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ABSTRACT

In preparation for new federal legislation that promotes unprecedented levels of comprehensive planning and service integration at state and local levels, an analysis of state issues relevant to comprehensive service delivery is necessary. This paper examines such state issues, with a focus on Arizona's at-risk population, and presents a framework for comprehensive service delivery. It provides the rationale for such service delivery, summarizes the literature on research-based practices, illustrates district approaches to comprehensive service delivery, and sets forth guidelines for developing a comprehensive plan. System components of an effective plan are discussed in detail--student education, parent/family involvement, social/economic services, health services, and professional development. Five general principles underlie success: philosophy, people, processes, promising practices, and partners. Recommendations for developing comprehensive service delivery programs include the following: (1) build on existing information; (2) consolidate knowledge; and (3) think long-term. Contains 11 figures and over 250 references. Appendices contain information on Arizona practitioners' views and an illustration of a side-by-side program analysis. (LMI)

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**COMPREHENSIVE
SERVICES
IN
ARIZONA SCHOOLS:
A RESEARCH AND
PLANNING PRIMER**

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**COMPREHENSIVE
SERVICES
IN
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A RESEARCH AND
PLANNING PRIMER**

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INTRODUCTION

THE COMPREHENSIVE AT-RISK EDUCATION (CARE) PROJECT—PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The U. S. Congress recently enacted federal education legislation, e.g., *Goals 2000*, that promotes unprecedented levels of comprehensive planning and service integration at state and local levels. For the coming year, the congressional reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is expected to further advance the goals of service integration, especially for disadvantaged populations. In preparation for new and forthcoming federal initiatives, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) contracted with Morrison Institute for Public Policy, School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University, to study and analyze state issues relevant to comprehensive service delivery—especially as it relates to Arizona's at-risk population.

Morrison Institute was well positioned to conduct the present study having completed, on behalf of ADE, a longitudinal evaluation of 55 public school district programs for at-risk youth. The Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project evaluation study was established in 1988 by Arizona House Bill 2217 and continued through spring 1992. It was designed to: 1) determine the impact of various strategies on targeted at-risk students, 2) develop replicable model components for at-risk youth, and 3) outline policy issues and options presented by the project to ADE and the Arizona legislature.

In fulfillment of these goals, Morrison Institute produced three annual research and policy reports as well as two books on model components. The final research/policy reports—*Powerful Stories*, *Positive Results*—outline 11 recommendations for restructuring at-risk education in Arizona. *Promising Practices for At-Risk Youth: Blueprints for Success* are how-to books for practitioners wishing to replicate programs that demonstrated progress toward improving at-risk student achievement and self-esteem.

parent involvement, and staff expertise in working with at-risk youngsters.

The concept of comprehensive services was a recurring theme throughout Morrison Institute's research on the Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project. Discussions of "what works" noted that programs deemed more effective had better coordinated and consolidated planning, implementation, and evaluation efforts. And, policy reports recommended the expansion of such coordination and consolidation efforts at both local and state levels.

State legislation has periodically revisited the need for comprehensive planning and service delivery. For example, one bill proposed in 1992-1993 would have required a school applying for (projected new) state at-risk formula funds to develop a comprehensive plan which would outline the delivery of services grounded in research. This bill also specified that ADE provide technical assistance on at-risk issues, as needed, and utilize successful at-risk pilot programs as demonstration sites for "what works."

Although such efforts have not yet become law, it is likely that the issues will resurface as additional state and federal initiatives are presented. In an effort to respond proactively to such legislative proposals, the present study was designed to accomplish two goals:

- ▲ Clarify the components of a comprehensive plan for delivering research-based services, in order to provide guidance for schools and districts (should plans become a requirement to apply for state at-risk funding); and

- ▲ Recommend a course of action to ADE regarding the provision of technical assistance related to at-risk issues, including how to best utilize successful at-risk pilot sites as demonstration sites for "what works."

In conducting this study, Morrison Institute analysts pursued several lines of inquiry related to comprehensive services, at-risk pilot sites, technical assistance, and the current education policy context at the state and federal levels. Numerous activities were undertaken in support of the investigation, including:

- ▲ reviewing literature and consulting experts on topics associated with comprehensive planning, service integration, and specific intervention strategies in relation to at-risk issues;
- ▲ convening a select group of Arizona educators to help create an analytical framework for use in studying schools' site-based comprehensive services and service integration;
- ▲ profiling specific sites with respect to their planning and delivery of comprehensive services;
- ▲ collecting feedback from existing at-risk pilot sites about their notions of comprehensive services and technical assistance;
- ▲ polling successful (i.e., *Promising Practices*) at-risk sites with respect to potential roles in providing technical assistance;
- ▲ investigating the feasibility of establishing an at-risk clearing-house as part of a state strategy for technical assistance;
- ▲ interviewing key ADE personnel involved with federal and state-funded programs serving at-risk youth regarding their views on comprehensive service delivery and technical assistance;

- ▲ surveying all Arizona public school principals on technical assistance needs with respect to comprehensive services;
- ▲ monitoring the status of two pieces of federal legislation, the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and the *Improving America's Schools Act of 1993* (the eighth reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965);
- ▲ analyzing the "fit" between existing federal and state legislation, specifically in relation to at-risk issues; and
- ▲ comparing funding applications for key federal and state-funded programs that serve at-risk youth, and analyzing other states' "consolidated" applications.

As the project evolved, it seemed clear that its goals could best be met through three separate, but related, reports. *This report* is intended to meet the goal of clarifying a framework for comprehensive service delivery. It provides the rationale for such service delivery, summarizes the vast literature on research-based practices, illustrates district approaches to comprehensive service delivery, and sets forth guidelines for developing a comprehensive plan.

A second report, *Keeping Up With Reform—Comprehensive Services in Arizona Schools: A Survey of Arizona Principals*, documents the results of a survey conducted with Arizona public school principals. Survey results indicate schools' needs and preferences pertaining to technical assistance in relation to comprehensive service delivery.

A third report, *State Strategies to Support Comprehensive Services in Arizona Schools*, deals with state-level options designed to support Arizona schools in delivering comprehensive services. *State Strategies* addresses implications for Arizona policymakers.

CHAPTER ONE:

EDUCATION REFORM, COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES, AND AT-RISK ISSUES

EDUCATION REFORM AND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

The American public education system has long been the target of criticism. In the eyes of the public and policymakers, the system often falls short of meeting the nation's expectations. Dropout rates are too high. Achievement is too low. Too many students do not go on to college, and they are ill-prepared to be productive members of a globally competitive workforce. The public education system is not efficiently managed. It spends too much money with too little to show...and on and on. Of course there are counter-arguments for such charges, but they have not counteracted the popular view that education reform is in order.

Especially since the 1983 release of *A Nation at Risk*,¹ education reform initiatives have come and gone. In describing the history of education reform in the last decade, Fuhrman, Elmore and Massell (1993) talk about three "waves" of reform. The first wave sought to upgrade student achievement through actions such as mandated state testing programs and increased graduation requirements. At the same time, teacher qualifications were subject to review.

A second wave shifted emphasis away from students and teachers to school governance. This wave of reform popularized site-based management initiatives and school improvement efforts. These earlier movements, according to education analysts, "generated a high level of activity, but [have] yet to exert much influence over the processes of schooling related to student learning."²

Now the third wave of reform—*systemic change*—seeks to redress public education's track record. It does so by combining elements

of earlier reform movements in such a way as to promote "increasing coherence in the system through centralized coordination and increasing professional discretion at the school site."³ This model for reform is sometimes described as the "standards-driven alignment model." Simply put, it "stresses the state's role in developing challenging student outcomes around which school policies would be aligned" and is based on the premise that schools must "dramatically increase the level of performance of all their pupils."⁴ As Fuhrman and her colleagues point out:

While the words *systemic reform* take on many meanings, depending on the users, two themes predominate. Some use the term to refer to comprehensive change that is focused on many aspects of the system. Others stress the notion of policy integration, coordination, or coherence around a clear set of outcomes.⁵

Both of these themes, *comprehensiveness* and *integration/coordination*, are central to this study which is, essentially, about reforming education in Arizona.

