniques. Whether or not the I&RS team uses CBA strategies, however, some form of systematic assessment and instruction

Curriculum-based Assessment, continued

should be adopted by the I&RS team to help their colleagues with learning and performance problems.

Guiding Questions for Curriculum-Based Assessment

Examples of some basic questions that should be asked and answered as part of the CBA assessment process follow:

- Does the student have the language concepts and background knowledge for the task?
- Does the student have an adequate sight-word pool to read the selection?
- Does the student utilize strategies to decode unfamiliar words?
- When reading orally, does the student read with adequate fluency, expression and phrasing?
- When reading silently, does the student complete the task in a timely fashion?
- Can the student remember and articulate what was read?
  If he read it silently? If he read it orally? If it was read to him?
  Does the student rely on the need to look back at the text?
- Can the student summarize, paraphrase and evaluate what was read?
- Is the student's performance affected by instructional grouping (i.e., whole group, small group, partner)?
- Is the student able to follow directions in the context of instruction?
  Given orally? When written?
- Does the student have sufficient computational skills to work the assignment successfully?
- Does the student use good reasoning in problem solving?
- Does the student apply computational and problem-solving skills in meaningful ways?
- Does the student work efficiently on the assignment?
- Does the student see the material as relevant and meaningful?
- Does the student have the confidence and initiative to begin the assigned task?

Life Skills

Another form of assessment that can yield valuable information for I&RS planning involves the identification of life skill deficiencies. The I&RS team should assess students' competencies, at a minimum, in the five life skill areas, and associated descriptors or indicators of problems in each area, described below:

- ***Identification of Feelings*** – Degree of adequacy in identifying needs and wants. Degree of adequacy in correctly labeling feelings.

- ***Expression of Feelings*** – Degree of adequacy in exhibiting a range of emotions. Becoming frequently overwhelmed by emotions. Expressions of hurting self or others. Expressions of wanting to die.

- ***Social Interaction Skills*** – Degree liked by peers. Preference for being alone. Tendency to disturb others. Exhibiting inappropriate affection. Pattern of criticizing others. Follows the crowd. Recent change in friends.

- ***Decision-Making Skills*** – Ability to easily make a choice between two options. Ability to refuse peers when appropriate. Tendency to second-guess decisions. Ability to problem solve.

- ***Self-esteem*** – Derogatory comments about self. Second guesses self. Amount of reassurance required. Degree of confidence and comfort in new situations.

A simple "T" chart can be employed to help describe and plan for the deficiencies in specific, descriptive and factual terms.

LIFE SKILL DEFICIENCY

Life Skill: *Social Interactions* Dennis Grade 4

"T" Chart:

Looks Like:	Sounds Like:
Plays by self.	Criticism of others and self.
Not picked to be on teams.	"You're no good."
	"I'm better than you."
Picks on others.	"I didn't want to play, anyway"
Disturbs others at play.	"I wish I were dead."
Does not smile.	

Specific Goals: Replace negative comments (e.g., "You're no good. I'm better than you." "I didn't want to play, anyway.") during play period with either positive/courteous or neutral comments.

Method of Measurement: Observations. Checklists. Self-monitoring and self-reports. Graphs.

Interventions: Participation in cooperative learning groups. Utilize peer leaders to provide support and guidance. Provide opportunity for taking a leadership role on the playground. Skill tracking or streaming. Provide student with gambits and strategies for starting conversations and making friends. Schedule student interview with guidance counselor to follow-up the comment: "I wish I were dead."

Life skills can be observed and quantified. Provided below is a sample checklist for the case of a social skill deficiency, details of which are provided above.

Life Skill Measurement Checklist

Dennis Grade 4 Life Skill: *Social Interactions*

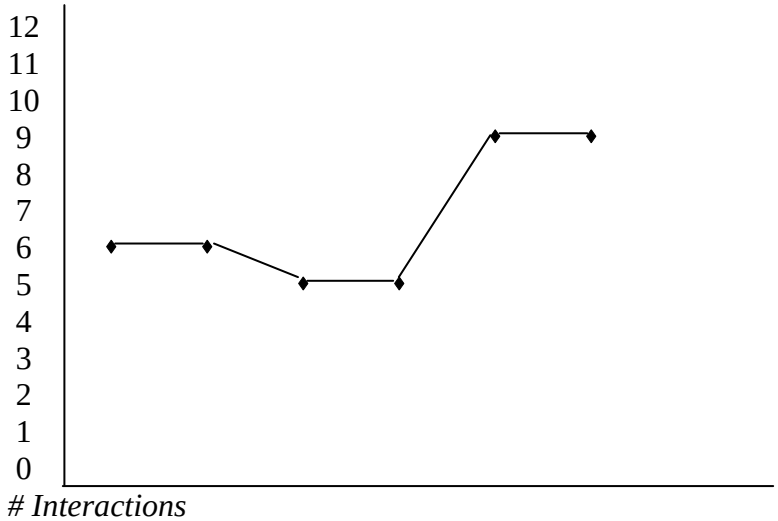
1. Participates in group						
2. Says appropriate remarks						
3. Smiles						
4. Offers assistance						
Totals						