A National Framework for Reform: *Goals 2000*

Goals 2000: Educate America Act (Public Law 103-227) represents the most recent federal initiative to promote systemic change. *Goals 2000* is the Clinton administration's version of a national vision for American education first put forth as *America 2000: An Education Strategy* under the Bush administration. *Goals 2000* sets forth eight National Education Goals (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Goals 2000

By the year 2000:

1. All children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. All students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.
4. The Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
5. U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement
6. Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
7. Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
8. Every school and home will engage in partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

Goals 1-3 and 5-7 preserve the essence of goal statements originally put forth under the Bush administration as "America 2000: An Education Strategy." New goals emphasize teacher education and professional development (Goal 4) and school and home partnerships (Goal 8).

Goals 2000 is intended to provide a national framework for "coherent, nationwide, systemic education reform." The Act promotes high standards of learning for *all* children, but recognizes existing inequities among schools in their capacity to provide equal opportunities for learning. *Goals 2000* has a number of provisions intended to preserve older efforts and begin new ones to rectify such inequities.

Among the provisions outlined in the Act, *Goals 2000* requires that state and local education systemic improvement efforts *must*:

incorporate strategies for providing all students and families with coordinated access to appropriate social services, health care, nutrition, and early childhood education, and child care to remove preventable barriers to learning and enhance school readiness for all students; and, provide all students with effective mechanisms and appropriate paths to the work force as well as to higher education.⁶

The Act places considerable discretion in the hands of state and local decision-makers to develop such strategies, but does encourage schools to partner with businesses and institutions of higher education and to coordinate and collaborate with agencies—including health and social services—that serve children, youth, and families.

The vision outlined in *Goals 2000* is interwoven throughout other education initiatives of the Clinton administration. Various versions of bills to reauthorize the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* refer repeatedly to comprehensive planning and integrated service delivery; the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994* facilitates linkages between schooling and the world of work/higher education; the *National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993* provides a mechanism for youth to acquire work experience through service and is a vehicle for students to access higher education or job training.

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All initiatives are aligned with the eight national goals. All support "reinventing government" to eliminate duplication, and all require or support unprecedented levels of interagency cooperation and collaboration.

These federal reform initiatives are *not* intended to place additional burdens on states or schools. Rather, the intent is to solicit and consolidate support in meeting students' diverse needs and to reduce fragmentation and the duplication of services which result in an inefficient use of limited financial and human resources.

Schools Cannot Reform Education Alone

Some educators and policymakers have asked: Why comprehensive services? Harold Hodgkinson, director of the Center for Demographic Policy, Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D. C. writes:

American education is like a house. This house was beautiful and well-maintained, one of the nicest houses in the world. But over time, the owners allowed the house to deteriorate. First, a leak in the roof developed, allowing water to enter the attic, then trickle down to the second floor, and then to the main floor. Floors buckled, plaster fell from the walls, electric systems rusted, windows began to fall out. The owners, returning after a long absence, hastily repaired the windows, the plaster, and the electric motors—but they neglected to fix the roof. The owners were surprised and angry when, after all their efforts, the house continued to deteriorate.

The leaky roof in our educational house is a metaphor for the spectacular changes that have occurred in the nature of the children who come to school. Until we pay attention to these changes, our tinkering with the rest of the house will continue to produce no important results.... This is the nature of education's leaky roof: about one-third of preschool children are des-

tined for school failure because of poverty, neglect, sickness, handicapping conditions, and lack of adult nurture. There is no point in trying to teach hungry or sick children. From this we can deduce one of the most important points in our attempts to deal with education: *educators can't fix the roof all by themselves. It will require the efforts of many people and organizations—health and social welfare agencies, parents, business and political leaders—to even begin to repair this leaky roof.* There is no time to waste in fixing blame: we need to act to fix the roof. And unless we start, the house will continue to deteriorate, and all Americans will pay the price.⁷

Hodgkinson's rationale is among the most vivid in describing what has become the biggest thrust of education reform in the 1990s, i.e., the need to develop comprehensive, integrated services for our nation's youth. While other proposed education reform measures such as charter schools and parental choice may bring about some change within the educational system, such efforts alone can not address the more daunting issue of poverty and its correlates. As Hodgkinson states: "Dealing with the root causes of poverty must involve health care, housing, transportation, job training, and social welfare bureaucracies."⁸

Proponents of systemic change recognize that many students come to school with problems that affect learning. They accept that schools should be held accountable for learning, but acknowledge that all too often schools are not equipped or trained to deal with the kinds of social problems that affect students' learning. Proponents of systemic change believe united efforts among multiple service providers and agencies can make a difference—in the quality of education and the quality of life.

Systemic reform efforts seek to engage multiple service providers in a unified fight against our nation's social ills. Accountability for learning is meant to be shared among all those responsible for dealing with children and families. Systemic reformers believe this is possible by changing the way the system operates.

Comprehensiveness Defined

Proponents of systemic change believe that in order to change the way the system operates, schools and other bureaucracies must be linked differently. Systemic change is accompanied by its own vocabulary to talk about such linkages. Increasing references are made to comprehensive systems, integration, coordination, and collaboration. All of these words are commonly understood, yet they take on specific meanings in the context of reform that need to be shared if systemic change is to occur.

Figure 2 illustrates some of the key federal, state, and local agencies which provide services to children and their families in the areas of health, human services, and education. This illustration is helpful to keep in mind as terminology is discussed. In Figure 2, any term can be applied to any unit of analysis—where a "unit of analysis" is any single cell, combination of cells, or the diagram taken in its entirety.

In the most widespread use of the term, *comprehensive* is used to convey a sense of completeness or inclusiveness, meaning that all or many aspects of a particular system should be addressed. In an educational context, a comprehensive system might involve looking at all the services offered within one level of the system (e.g., a comprehensive school program; a comprehensive curriculum that aligns all essential skills within and between grades). Or, it might involve looking at the interrelationships among all levels of the system (i.e., federal, state, and local).

In the education literature, the term most frequently describes delivery systems which provide not only educational services, but also physical and mental health services and human or social services. Comprehensive services also extend to families, in addition to students. Including family services recognizes that life circumstances are important elements contributing to a child's well-being and ability to benefit from his or her education.⁹

While the notion of comprehensiveness makes sense, critics have pointed out that separate elements of a comprehensive system too

often are funded, designed, implemented and analyzed independently. In relation to schools, Fuhrman and her colleagues note that the effect of this "over time has been to fragment school organization into a variety of specialized activities and to increase the complexity of teachers' and students' work in schools."¹⁰ Many others likewise have commented on the fragmentation and duplication of effort among education programs within schools and between educational institutions and other health and human service providers.¹¹

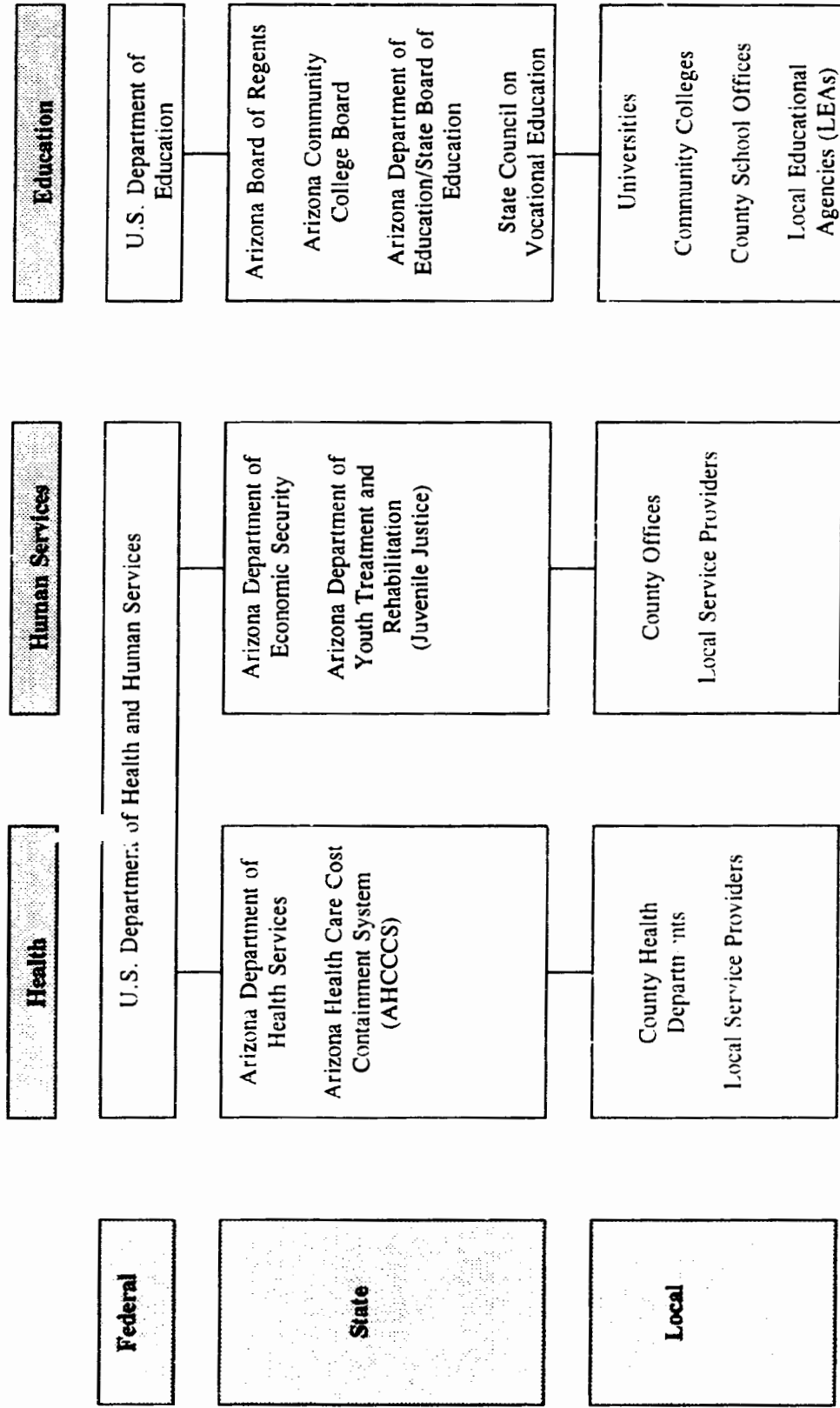
In order to reduce fragmentation and duplication of effort, proponents of systemic change refer to the *integration*, or *coordination*, of existing services. Integration does not refer to a merger between or among service systems, "but rather increased collaboration among them—that is, a partnership in which a number of service [providers] develop and work toward a common set of goals."¹²

Integration may take place within or between systems (cf. Figure 2). Within a system, integration might mean greater coordination of services targeting similar populations. Between systems, integration might mean greater interagency coordination in delivering health care or other social services on or near school sites.

Collaboration is one espoused means for integrating service delivery. In recent years, much has been written about collaboration—the rationale behind collaborative efforts, what they are, how to create them, elements of successful collaborations and barriers to success.¹³

Figure 2

Comprehensive, Integrated Service Delivery: Units of Analysis
(examples of key service providers)



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Imagine a continuum of partnerships. Some researchers place collaboration at one end of the continuum, one-on-one institutional partnerships at the other end, and cooperative efforts in the middle. Reciprocity and shared decision-making are critical elements used to differentiate among these relationships.

One-on-one partnerships generally are described as nonreciprocal. One partner is generally a patron of the other; partners function independently of one another. In contrast, both cooperative and collaborative agreements are characterized by reciprocity. Whereas partners are more or less autonomous in cooperative efforts, collaboration is characterized by high degrees of shared commitment, authority, and decision-making that results in "new roles and relationships for the various players, integrated delivery of multiple services, and cross-institutional activities."¹⁴

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES AND AT-RISK YOUTH

In the context of systemic reform, it is incongruous to single out children as at risk. Changes are intended for all children, regardless of their circumstances or categorical funding labels. And all children *means* all children. Following *Goals 2000*, Sec.3.(a)(1):

The terms 'all students' and 'all children' mean students or children from a broad range of backgrounds and circumstances, including disadvantaged students and children, students or children with diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, students or children with disabilities, students or children with limited English proficiency, school-aged students or children who have dropped out of school, migratory students or children, and academically talented students and children.

Realistically and historically, however, educational reform has had less to do with students who succeed in the system than it has had with students who fail. And so, any analysis of systemic reform

and comprehensive services inevitably must focus attention on at-risk issues. A review of the literature on at-risk youth leads to the following assertions:

- ▲ There are students in the educational system—whether they are called at risk, disadvantaged, or by any other name—who share patterns of academic performance and behavior associated with school failure.
- ▲ These students are disproportionately represented among certain populations: ethnic minorities and the poor. Furthermore, poverty is the most frequently cited factor in the literature associated with low academic achievement and related difficulties.
- ▲ Years of trying to "fix" students through efforts such as remedial pull-out programs have not significantly improved their academic and behavioral performance.
- ▲ Efforts to fix the system—the "third wave" of reform—are gaining momentum.

At-Risk Correlates and Arizona's Children

Nationally, nearly 400,000 youth drop out of high school each year. One of every twenty of these are Arizonans.¹⁵ Of students who stay in school, clearly some fare better than others. Across the nation, white students typically outscore their black, Hispanic, and Native American peers on achievement tests. Not surprisingly, a majority of those who go on to college and earn a degree are white. For the one-half of high school graduates who do *not* go on to college, economic prospects are dim and growing bleaker.¹⁶

It is indisputable that there are students in our educational system who do not perform well on measures of achievement. A second fact is that these students overrepresent certain groups—particularly ethnic minority groups and the poor. Too often, being a minority and being poor go hand in hand.¹⁷

In Arizona, the number of students living in poverty is on the rise. In 1993, over one in every five children under the age of 18 lived in poverty. Statistics are worse for young children (one in every four live in poverty) and children in some rural counties (one in every two children). Concomitantly, Arizona's minority populations have increased dramatically since 1980. Accompanying this growth, numbers of children identified as Limited English Proficient have risen as have numbers of students receiving migrant services.¹⁸

The relationship between poverty and low educational attainment is not new. In the 1960s' War on Poverty, research about so-called low achievers and disadvantaged students gained notoriety.¹⁹ Discussing the academic problems of children in poverty, researchers of the 1960s predicted that "We may change the name but the problems remain, passing from generation to generation...."²⁰

In the latter eighties, the U.S. has suddenly rediscovered [educationally disadvantaged] populations, renaming them at-risk students.

—Henry Levin

One of the most comprehensive studies to date on "at-riskness" is Phi Delta Kappa's (PDK) Study of Students At Risk. This study examined over 21,000 students on 45 environmental risk factors and concluded that children are at risk "if they are likely to fail at school or fail at life" due to physical or emotional trauma and educational, personal, or social problems.²¹ That is:

Students who experience academic failure tend to experience more personal pain and to come from families with higher incidences of family tragedy, lower family socioeconomic levels, and less family stability.²²

Statistics noting the rising numbers of Arizona's children in poverty have already been cited. There are also disturbing trends related to other correlates of at-riskness. According to the *Kids Count Factbook: Arizona's Children 1994*, 23 of 30 indicators of child well-being depict worsening conditions for children. Since 1990 there are higher percentages of drownings, children without health insurance coverage, firearm-related deaths and hospitalizations, homicides, and diagnosed cases of HIV infection/AIDS. Arizona's children are experimenting with drugs at younger ages than ever before. Reported incidents of child abuse and neglect also have risen since 1990. There are more homeless children, births to teens, and juvenile arrests for violent crimes.²³ In sum, Arizona's at-risk population is increasing.

Programs for At-Risk Youth

Richardson and Colfer help define the term "at-risk" in a way that sheds light on programs that have arisen to serve at-risk populations.²⁴ In their review of the literature, they note that the term is used to describe students (as a descriptive concept) and variables (as a predictive concept).

- ▲ As a descriptive concept, the term is applied to many categories of students who exhibit unsatisfactory academic or social behaviors in school (such as underachievers, chronic truants, and delinquents).
- ▲ As a predictive concept, at-risk students are identified on the basis of background, social, and emotional characteristics such as level of English proficiency, minority status, low socioeconomic status, or a pre-existing handicapping condition.

As the authors point out, both kinds of definitions abound in the literature and sometimes are used together.

Over the years, there has been a proliferation of federal, state, and local programs at all grade levels for students known or predicted to be at risk for academic failure. There are federal programs for economically disadvantaged children, migrant children, Indian children, and limited English proficient children. There are also programs for neglected and delinquent youth, programs for dropouts, programs for substance abusers, and programs for single, teen mothers. In Arizona, there are state-funded "at-risk" programs for preschool children, children in grades kindergarten through third, and youth in grades seven through twelve. Students in these types of programs, federal and state, fall under the umbrella of "at-risk"; all are targeted to receive additional program/financial support.