1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often

Simple graphs, such as the one below, or other charts can be developed by the case coordinator to provide a picture of the observations, which can help I&RS tam members gain a more clear perspective on students' patterns:

LIFE SKILL GRAPH

Dennis Grade 4 Life Skill: *Social Interactions*



Cooperative Team Learning

While cooperative team learning, which is described earlier in this section, is an instructional, rather than a disciplinary strategy, research studies indicate that it appears to also have a positive effect upon the incidence of classroom misbehavior.

School Climate

Negative school climate is one of several factors that have been found to increase students' risk for involvement in self-destructive behaviors. Students' risk for developing harmful behaviors can be decreased and student achievement, performance and safety can be improved by developing an atmosphere in schools where academic success, respect for self, others and property and the motivation to learn and actively participate in the school's social life are expected and rewarded.

A critical factor in the creation of positive instructional environments is the pervasive belief by all school staff that all students can achieve excellence in academics and in their general school performance. Creating a climate conducive to optimal learning is best accomplished by ensuring that all school staff and school programs consistently transmit the expectation that all students can achieve and perform to the highest possible standards, and by applying all skills, resources and support to fulfill this expectation. A positive school climate is created by placing the highest value on each staff member, each parent and each student and his/her successes, and consistently treating each with dignity and respect. A healthy school climate is also fostered by clearly informing students' of their rights and responsibilities, and holding students equally accountable for them.

As described in "Changing the Schools: A Word to School Leaders about Enhancing Student Investment in Learning," by Martin Maehr, a positive psychological environment strongly influences student motivation. School leaders can create this type of environment by establishing policies and programs that:

- Stress goal setting and self-regulation/management.
- Offer students choices in instructional settings.
- Reward students for attaining "personal best" goals.
- Foster teamwork through group learning and problem-solving experiences.

School Climate, continued

- Replace social comparisons of achievement with self-assessment and evaluation techniques.

- Teach time management skills and offer self-paced instruction when possible.

One of the most effective avenues for engendering student motivation is a school's culture. According to Deal (1987), school culture can be embodied and transformed through channels such as shared values, heroes, rituals, ceremonies, stories and cultural networks.

Davis (1989) suggests using a wide array of activities and symbols to communicate motivational goals. "Visible symbols," he says, "illustrate and confirm what is considered to be important in the school." He suggests using "school newsletters, statements of goals, behavior codes, rituals, symbols, and legends" to "convey messages of what the school really values." Staging academic rewards assemblies, awarding trophies for academic success and displaying them in trophy cases, scheduling motivational speakers and publicizing students' successes can help students see that the desire to be successful academically is recognized and appreciated.

Klug (1989) notes that school leaders can influence levels of motivation by "shaping the school's instructional climate," which in turn shapes "the attitudes of teachers, students, parents, and the community at large toward education." He says that by effectively managing this aspect of a school's culture, principals can "increase both student and teacher motivation and indirectly impact learning gains."

I&RS teams should give consideration to the many ways that their supportive services can positively influence the school's instructional climate. For example, I&RS teams can effect school climate by making recommendations for school-wide changes based upon the required review of I&RS team case information and activities (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2(a)11.

Cross-age Partnerships

The application of cross-age partnerships (e.g., high school to middle students, middle school to elementary school students, adults to all students) can be a useful tool in tutoring students, increasing school safety, engendering peer respect and creating closer bonds to the school community.

Adult Volunteers/ Mentors

As the literature from the National School Volunteer Program (1986) points out, a generation ago the term "school volunteer" meant parent volunteer. Today, school volunteers come from many sources and provide a wide range of services at the elementary and secondary levels.

While the need for school volunteers has grown, the supply has shrunk largely because mothers, the major traditional source of volunteers, have increasingly taken jobs outside the home. As result, more and more schools are discovering the wealth of experience and expertise in their communities' senior populations.