The distinction between at-risk as a descriptive versus a predictive concept helps sort out programs for at-risk youth. Programs at earlier grade levels are more likely to target students based on the predictive use of the term, since academic and/or behavioral manifestations of at riskness may not yet be in evidence. They tend to emphasize entire populations of children (e.g., migrant, Native American, poor) considered at risk for failure.

In contrast, programs at later grades focus more heavily on the descriptive use of the term. They tend to target groups of students who have already exhibited academic and/or behavioral problems (e.g., low achievers, dropouts, teen parents, substance abusers, delinquents).

What is perhaps most important to understand about this host of special programs and services is that each one has its own guidelines, applications, and reporting formats. Each has its own rules and regulations for schools to be in compliance and eligible for funding. In most cases, each program has a different assigned liaison from the U.S. Department of Education or state educational agency. And all contribute to a layer of bureaucracy superimposed on schools' missions to improve learning for children.

The propagation of programs for at-risk students has created a bureaucratic maze of disconnected pathways surrounding a com-

mon goal. This maze is one of the compelling reasons prompting systemic reform and the move toward comprehensive and integrated service delivery. At a bureaucratic level, reform efforts are directed less toward program-specific compliance and more toward utilizing program resources more efficiently to educate children regardless of their labels. Systemic reformers want a more efficient system.

From "Fixing" Children to "Fixing" Environments

Systemic reformers also want a more humanistic system—one that is more individually oriented and child-centered—one that does not view children as flawed.

Historically, many programs for at-risk children have provided remedial or compensatory education using a deficit delivery model. As described in the literature, this model views students as lacking in some respect, and seeks to remediate their deficiencies by adopting a specific strategy or strategies. Learning and behavioral difficulties are attributed primarily to individuals; schools are held accountable for "fixing" deficiencies—i.e., raising test scores.²⁵

For years, researchers have pointed out flaws in the deficit delivery model. Finally, more serious attention is being paid to the idea that children are not inherently to blame for their academic difficulties. Rather, as the PDK study states, societal factors are responsible for at-riskness including "the breakdown of society" and "the break-up of the family."²⁶ Statistics that support these claims are not difficult to come by.²⁷

The preference of educators in the 1990s is to switch from a deficit model (and its negative labeling of students) to a comprehensive delivery model. This model adopts a philosophy that all children can learn given the necessary conditions and opportunities, but recognizes that environmental risk factors (as opposed to an inherent deficit) affect a child's chances of success or failure. Successful learning cannot take place in unhealthy environments—

efforts must therefore be directed toward fixing such unhealthy environments.²⁸

At least in part, this view acknowledges that reform efforts based on the deficit model have not produced desired outcomes. Given this, many proponents of systemic change urge educators and policymakers "to shift from designing compensatory and remedial programs for various student needs to creating effective learning environments for all students, whether they are poor, learning disabled, handicapped, language deficient, or gifted."²⁹

With attention shifting away from "fixing" children toward "fixing" environments, educators are more carefully scrutinizing the entire service delivery system. This is where comprehensive services come into play as both a prevention and intervention strategy for at-risk youth. Comprehensive services are geared toward more effectively counteracting negative effects of poverty and other factors on achievement. The payoff is not only for children at risk. It is for every taxpaying citizen with a vested interest in the future productivity of the American public education system.

CHAPTER TWO:

◆ ◆ ◆ COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES — A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This very brief chapter offers an Arizona framework for conceptualizing comprehensive services. It answers the critical question of what is, or should be, the nature of these comprehensive, integrated services.

Recent literature is replete with definitions of comprehensive services. However, Morrison Institute researchers sought to develop an Arizona-based definition by asking personnel from 55 sites funded by the Arizona At-Risk Project how *they* defined this notion. Some of their responses are offered below (see also Appendix A).

Regarding students...

- a child is treated as a whole person (home, health, safety); part of a family (social).
- the total student is provided for... considerations must be given to counseling [and] planning for students' transition into the world of work or further school.

Regarding parents...

- there is parent development [because] when you help parents, you help kids.

Regarding staff...

- staff are not labelled according to funding source (e.g., Chapter 1 teacher)—they have the freedom to "cross boundaries."

- all staff are viewed as a "resource pool" available to serve all students.

- there is professional development on context-specific needs.
- staff have similar goals and a shared belief system.

Site personnel define comprehensive services as an array of services for a variety of clients. Social and health services are addressed in addition to education, and encompassed students, families, and staff. In the words of one educator, "the school provides needed services—academic, health, social, economic—to whomever needs them."

Integration figures prominently in at-risk staff definitions of comprehensive services. Integration involves highly collaborative efforts in which "everyone is working toward the same goal and shares a school vision." There is a "holistic plan" which takes into account students' academic and personal/social needs and individualizes school and partnership programs to meet those needs. The result is a "total school" program design and a schoolwide evaluation.

In an integrated program, curriculum is articulated within and between grades. Academic services are not pullouts; rather, they are integrated within the child's day in his or her classroom. According to one respondent, "the child's day is seamless." Correlatively, lines between and among programs are blurred, and "one wouldn't be able to distinguish sources of funding for particular services."

One at-risk program staff member indicated what she believes to be essential for developing and implementing comprehensive services. She notes: "At a building level, it is *critical* for staff to have time to dialogue. The system needs to value time to dialogue."

Using Arizonans' perceptions of comprehensive services as a starting point, Morrison Institute staff and a cadre of at-risk project personnel developed an Arizona framework for conceptualizing a comprehensive, integrated service delivery system. Figure 3 illustrates five key components of a system for delivering comprehensive services to children and families.

- ▲ **Student Education:** school-based learning environments and programs for students, including programs that provide transitions for students leaving one system and entering another (e.g., preschool to public school; school to work).
- ▲ **Family Involvement:** school initiatives to involve families in the school or in the education of their children.
- ▲ **Social Support/Economic Services for Children and Families:** school-based or school-linked formal programs and services to support family development.
- ▲ **Health Services for Children and Families:** school-based or school-linked formal prevention/intervention physical and mental health programs and services.
- ▲ **Professional Development for Staff:** all efforts to enhance staff performance, relative to the four previous components.

Student education is at the top of Figure 3 to represent a philosophy that other services should descend from a common goal to improve educational opportunities and outcomes. Achieving this goal depends on families' well-being and involvement in the schools and on skillfully-trained professional staff. Figure 3 portrays all components as interconnected and interdependent — important features of a comprehensive service delivery system because:

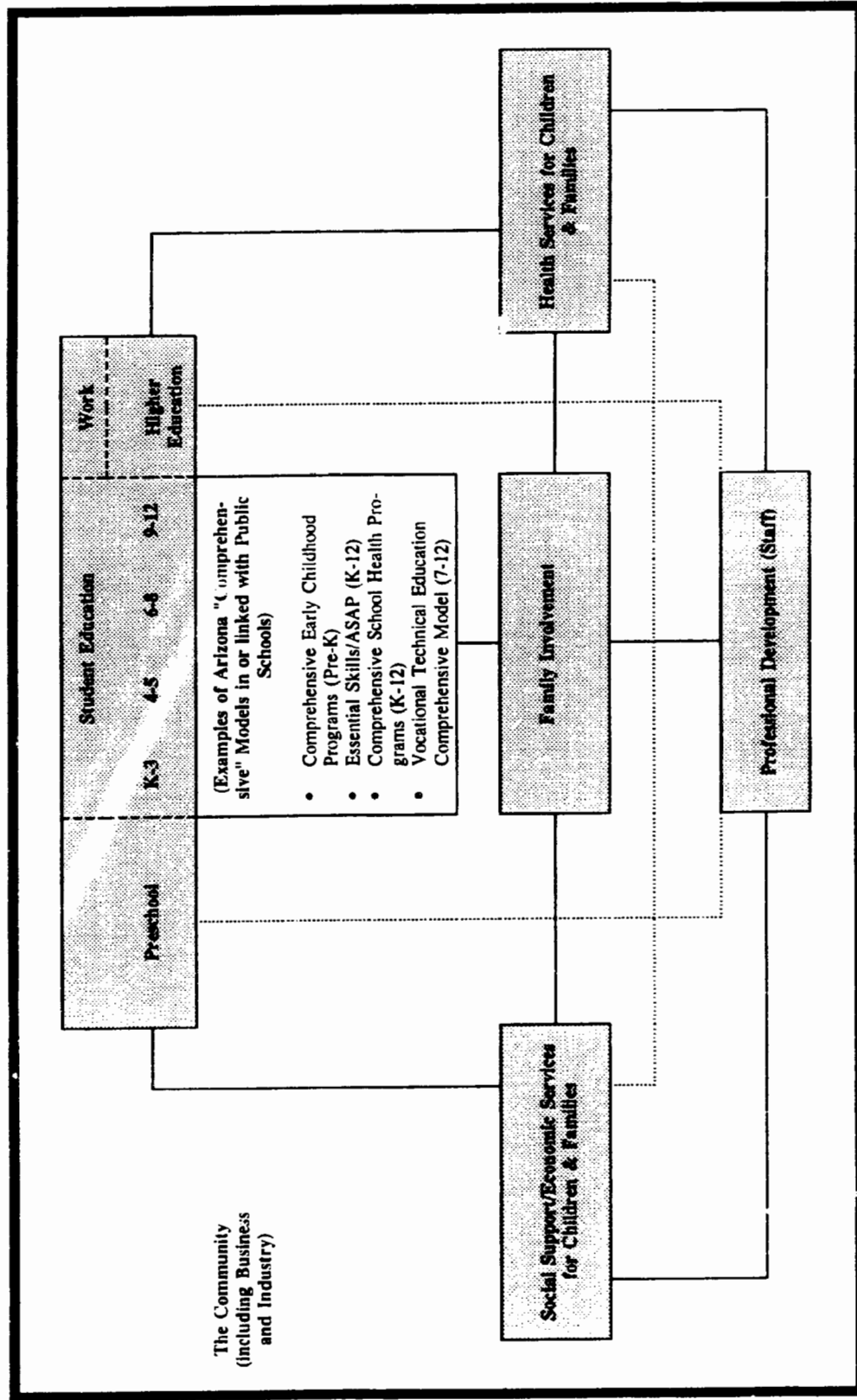
The defining characteristic of a system is that it *cannot* be understood as a function of its isolated components. The behavior of the system doesn't depend on what each part is doing but on how each part is interacting with the rest.¹