Senior citizens have discovered that volunteering offers an avenue for exercising skills and talents gained through a lifetime of experience. Over 41 percent of Americans 60 years and older perform some form of volunteer work, and volunteered an average of 64 days a year.

Angelis (1990) outlines the following seven steps to execute in developing a successful intergenerational program:

- ***Needs Assessment*** – Determine student needs and what is to be accomplished through the program. Develop simple goals. Identify, inform and involve key administrators and other decision makers whose influence and support can make the program successful.

- ***Job Description*** – Establish expected results from the volunteer activity. Use this information to develop a list of specific tasks volunteers are to perform. A job description tells volunteers the purpose of the program, the required skills, the required amount of time and what is expected of them.

- ***Recruitment*** – The best technique is personal contact either by telephone or a casual query in conversation. Potential volunteers usually accept if they are approached by people they know. Contact opportunities include adult education programs at community colleges, retiree organizations, social clubs, faith institutions and library groups.

- ***Screening*** – After extending a warm welcome and commending candidates for their interest in education, questions should be asked about their special training, education, skills, hobbies, interests, other volunteer experiences, membership in organizations and the specific age range of students with whom they prefer to work. Health, physical

Adult Volunteers/Mentors, continued

limitations, criminal history and attitudes toward students should also be ascertained.

- ***Orientation and Training*** – Orientations should be scheduled throughout the year. Since volunteers need time to learn how things are done in a new and unfamiliar environment, it is helpful to supplement the orientation with written materials, tours of the school and surrounding areas and introductions to other teachers and administrators. Discuss the program with involved students and prepare a welcoming event that allows volunteers and students to get acquainted.

- ***Recognition*** – The volunteer experience carries many rewards, including social contacts and feelings of involvement and importance; but these feelings alone are often not enough to keep volunteers motivated. Therefore, it is critically important to publicly and privately recognize the contributions of volunteers.

- ***Evaluation*** – The success of the program should be gauged according to whether the goals and objectives, that ideally are established cooperatively by educators, volunteers and administrators, have been achieved. As part of this process, everyone involved should acknowledge what is going well; what is not going well; and what should be done differently.

Some special issues that may need to be addressed include transportation, meals, liability insurance and tuberculosis or other health tests. However a volunteer program is planned, it can provide valuable resources for the resolution of problems brought before the I&RS team.

In-school Suspension

Marilyn Gootman, in an article in Educational Leadership titled "Effective In-house Suspension," indicates that current research on protective factors for resilience suggests that a modified in-house suspension program can enable students to remain resilient through difficult times. This type of program should incorporate three protective factors that enhance resilience in students:

- A relationship with an adult who thinks they are worthwhile.
- A sensitivity to their feelings.

In-school Suspension, continued

- A sense of power and control in their lives.

Instead of serving as a gatekeeper or sergeant at arms, the adult(s) in charge should assume the role of a supportive resource. The intent is for the adult(s) to take an interest in the students; express the belief that they are worthwhile; encourage them; and treat them with empathy and respect, while remaining firm.

The supportive resource has two main functions: immediate intervention and long-term prevention.

- ***Immediate Intervention*** – Since students typically are raging mad when they are first sent to the in-school suspension program, arguing with them and lecturing to them is pointless. The supportive adults should responsively and non-judgmentally listen to these students to convey the message that they matter. This does not mean that agreement is required, rather it means that their right to have those feelings is respected, and they are valued enough to be heard.

  Once the listening process defuses the anger, problem solving with students can help them feel powerful and in control of their lives. The intent is to place responsibility for the problem(s), as well as the solutions, in students' hands, and to create hope and optimism in students who are typically discouraged.

  First, guide students to identify the problem that caused the in-school suspension. Second, brainstorm alternatives with students. Third, guide students to choose the best solutions. If the solutions do not work, students should feel safe to go back to their supportive resources to figure out better ones.

- ***Long-Term Prevention*** – The task here is to solidify a long-term relationship between students and their supportive resources, which continues beyond the in-school suspension time. After leaving the in-school suspension program, the supportive resources periodically touches base with them, checking to see how they are doing, encouraging them and redirecting them; always expressing confidence in them and the belief that they are worthwhile, even if they make mistakes.

Alternative Education

Most learning, behavior and health problems can be addressed within the context of the school's general education program or in cooperation with community resources. Some students, however, who are not succeeding in their present school settings may perform best in nontraditional educational environments or by participating in learning opportunities that are more suitable to their special needs, interests and aspirations than those offered in conventional school settings.

Alternative education programs offer a viable and suitable educational option for students who are not experiencing success in their present settings and who require increasing amounts of professional time and attention from school staff. Since these students may exhibit patterns of behavior that interfere with the educational process and often occur in conjunction with poor academic performance, a school district may find it necessary to establish an alternative education program to achieve both school-related objectives and to facilitate student success.

Optimally, alternative education programs target students who either are not engaged in school, who have lost their commitment to school or who have not succeeded in school. These programs work toward changing students' self-defeating attitudes and behavior and building student success. Alternative school programs offer most school districts a credible option for addressing the needs of students with a history of negative school experiences and patterns of chronic behavior that have been disruptive to their own education, as well as to that of their classmates.

Alternative education programs, as defined by the New Jersey Department of Education, offer non-traditional, yet effective learning environments that provide flexible educational objectives closely related to the learning styles and the individual needs of students, while addressing the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Alternative education programs are designed as small units, with carefully selected staff who provide intense, comprehensive and individualized services to students and their families. Alternative education programs provide a caring and supportive long-term environment where rules and regulations are clearly defined and fairly and consistently enforced. These programs may incorporate site-based management approaches, cooperative learning strategies and shared decision-making within the program structure.

Alternative Education, continued

Alternative education programs are *not* designed to be punitive in nature nor are they short-term suspension programs for students with behavioral problems. Alternative school programs should *not* be used as a place for students and/or teachers who are perceived to be uncooperative. In some districts, alternative school programs may be the only appropriate and suitable option available for meeting the needs of particular students. With this in mind, districts must work cooperatively with students, teachers and parents to prevent alienation from the alternative school program. This means that students are continuously encouraged to become actively involved in the educational process and allowed to choose their participation in the alternative education program.

Alternative education programs that provide comprehensive services to students who have specific needs and an identifiable set of problems should work toward achieving the following objectives:

- Assist students to achieve the Core Curriculum Content Standards and satisfy both local and state high school graduation requirements;

- Provide special support and assistance to help identified students develop more responsible patterns of behavior;

- Improve the school climate by maintaining an educational environment conducive to teaching and learning; and

- Increase student understanding of and adherence to fundamental codes of conduct and compliance with the school's disciplinary policies and procedures in order to achieve a school climate that is conducive to learning and to the safety and well-being of all students.

Alternative Education, continued

CHARACTERISTICS
OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Alternative education programs represent an organizational configuration with the following distinctive characteristics:

- ***Separate Site*** – A separate wing or building.
- ***Specified Population*** – Students with specific needs and an identified set of characteristics or problems.
- ***Site-based Program Coordinator*** – A certified professional assigned at the facility with responsibility for program supervision and coordination. If the responsibility includes supervision of staff, the individual must hold a supervisor's certificate.
- ***Small Program Size*** – Enables the program to maintain its unique features, while providing a low student-teacher ratio that affords teachers the opportunity to establish personal relationships with students and offer individual attention to students' learning and behavioral needs. The ideal number of students in an alternate program should *not exceed sixty*. A limited student population provides for an optimum program design for achieving alternative education goals.
- ***Comprehensive Support Services*** – Health, substance awareness and counseling services specifically tailored to facilitate student adjustment and educational success, as well as other social services, including case work and referral services, which link the students and their families to available community resources. Additionally, students will have access to pupil support and other school-related services. In Abbott school districts, the Coordinator of Health and Social Services, as well as the Dropout Prevention Counselor should support implementation and achievement of the goals of alternative school programs.

Alternative Education Program Requirements

The regulations found at N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8, Alternative Education Programs (described below), set forth the requirements for the operation of alternative education programs in New Jersey schools. The regulations provide guidance in the following areas: program approval, application process and approval criteria and mandatory student placements.

6A:16-8.1 Program approval

(a) Each district board of education intending to operate an alternative education program shall first submit an application and obtain approval from the Commissioner of Education.

(b) Each district board of education of an Abbott district, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.2, N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.4(j) and N.J.A.C. 6A:24-6.1(a)3, shall implement plans providing for the establishment of an alternative middle school and high school.