Arizona's *Essential Skills* curriculum frameworks and the companion *Arizona Student Assessment Program* (ASAP) are central to the state's student education component. *Essential Skills* and ASAP provide a working definition of "high standards of learning" for all students toward meeting the intent of *Goals 2000*. To promote coherence in the system, education systemic reform initiatives and comprehensive planning efforts should be aligned with and integrated within the state vision embodied by *Essential Skills* and ASAP.

A sometimes confusing issue regarding comprehensive services is the fact that several school-based programs are referred to as comprehensive. Among these are programs for early childhood, school health, and vocational-technological education. These *are* comprehensive programs in their own domains; to date, however, the degree to which these "comprehensive programs" are aligned and integrated with other school programs is uneven.

Multiple and overlapping "comprehensive programs" bring up one of the most critical points in conceptualizing comprehensive services: A comprehensive plan is a template—an umbrella plan—that must consider all service delivery. *One* plan needs to align individual programs to ensure complementarity. *One* plan needs to outline the array of services and examine how they are integrated (whether integration is a function of better coordination and collaboration of within-school programs or one of interagency linkages). *All* programmatic plans need to fit within this larger comprehensive plan.

Figure 3
Components of a Comprehensive Service Delivery System for Children and Families



CHAPTER THREE:

◆ ◆ ◆ SYSTEM COMPONENTS -- WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Research by Teddlie and Stringfield supports these ideas. Their 10-year study of Louisiana schools offers compelling evidence that schools "play major roles in individual student achievement, especially when considered cumulatively over years."¹ For example, they found that school and teacher contextual variables accounted for up to one-quarter of the variance in an individual student's academic performance.

School attributes that make a difference in student performance are alterable. Many reflect "climatic and organizational characteristics such as teacher expectations or students' sense of academic futurity." Such attributes can be changed in order to promote student success.²

From the Three Rs to the Five Ps

No longer is good education a matter of simply reading, writing and arithmetic. Of course basic skills are essential, but changes in the nation's economy, workplace, and social fabric dictate a new set of principles for education. These principles are simplified as the Five Ps: Philosophy (or Purpose), People, Partners, Processes, and Promising Practices. Cumulatively, the "Five Ps" provide a good set of guidelines for designing and implementing an effective comprehensive program.

Philosophy: Effective programs are based on the philosophy that all children can learn.

Effective programs are integrated within schools that are characterized by high standards and expectations for all students. These schools typically convey a sense of purpose governed by a shared philosophy that all students can succeed, given the appropriate circumstances to learn. This philosophy is perhaps best expressed

This chapter deals specifically with the five major components of a comprehensive service delivery system outlined in Figure 3: Student Education, Family Involvement, Social Support/Economic Services, Health Services, and Professional Development. It describes practices and programs that, when combined, form an effective comprehensive service delivery system.

In some ways, the discussion is paradoxical to systems thinking because it treats each component separately. However, it does illustrate the interdependency among the components that comprise a comprehensive system.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMPREHENSIVE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Prior to elaborating upon each of the five components, it is useful to discuss more general and crosscutting elements of "effectiveness." These elements are drawn from research about at-risk populations and practices, effective schools (also known as school effects research), a growing body of related literature on at-risk schools, and emergent research on learning organizations.

Effectiveness Defined

As used in this chapter, "effective" generally means that a practice or program has been found to positively affect students and their performance. This definition reflects the idea that what schools, teachers, and others do can make a critical difference in students' lives. Adopting this viewpoint, implementing effective programs depends on changing what schools, teachers, and others do—on altering environments upon which student success is predicated.

by Stanford educator and economist Henry Levin, who founded the Accelerated Schools project. He suggests that one knows whether or not a program or school is "good enough" when it is "good enough" for one's own child and therefore, for any child.³

One means by which this philosophy is translated into practice is to downplay the use of remedial or compensatory approaches to education. Few effective programs utilize pullouts or track students by ability and most reject retention as a solution for a student who is struggling academically. These strategies—pullouts, ability tracking, and retention—are cited frequently as practices that do *not* work with at-risk students, and are seldom seen in effective programs. If used at all, such approaches supplement a more rigorous academic program.

People: Effective programs are run by highly committed staff within highly supportive environments.

It has become cliché to talk about the right person doing the right job, but it is a truism applied to effective programs. Staff of such programs generally seem to be extraordinarily committed to their students and sensitive to them as individuals. In the words of Kofman and Senge, they are grounded in "values of love, wonder, humility, and compassion."⁴ Chester Finn, noted educational analyst, puts in another way:

Replicating success is not just a matter of tracking down the right scheme to copy. It is not just a matter of obtaining the funds. The features that the most promising strategies appear to have in common include levels of energy, commitment and role definition that exceed the usual requirements of public schooling (and school employees) in the United States. To put the matter more sharply:

What seems to succeed with disadvantaged children draws on qualities not found in the formal job descriptions of those who manifest them and not easy to write into the job descriptions of others, precisely because

these qualities elude the bureaucratic paradigm...and partake instead of abnormal energy, a deep love for children and a raging passion for results.⁵

Typically, such dedicated staff are found within supportive school communities. A supportive school community is one that values students and staff and rewards dedication in a variety of ways. It is one that supports teachers, and new teachers in particular. Teachers in supportive environments are provided with assistance, are monitored and receive feedback, and participate in team-building. Research has shown that these components of teacher socialization—assistance, monitoring, and team-building—not only are more prevalent in effective schools, but also are positively associated with teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, since teacher effectiveness is associated with student achievement, a supportive environment for teachers is an important component of student success.⁶

Last, but certainly not least, the school principal is perhaps the most critical element in the people equation. The principal not only provides school leadership, but affects the school's organizational climate and "teacher ethos." According to the research, there is no one set of leadership characteristics a principal must have; rather, the "fit" between the administrative style of the principal with teacher and student characteristics is most important for success.⁷

Partners: Effective programs extend services beyond those typically ascribed to public schools; i.e., they are comprehensive.

Schooling from kindergarten through twelfth grade accounts for less than ten percent of a child's life.⁸ Programs that make a difference accommodate the reality that the remaining 90 percent of a student's life is influenced by factors beyond the school's control. These programs solicit partners outside the realm of formal education.

When students come to school abused, neglected, hungry, or poor, academics may be the last thing on their minds. Programs, espe-

cially those designed for disadvantaged students, recognize a need for complementary support systems to help children succeed in school. Figure 3 shows that support systems include family involvement, social and health services, and a strong professional development component. In most cases, the effective delivery of services in these areas is dependent on effective partnerships.