Alternative Education, continued

Alternative Education Program Requirements, continued

6A:16-8.2 Application process and approval criteria

(a) Each district board of education intending to operate a high school alternative education program shall submit an application to the county office of education and receive approval to operate based on documentation that the following criteria will be met:

1. A maximum student–teacher ratio of 12:1;
2. An Individualized Program Plan for each student enrolled in the program;
3. Individualized instruction to students that address the Core Curriculum Content Standards;
4. Comprehensive support services and programs which address each student's health, social development and behavior;
5. Work-based learning experiences that are made available for all students;
6. Instruction by staff who are appropriately certified;
7. Compliance with attendance policies in N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(d)2;
8. Program services to students at least four hours per day and a minimum of 180 days per year; and
9. Credits based on the program completion option pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1(a)1ii.

(b) Each district board of education intending to operate a middle school alternative education program shall submit an application to the county office of education and receive approval to operate based on documentation that the following criteria will be met:

1. A maximum student–teacher ratio of 10:1;
2. An Individualized Program Plan for each student enrolled in the program;
3. Individualized instruction to students that address the Core Curriculum Content Standards;
4. Comprehensive support services and programs which address each student's health, social development and behavior;

Alternative Education, continued

Alternative Education Program Requirements, continued

5. Case management services, including, but not limited to monitoring and evaluating student progress and coordinating services;

6. Instruction by staff who are appropriately certified;

7. Compliance with attendance policies in N.J.A.C. 6:8-5.1(a)2;

8. Program services to students at least four hours per day and a minimum of 180 days per year; and

9. Transition services returning the student to the general education program.

6A:16-8.3 Mandatory student placements

(a) The district shall provide placement for a student in an alternative education program in the following instances:

1. A student removed from general education for a firearms offense, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.5; and

2. A student removed from general education for an assault with weapons offense, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-5.6.

(b) If placement in an alternative education program is not available, the student shall be provided instruction at home or in another suitable facility until placement is available, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-9.

Additional Program Components

While not required, districts interested in implementing and receiving approval for an alternative education program should also consider the following components:

1. The program's attendance policy, per N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1(d)2, should be consistent with the program philosophy;
2. Faculty should monitor student attendance; identify students who may have difficulty complying with the goals in their Individualized Program Plans (IPP); and provide supports necessary to ensure compliance with their IPPs;
3. Ensure that academic instruction is designed to prepare students to acquire the skills evaluated in standard statewide assessments;
4. Incorporate the following elements in the Comprehensive Support Services: individual and/or group counseling, case management and referral services, health services, substance awareness support, linkages to school and community resources and other student support services, as appropriate; and
5. A personal development component that addresses each student's social development and behavior (e.g., conflict resolution, peer mediation, character education, service learning);

Alternative Education, continued

The New Jersey Department of Education's publication titled A Guide and Application for the Operation and Approval of Alternative School Programs sets forth the requirements for operating alternative education programs in high school settings and establishes a process for program approval by the county superintendents of schools. Two standard forms which are included in the publication mentioned above and described below are provided to facilitate the approval process and to assure that the educational planning process complies with the program completion requirements as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:8-7.1.

- ***Form A*** – This form is to be completed by the school district seeking approval of an alternative education program. The review and approval of the program application will be conducted by the office of the county superintendent of schools.
- ***Form B: Alternative Program Individualized Program Plan*** – This form is to be used for each student placed in an alternative education program, whether or not the program completion option is to be used as the basis for awarding high school credit.

I&RS teams should be familiar with available alternative education programs, the characteristics of successful programs and the application, planning and approval procedures for the adoption of an alternative education program should the team decide to recommend one based on a review of the educational needs of its cases.

Special Needs Students

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)2 permits schools to provide I&RS services for students with learning disabilities, as long as the services do not alter the student's individualized education program (I.E.P.). The services provided for students with learning disabilities should be coordinated with the student's I.E.P team, *as appropriate.*

The boundaries are collapsing between regular and special education, and the landscape is rapidly changing for how schools configure their resources and deliver services to general and special education students. The I&RS team can play a pivotal role in supporting regular education teachers who have new demands placed upon them as students with learning disabilities are included in the general education classroom, as well as in brokering the cross-fertilization of skills among general and special education staff.

Special Needs Students, continued

The I&RS team can be particularly helpful in providing supportive assistance to instructional staff who are waiting for the final dispositions of child study team evaluations or 504 cases.

Highlighted below are two types of circumstances in which the I&RS team can be called upon to assist with situations involving special needs students: 1) *Inclusion* of students with disabilities in general education classrooms; and 2) Cases under *Section* 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Including Students with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a continuum of placement options be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The law also requires that:

> *"to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities…are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids can not be attained satisfactorily."*
> [IDEA Section 612(5) (B)].