Processes: Effective programs are characterized by a site-based focus, reflection, and commitment to improvement.

The gist of this theme is that *context and process matter*. In other words, effective programs are customized with respect to the unique characteristics of school staff, students, and the community. This lesson is illustrated by research on some of the best known and successful programs serving at-risk students today: Levin's Accelerated Schools, Slavin's Success for All schools, Comer's School Development Program, and Ted Sizer's Essential Schools.

Literature about these programs emphasizes the idea that implementation does not look alike in any two schools. This is because in order to have an effective program, there must be ownership at all levels in creating and customizing day-to-day operations and governance. As Sizer notes, "Each school must craft...ideas into practices that are respectful of its community and that draw on the strengths of its particular faculty."⁹

The *process* of customization often involves site-based governance, assessing community needs, and continuous improvement efforts. Regarding the latter, a premise of effective programs seems to be that there is always room for improvement. Program staff are characterized by an unusual willingness to scrutinize their programs, and student assessment and program evaluation are viewed as essential program management tools. Evaluation results are used, with a focus on student outcomes, to improve program operations and services. Program staff in successful programs are devoted to learning. The search for and creation of site-based solutions are one reason why not two successful schools or programs look alike.

A "good" process incorporates reflection—a relatively new and increasingly important concept in the research literature. As applied to effective comprehensive programs, it refers to the idea that committed educators think for themselves and that institutions committed to students value time to think. Such educators and institutions recognize that they cannot simply replicate others' solutions to educational problems by following the prescriptions of "how-to" documents or research-based lists. To do so, according to researchers Eubanks and Parish (1992), "produces school improvement efforts that maintain the status quo."¹⁰

To change the status quo, argue researchers Kofman and Senge, requires "a new way of thinking, feeling, and being" that involves moving "from the primacy of the pieces to the primacy of the whole, from absolute truths to coherent interpretations, from self to community, from problem solving to creating solutions."¹¹ This is the essence of *systems thinking*.

Dialogue and reflection are critical processes to develop this "new way of thinking." They are tools which unite people and promote interactions that lead to creative solutions and a shared commitment to action. Unlike the "quick fix," there is likely to be more sustained and committed action toward *real* change when people are allowed time to discuss, reflect, test things out, and repeat the cycle without fear of repercussions.

The recent study of Louisiana schools provides a clear illustration of systems thinking in educational research. Researchers identify three "systems" within schools that interact to produce effects on student performance. The researchers call these systems "administrative appropriateness, teacher preparedness, and student readiness." Their findings indicate that a school's effectiveness depends on the interaction of these three systems. That is, changes in administrators, teachers, and/or students can and do alter effects on student performance (i.e., the school's effectiveness).¹²

The interaction of administration, teachers, and students seems particularly noteworthy in relation to at-risk issues. The Louisiana study compared effective schools in two socioeconomic status

(SES) brackets—poor and mid-income communities. Researchers found that equally effective schools in each income bracket had *different* patterns of interactions among principals, teachers, and students/communities (Figure 4). One conclusion drawn is that: "staffs at effective schools implement different strategies for creating and maintaining effectiveness based on the schools' SES context [including] geographic context."¹³

The Louisiana study has important implications for school improvement efforts. As a rule, the public views schools as if they are unidimensional entities readily subject to change—if *only* there were higher standards, or better assessment, or more training, or more money and so forth. The Louisiana study shows that a school's ability to influence student performance depends on the *stability* over time of its components (i.e., administrators, teachers, and student characteristics.) Tinkering with any one component of the system may not bring about desired changes in student performance. The "trick" for effective schools is to make the appropriate adaptations when changes occur. This implies constantly monitoring the system and adjusting actions as appropriate.

In sum, although school improvement *processes* do not ensure student success, they both contribute to and are prerequisites for success.¹⁴

Promising Practices: Effective programs incorporate multiple, proven strategies.

As noted, most education critics judge effectiveness using the criterion of students' academic achievement. This report concurs with the use of this measure—conditionally. It should be clear from the previous discussion that "success" is highly contextualized. And because no two schools have exactly the same context, replicable strategies or programs that unfailingly produce student academic gains are difficult to identify.

Figure 4

Characteristics of Effective Middle- and Low-SES Schools

Middle-SES Schools...	Low-SES Schools...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote both high present and future educational expectations. • Hire principals with good managerial abilities. Increase teacher responsibility for and ownership of instructional leadership. • De-emphasize visible external rewards for academic achievement [which] should be unnecessary if an adequate orientation is found at home. • Expand curricular offerings beyond the basic skills. • Increase contact with the community. Encourage parents with high educational expectations to exert pressure for school achievement. • Hire more experienced teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high present educational expectations.... Allow high future educational goals to develop later. • Hire principals who are initiators; who want to make changes. Encourage a more active role for the principal in ...providing overall instructional leadership. • Reward academic achievement. Make high-achieving students feel special. • Focus on basic skills first... with other offerings after basic skills have been mastered. • Carefully evaluate the effect of the community on the school. If the community does not exert positive pressure for school achievement, create boundaries to buffer the school from negative influences. • Hire younger, possibly more idealistic teachers. Give the principal more authority in selecting staff.

Schools Make a Difference, Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993

Recent research cautions:

[There is] an overreliance on achievement scores alone as indices of schools' effectiveness. Such narrowly defined school effects measures can be greatly affected by many factors across time, thus indicating less stability in school effects than may actually exist.¹⁵

Achievement scores are necessary measures of school effectiveness. They should not be the only measures of success.

Despite an abundance of empirical evidence demonstrating student outcomes *and* replicability, educational literature on "best practices" is extensive and growing daily. What is clear after reviewing this literature is that educational advice is much more likely to be based on knowing what *doesn't* work than on knowing what does. With this in mind, many practices have emerged as holding promise for improving and supporting student performance. Such practices as they relate to student education, and other components of a comprehensive service delivery system, comprise the remainder of this chapter.

THE STUDENT EDUCATION COMPONENT

This section focuses on instructional strategies and program components shown to be effective in working with students, especially those considered to be "at-risk." Strategies are examined that pertain to preschool public school transition programs, early childhood programs, programs serving older at-risk youth, and school-to-work transition programs. Importantly, all such programs are supported in numerous federal initiatives including *Goals 2000*, the reauthorization of the Head Start Act, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, and the National Community Service Trust Act of 1993.

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Preschool-Public School Transition Programs¹⁶

The concept of providing program continuity and smooth transitions for children from preschool to kindergarten has received increasing attention from early childhood experts. For example, Kagan (1992) talks about two continuums of continuity—horizontal and vertical. Vertical continuity refers to linkages between care/education settings across time or development (e.g., between preschool and elementary school). According to Kagan, a high degree of vertical continuity means that later services are aligned and build on services provided earlier. Through vertical continuity, families are enabled to nurture and strengthen family members, rather than repeatedly having to adapt to new systems.

Although research specifically examining the transition from preschool to kindergarten has been sparse, recent national studies have shed some light on the topic. One longitudinal study involving poor children found that preschool classrooms were more developmentally appropriate than kindergarten classrooms, particularly in regard to child-staff ratios. The authors recommended concentrating Chapter 1 funds on improving the quality of early childhood programs rather than on the traditional Chapter 1 approach of providing remediation in the upper grades.¹⁷

In another nationwide study of transitions to kindergarten, the authors concluded that transition activities from preschool to kindergarten are uncommon. Although activities such as welcoming incoming children and parents through special school events were relatively easy to find, activities that required coordination or communication between preschools and public schools were much more unusual. Only ten percent of schools in the sample indicated they had some type of systematic communication between kindergarten teachers and pre-K educators or care providers.¹⁸

In summary, early childhood researchers and practitioners increasingly view the early years of a child's life as a continuum of development that should be underpinned by continuity in services and programs. This supportive network should involve not only

parents, but educators and the community as well. However, one of the most important transitions occurring during this period—from preschool to elementary school—is characterized in the research as fragmented and disjointed.

At least two federal projects fund efforts to ensure smooth transitions in early childhood programs: the Head Start Follow Through Program and the Head Start-Public School Transition Project. By studying these programs, researchers have identified elements that need to be present in order to ensure smooth transitions for children between preschool and kindergarten. These elements include the following:

- ▲ Transfer of children's records from the preschool to the receiving elementary school.
- ▲ Communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers and staff to share information about children and programs.
- ▲ Inclusion of parents in transition activities, such as kindergarten orientations for parents during the preschool years.
- ▲ Joint activities between preschool and kindergarten classrooms, such as buddy reading.
- ▲ Visits by preschoolers to kindergarten classrooms.
- ▲ Visits by kindergarten teachers to preschool classrooms.
- ▲ Continuity of programming, such as developmentally appropriate curriculum and appropriate child:adult ratios.
- ▲ Joint training for preschool and public school teachers.
- ▲ Formal and informal policies and agreements between preschools and public schools specifying roles and responsibilities for transition activities.

Early Childhood Programs

Effective programs for young children are founded on developmentally appropriate practice, which is promoted and elaborated upon by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and others.¹⁹ First and foremost, effective learning environments for young children must be developmentally appropriate.

Additionally, some educational strategies appear particularly effective in working with younger children considered to be at risk. These include both prevention and intervention strategies. *Prevention* strategies are intended for children to experience academic success early on in their schooling, following the time-tested dictum that "success breeds success." *Prevention* strategies include preschool, full day kindergartens, and individualized assistance (e.g., tutoring), as well as assigning students differently in the primary grades (e.g., multi-age classrooms). Regarding the latter, Larry Lezotte of the Effective Schools movement notes that:

In carefully controlled studies, students in a continuous progress model gained, on average, about half a standard deviation in measured achievement over students in traditional grade organizations. This may not sound like a lot, but if you think about it incrementally over several years and across all subjects and hundreds of thousands of students, it could have a profound long-term effect [and] it does not have to cost a lot of money.²⁰

Intervention strategies are intended to correct early manifestations of academic difficulty. Reading tutorials have emerged as one of the more effective research-based intervention strategies. The nationally renowned "Reading Recovery" program and the Arizona-based "Collaborative Literacy Intervention Project" are well documented reading tutorial programs with a track record of successful intervention.²¹

Effective programs result from combinations of effective practices. Among the best known and well-documented elementary school programs for at-risk children are Henry Levin's Accelerated Schools, Robert Slavin's Success for All schools, and James Comer's School Development Program. A recent analysis of these three programs highlights shared early childhood practices.²² Common elements include:

- ▲ an emphasis on prevention over remediation, with a commitment to preschool experiences;
- ▲ a contextualized curriculum, with emphasis on reading and language skills;
- ▲ lots of oral reading and cooperative learning activities;
- ▲ instructional methods including smaller classes "to facilitate individual attention and the development of student-faculty relationships"; and,
- ▲ tutorial assistance (e.g., one-on-one, small group, peer).

Two programs (Levin's and Comer's) also incorporate extended day activities, and all—in varying degrees—emphasize the "whole child" by paying attention to social and psychological development in addition to academics. In delivering comprehensive services, these programs rely on site-based governance and strong parent and community support and involvement.

Much research concerns teacher-to-student ratios, and has shown the positive effects of more individualized attention. One-on-one tutorials appear most effective; cooperative learning and small group learning are also productive strategies to facilitate learning. Finally, a growing body of literature supports reducing class sizes, since smaller classes have been correlated with improved academic performance.²³

In sum, and as corroborated by Morrison Institute's research on early childhood programs for younger at-risk students, most—if not all—"effective" strategies in working with younger children are those that provide students with more individual time and attention.²⁴

Some teacher behaviors have also been shown to contribute to higher student performance. Behaviors related to classroom management, presenting new material, questioning students, and maintaining a positive social-psychological climate have all been cited in the literature as related to students' academic performance. Specifically, time-on-task, positive reinforcement, and positive disciplinary techniques recur as having effects on student learning.²⁵

Adolescent Programs

Many researchers cite a scarcity of reliable research about effective educational practices for students in middle and high schools.²⁶ Given the limitations of the research base, this analysis draws extensively from a recent empirical analysis of dropout prevention programs.²⁷ The analysis originates from examining reasons why students drop out of school.

Students drop out for a number of reasons. They drop out when they fail repeatedly. They drop out when they are ostracized or feel humiliated by their peers or by their teachers. They drop out when they can not see the value of what they are learning. They drop out when life circumstances, for whatever reasons, are overwhelming to the degree that school is secondary to survival. These reasons are both causes and effects of a myriad of other reasons. Any one reason is sufficient for dropping out; many students cite multiple reasons.

Research suggests that in order for a dropout prevention program to be effective, it must counteract reasons for dropping out. It must motivate students to stay in school (Figure 5). Figure 5 shows that students are motivated to stay in school when four conditions are met:

These four conditions connect formal and informal dimensions of schooling with how school is perceived in and out of school. Accordingly, effective strategies for dropout prevention are holistic in nature and incorporate opportunities for students to succeed in schoolwork, a human climate of caring and support, strategies that convey the relevance of school to the future, and help with personal problems. According to the research:

the absence of any one component can be sufficient to create serious dropout problems and the presence of each component should serve to strengthen the efficacy of the remaining components.²⁸

One strategy that, when implemented correctly, has the potential to address all four components is "service learning"—an intervention that combines classroom-based instruction with community service. Discussed in the literature as a particularly effective strategy for "disenfranchised" youth, service learning also represents a strategy that is good for *all* children. Recent research illustrates the effects of community service participation on at-risk students toward reducing feelings of alienation and improving self-esteem.²⁹

Research conducted by Morrison Institute corroborates these findings for older at-risk students and sheds light on other specific strategies relevant to Figure 5. The Institute's findings are based on the four-year evaluation of 21 at-risk programs in Arizona public middle and high schools. Overall, the greatest student results were achieved by programs that integrated academic, vocational, and support services.³⁰

A repertoire of strategies were used to help students succeed academically. Improving access to educational services was a key consideration in some programs. Flexible scheduling strategies (e.g., evening hours) were employed by many programs in order to accommodate students.

▲ Students experience academic success—they are able to function within the "formal environment" of the school (e.g., its curriculum).

▲ Students feel recognized and respected as individuals—they are satisfied with the "informal environment" of the school (e.g., relationships with peers and staff).

▲ Students are able to relate what they are learning in school to their future—schooling is connected to life.

▲ Students are able to balance learning in school with life outside of school—schooling helps instill appropriate coping skills to achieve this balance.

Figure 5

Conditions for Motivating Students to Stay in School

	School academic goals (Formal)	School social relations (Informal)
Within school experiences (Internal)	Opportunities for success in school-work	Human climate of caring and support
Connections with the outside world (External)	Relevance of school to students' community and future	Help with student's personal problems

Dropout Prevention in Theory and Practice, McParland, 1994

Almost all programs customized student courses of study by individualizing academic goals and allowing students to pursue these goals at their own pace. Instructional delivery used combinations of small group instruction, one-on-one tutorials, and computer-assisted instruction. Many programs used block scheduling for subject matter study. Far from being "watered down," programs were academically rigorous and fit a description of having high expectations for all students.

Holistic programs were characterized by more personal and friendly relationships between students and staff. These relationships were especially important for students in the middle school grades. Programs achieving the greatest results appeared to employ more staff who were vocally enthusiastic about working with kids, and "at-risk" kids in particular. Many of these staff members related having experienced school failure themselves and voiced an empathy with their students. Staff attitudes were important variables in student program evaluations.³¹

Holistic programs incorporated career counseling, aptitude explorations, and vocational training. Several linked with JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) programs in order to provide students with opportunities for paid and unpaid work experience. Others programs formed partnerships with local businesses in order to provide job placements. In general, most students were assisted in creating for themselves a future goal and exploring the relationship between schooling and their future.

Finally, programs relied extensively on assistance from school and community-based counselors, as well as social service agencies. Individual and small group counseling were part of every program and services were matched with individual students' needs (e.g., substance abuse treatment, prenatal care, crisis intervention, family counseling).

Regarding counseling services, research supports the critical role that counselors can play in effective programs—not only for adolescents, but for elementary children as well. In *Children Achieving Potential*,³² research is cited to support the contention

that effective school counseling can help improve student achievement, reduce dropout rates, and improve student and family behaviors, attitudes, and skills. The ideal counselor-to-student ratio is 1:300.

A comprehensive counseling program is one that provides:

- ▲ preventive classroom guidance activities;
- ▲ individual and group counseling;
- ▲ referrals to community agencies;
- ▲ consultation with teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders;
- ▲ crisis intervention; and
- ▲ assessment, placement, and follow-up services.