As a result, there is a strong presumption under IDEA that students with disabilities should be educated in regular classrooms, with appropriate aids and services. Therefore, the I&RS team should be well-versed in the dynamics and issues involved when students are included in general education classes, as well as strategies for helping classroom teachers and school buildings make inclusion work.

A substantial body of research has contributed to our knowledge about the successful inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classes. Listed below is a summary of activities and support systems, developed by the Council for Exceptional Children, which are commonly found where successful inclusion has occurred. This information can help guide or provide insight into the I&RS team's assessment of requests for assistance that involve special needs students who have been included in general education classrooms.

Special Needs Students, continued

Attitudes and Beliefs

- The general education teacher believes that the student can succeed.
- School staff are committed to accepting responsibility for the learning outcomes of students with disabilities.
- School staff and the students in the class have been prepared to receive a student with disabilities.
- Parents are informed and support program goals.
- Special education staff are committed to collaborative practices in general education classrooms.

Services and Physical Accommodations

- Services needed by the student are available (e.g., health, physical, occupational, speech therapy).
- Accommodations to the physical plant and equipment are adequate to meet the student's needs (e.g., toys, building and playground facilities, learning materials, assistive devices).

School Support

- The principal understands the needs of students with disabilities.
- Adequate numbers of staff, including aides and support personnel, are available.
- Adequate staff development and technical assistance, based on the needs of school staff, are provided (e.g., information on disabilities, instructional methods, awareness and acceptance activities for students, team-building skills).
- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for monitoring individual student progress, including grading and testing.

Special Needs Students, continued

Collaboration

- Special educators are part of the instructional or planning team.
- Teaming approaches are used for problem solving and program implementation.
- General education teachers, special education teachers and other specialists collaborate (e.g., co-teaching, team teaching, I&RS teams).
- Teachers foster a cooperative learning environment and promote socialization.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (34 CFR Part 104, Subparts A, C and D) prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all programs and activities conducted by recipients of federal financial assistance. Section 504 states that school districts:

> *"shall provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person…regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap… the provision of an appropriate education is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services…that are designed to meet individual educational needs of handicapped persons…"*
> (34 CFR Subpart D 104.33)

A person with a disability under Section 504 is anyone who (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment. This definition differs from the one found in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which defines specific disabling conditions.

Pursuant to these definitions, some individuals who are not qualified for special education under IDEA may be qualified for special services under Section 504. Additionally, students who are eligible under IDEA are also protected from discrimination under Section 504.

Special Needs Students, continued

Regarding placement procedures, Section 504 sets forth, in part, that school districts must:

> *"ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of evaluation data, and the placement options…"*
> [34 CFR 104, Subpart D 104.35 (c)(3)]

Pursuant to this regulation, the I&RS team may be used to process cases under Section 504 for the following reasons:

- The I&RS team is a global problem-solving mechanism in the general education program;
- The composition of the I&RS team is representative of the school community and includes all other school and community-based resources, as appropriate, to assist in assessing and addressing student problems;
- The I&RS team can be expanded, per the circumstances of each case, to include staff or others who are familiar with identified students and staff and community-based resources who have expertise related to the case;
- The I&RS team collects and analyzes comprehensive information on identified problems; and
- The I&RS team uses a collaborative problem-solving process to develop specific action plans for addressing identified problems.

Professional Development, Coaching and Collegiality

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2(a)4, school districts are responsible for providing "support, guidance, and professional development to *school staff who identify* learning, behavior, and health difficulties." (Italics added). In addition, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2(a)5 requires school districts to provide "support, guidance, and professional development to *school staff who participate in each building's system* for planning and providing intervention and referral services." (Italics added.) Whether the I&RS team incorporates into its I&RS action plans some of the strategies described in this manual or other approaches, it is expected that in many instances staff responsible for implementing the plans will need to develop their knowledge and skills to successfully carry out their portions of the plan.

The team should maintain files of information from professional development activities that are readily accessible during team problem-solving meetings. Discussions should ensue following professional development activities to consider ways to ensure that the new skills or information will be applied in appropriate cases.

Teams are encouraged to seek traditional, as well as innovative methods for the professional development of staff. The team should ensure that new information obtained by team members are shared with all other members. Described below are examples of professional development methods that I&RS teams should actively pursue:

School visitations	***Bibliographies***
Phone consultations with "experts" or local, state and national officials	***Higher education courses***
Internet queries	***Seminars***
Literature searches	***Workshops***
Hiring consultants to determine staff strengths, areas for improvement and action recommendations	***Conferences***
Consulting with professional associations or services	***In-services***

Professional Development, Coaching and Collegiality, continued

Special consideration should be given to how new information will be imparted to staff who request the assistance of the team. The team should be prepared to help staff members make appropriate applications of the information to their unique situations. The team should also play a key role in identifying the training needs of staff for implementing I&RS action plans and ensuring the provision of appropriate professional development for them.

In providing or arranging for the provision of professional development, the team should keep in mind the following findings of research on training techniques as reported by B. R. Joyce and J. Showers in Power in Staff Development Through Research on Training:

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING TECHNIQUES

TRAINING STEP	***ACQUISITION OF SKILL KNOWLEDGE***	***ACQUISITION OF SKILL***	***APPLICATION OF SKILL-TRANSFER***
THEORY	*Middle to High*	*Low (5%)*	-----
DEMONSTRATION	*High*	*Low (3-5%)*	-----
PRACTICE AND FEEDBACK	*High*	*High (80%)*	*Low (5-10%)*
COACHING	*High*	*High (95%)*	*High (80%)*

Professional Development, Coaching and Collegiality, continued

The research literature strongly suggests that passive forms of adult education (i.e., theory, demonstration) may be necessary but not sufficient for the acquisition and application of skills, which should be the intent of I&RS action plans. The research also indicates that the use of experiential professional training techniques (i.e., practice, feedback) may produce the *acquisition* of new skills, but is not sufficient for skill application. Skills acquired through training initiatives tend not to be *applied* to "back-home" situations without *coaching* and support in the settings in which the skills are to be used.

Coaching is defined as two or more people who regularly observe another's work and provide helpful feedback to assist in the mutual implementation of agreed upon skills. The foundations of coaching include:

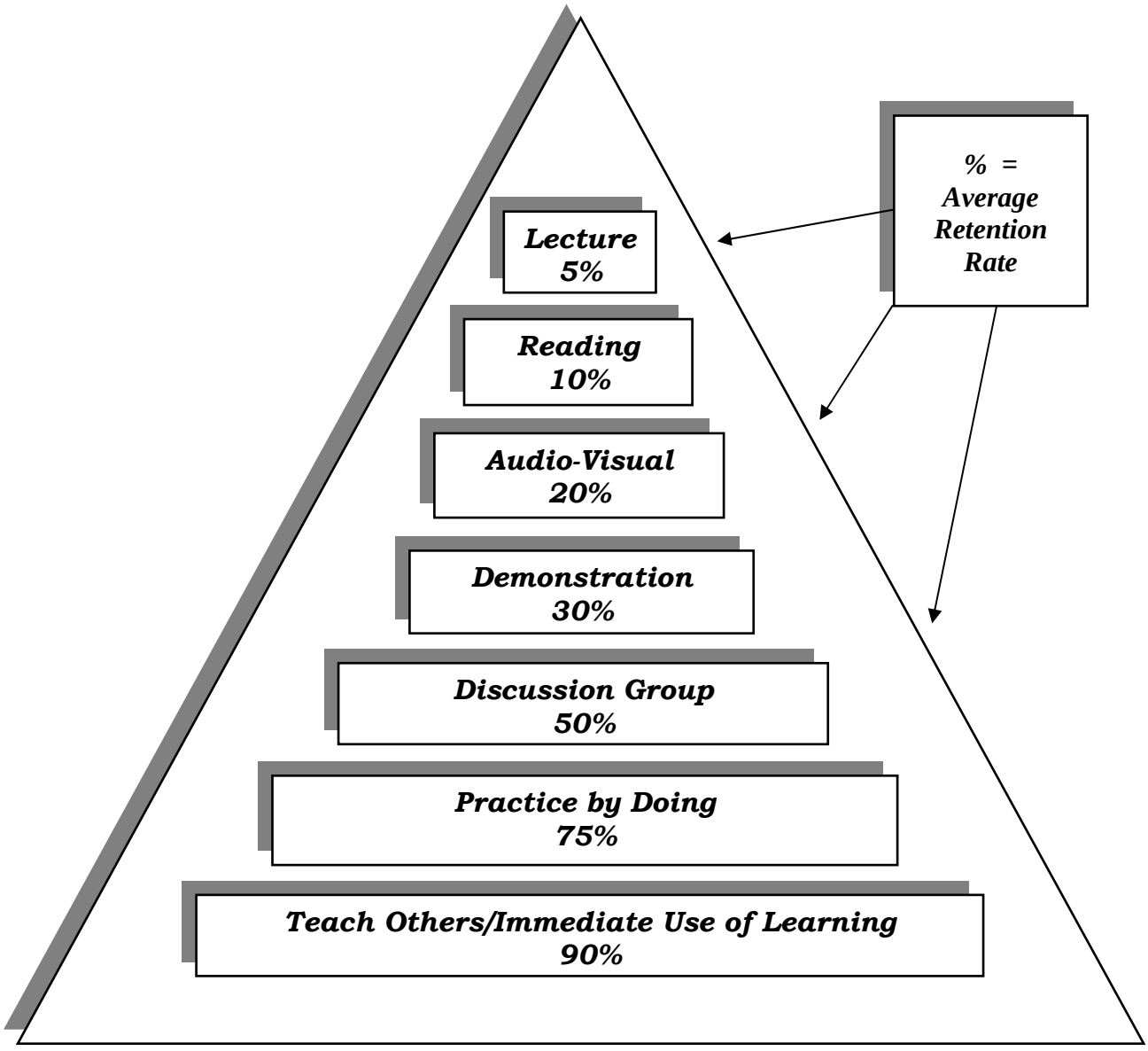
- *Companionship and interchange;*
- *Technical feedback and practice;*
- *Analysis of application; and*
- *Adaptation to different settings (transfer).*

The collegial and collaborative problem-solving and supportive processes of the I&RS team, including the functions of the case coordinator, provide an ideal context in which coaching can be applied to increase the chances of effective skill application and the success of I&RS action plans.

Professional Development, Coaching and Collegiality, continued

Learning Pyramid

I&RS teams should design professional development programs in a manner that will yield the highest retention of information and foster broad utilization of program learnings. The National Training Laboratory produced the following Learning Pyramid to illustrate the average retention rate associated with different teaching and learning strategies.



Professional Development, Coaching and Collegiality, continued

Experiential Learning

The use of various experiential learning techniques is fundamental for adult education. Experiential learning focuses on the direct learning experiences of the participant or learner, as opposed to the vicarious experiences garnered through didactic approaches.

The experiential model is an inductive rather than a deductive process: the learning, or meaning, to be derived from any experience comes from the learner himself. The participant's discovery may be facilitated by a leader, but in the end, the participant finds and validates his own experience.

The mere use of an experiential strategy, however, is not sufficient to achieve established instructional objectives. Experiential learning activities are more likely to "fail" when there is no purposeful model of facilitation used to accomplish learning objectives; when the application of the facilitation model is truncated or abbreviated; or when the model is inadequately or improperly implemented.

There are steps to be followed by group facilitators when processing member's participation in a structured experience. Each step is an essential part of the entire learning sequence; each needs sufficient attention to realize its full impact.

Model for Facilitating Structured Experiences

A model for processing experiential learning activities has been explained by J. William Pfeiffer in A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training: Volume X. The five revolving steps of the model (i.e., experience, publish, process, generalize, apply) are described below:

Experience *The "Activity" Phase*	***The process usually starts with a structured learning experience. The participant becomes involved in an activity; he behaves in some way, or he does, performs, observes, sees or says something. This initial experience is the basis for the entire experiential learning process.***

Model for Facilitating Structured Experiences, continued

Publish *Share Reactions & Observations*	***Following the experience itself, it becomes important for participants to share or "publish" their reactions and observations with others who have either experienced or observed the same activity.***

Process *Discuss Patterns & Dynamics*	***An essential, and often neglected, part of the cycle is the necessary integration of the sharing that occurs in the publishing phase. The dynamics that emerged in the activity are explored, discussed and evaluated (i.e., processed) with other participants.***

Generalize *Develop Principles*	***Flowing logically from the processing step is the development of principles or the extraction of generalizations from the experience. Stating learnings in this way can help participants further define, clarify and elaborate on them, and help learners develop a conceptual framework for use in the next step.***

Apply *Plan How to Use the Learning*	***The final step in the cycle is to plan applications of the principles derived from the experience. The experiential process is not complete until a new learning or discovery is used and tested behaviorally or applied to a planning or problem-solving model. Application, of course, becomes an experience in itself, and with new experience, the cycle begins again.***