In the Morrison Institute research, integrated, holistic programs were typically offered by alternative schools and schools-within-schools. As vehicles for delivering services, research supports the effectiveness of alternative schools and programs. A recent review of the research on alternative schools indicates that students in alternative settings fare better than their at-risk peers in conventional schools. That is, compared to at-risk youngsters in conventional schools, alternative school students tend to feel more positive about themselves and toward school, skip school less frequently, manifest less disruptive behavior in school, and show improved academic performance.³³

School-to-Work Transition Programs

A multitude of research on school-to-work programs has been conducted in recent years.³⁴ As synthesized in the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994*,³⁵ good school-to-work transition programs have three elements: school-based learning components, work-based learning components, and connecting activities.

School-based learning components include, at a minimum:

- ▲ Expanded and improved career and academic counseling in the elementary and secondary grades, which may include linkages to career counseling and labor market information services outside of the school system.
- ▲ Curricular pathways to develop new career goals over time and to change career majors.
- ▲ Model curricula, innovative instructional methodologies, and other strategies that integrate academic and vocational learning and promote career awareness across all grades, and that are consistent with academic and skill standards established pursuant to the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* and the *National Skill Standards Act of 1994*.
- ▲ Formal mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of students participating in a School-to-Work Opportunities program to additional training or postsecondary education programs.

Work-based learning components incorporate work-based experiences, preferably those that are paid and "high-quality." Connecting activities utilize teachers, employers, mentors, counselors, related services personnel, and others to work with students and facilitate linkages between schools, workplaces, and postsecondary opportunities.

When we are able to create schools with a challenging curriculum, a variety of instructional strategies, a variety of learning settings and a personal approach to students, then more students will succeed. The problem is not our lack of knowledge about what works; it is that we have not created systems that promote it.

—National Association of State Boards of Education

THE PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT COMPONENT*

The link between parent/family involvement in school and positive student outcomes is well established in the literature. Evidence is substantial and consistent relating parent involvement to students' academic achievement, social-emotional development, and school success at all grade levels. For example, three of the most prominent and effective school restructuring efforts in the country showing positive student results—Levin's Accelerated Schools, Slavin's Success for All Schools, and Comer's School Development Program—all have coherent and systematic parent involvement strategies. Effective programs for parents/families don't just happen—they require coordinated, systematic planning and implementation.

Despite the positive relationship between parent involvement and student success, educators often find it challenging to plan and sustain effective parent involvement programs. Parent involvement is particularly daunting for schools serving large populations of at-risk students and families.

Many researchers have studied and documented specific barriers to involvement, as well as strategies that appear to be effective in garnering support and involvement of parents of students at risk of school failure. Other work provides a strong foundation for framing parent involvement policies and strategies at both the state and local levels. This section summarizes the lessons learned through an analysis of this literature.³⁶

Schools generally play a central role in their home communities. To perform this role effectively, schools must design programs that not only meet the needs of the student population, but also those of the larger community, including parents. This requires a *belief system* that views the family as part and parcel of the

* In this section and throughout this document, the words parent and parent involvement are used generically. "Parent" should be understood in terms of a biological parent or primary caretaker; parent involvement similarly refers to parents or other family members, including "significant others."

mission to educate children and values parental/family input and participation. Part of the success of programs such as Accelerated Schools, Success for All schools, and the School Development Program is their fundamental belief that places parents as integral partners with schools in achieving successful outcomes for children.³⁷

Although valuing parents is a belief espoused often at state, district and local levels, it is not always apparent in the actions of school staff. Research has shown that staff may have a negative orientation toward parents, viewing them as part of a student's problems rather than as a resource and a partner. When parents perceive negative attitudes, they may feel intimidated or alienated.

Non-participating parents (e.g., because they do not feel welcome) can reinforce a school's attitude that "parents don't care." The cyclic interaction of negative attitudes on the part of both parents and schools creates one of the most formidable barriers to developing effective involvement programs.

Flounder or Flourish: Schools Do Make a Difference

The extent to which parent involvement flounders or flourishes is associated with two major sets of factors: the characteristics of the parent population, and practices employed by the school in communicating and working with parents. Before designing and implementing a parent involvement program, schools are advised to thoroughly assess parent characteristics and needs and honestly inventory school attitudes and practices toward working with parents.

Several parent characteristics are associated with their involvement in schools, or lack thereof. These include income, education level, level of self-confidence, ethnic background, size of family, marital status, and working status. Uninvolved parents often lack resources such as time and money, lack an understanding of the importance of parent involvement, have a history of negative experiences with schools, or feel intimidated by teachers and staff.

What schools need to understand is that while parent characteristics play a role in levels of involvement, school practices are *more* powerful in affecting parents' involvement. Research-based school factors that impact parent involvement include mechanisms and means for reporting student progress, staff attitudes, and the staff's level of understanding and interest in involving parents.

The research literature clearly illustrates how schools affect parent involvement. For example, one study of low-income parents showed that in spite of their positive attitudes about involvement, and awareness of involvement opportunities, they were unlikely to participate for a variety of reasons (e.g., lack of child care; work schedules). This same study also showed that parents who received specific personal communications about school events were significantly more likely to participate than parents who did not receive such communications.³⁸ Another study of eight inner-city Chapter 1 schools further confirms the ability of schools to influence parent involvement. As the authors assert:

All of the inner-city schools are discovering that, regardless of where they started from, they can systematically improve their practices to involve the families they serve.³⁹

Strategies for Parent Involvement

There are many types of parent involvement. Epstein's typology of school-family connection illustrates a range of opportunities, and has been used widely at both state and local levels to develop parent involvement programs (Figure 6). Epstein's school studies show that a variety of options need to be made available to parents because they have different needs, and that different types of involvement lead to different benefits for parents, teachers, and students.

Figure 6

Five Types of School-Family Connections

Basic obligations of families: to provide for the health and safety needs of children, develop parenting skills that maintain healthy development, and build positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior. Schools can assist families through activities such as parent education programs and home visiting.

Basic obligations of schools: to communicate with families about school programs and student progress through written memos, report cards, and conferences. The quality and frequency of communication determines how it is received and whether it has the intended impact on families.

Parent involvement at school: to volunteer in the school and attend school events. Schools can maximize involvement by being flexible in scheduling events and focusing on recruitment and training of volunteers.

Parent involvement in learning activities at home: to assist children at home on learning activities that are coordinated with child's class work and require some assistance from parents. Schools may have to provide support to parents in carrying out the activities.

Parent involvement in school decision-making: to actively participate in school governance and planning through school management groups, advisory councils, advocacy groups, or other school or district committees. Parents may need training to participate effectively.

School Programs and Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement...
Epstein & Dauber, 1991

Each type of involvement depicted in Figure 6 was observed and documented as part of Morrison Institute's longitudinal evaluation study of the *Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project*. This study showed that parent involvement varied by school and occurred in different degrees. Using Epstein's typology, involvement ranged from schools trying to assist parents in meeting their basic obligations to

those which successfully involved parents in participatory decision making.

In probing parent involvement further, Morrison Institute researchers found that many practitioners saw "involvement" in terms of two dimensions of parent behavior: how actively they *support* their child and the school system and how actively they *participate* in the school or its activities. Across schools, high and low degrees of parent involvement were attributable to both high and low levels of support and participation. Although degrees of parent support and parent participation both fall along continuums, generally one can describe parent involvement by one of four types (Figure 7).

Figure 7

Four Types of Parents

+	Supportive of child (for example, often encourages)	-	Not supportive of child (for example, ignores child)
+	Active participant (for example, helps child with homework)	+	Active participant (for example, comes if food is provided)
+	Supportive of child (for example, cares for well-being)	-	Not supportive of child (for example, is abusive)
-	Inactive participant (for example, rarely comes to school activities)	-	Inactive participant (for example, no communication with school)

Rethinking Parent Involvement,
Vandegrift & Greene, 1992

Given the potential range of involvement options that schools can offer, combined with the levels at which parents may be approaching such involvement, schools attempting to plan and implement effective parent involvement programs must plan on "meeting parents where they are." A menu of options for parent involvement is essential.⁴⁰

To best meet parents where they are requires assessing the needs of parents for whom programs are designed. By matching school services with parent needs, the foundation is laid for building positive relationships between parents and the school community. These relationships are essential for success, since research has shown that whether parent involvement programs will work or not is largely associated with affective and attitudinal conditions on the part of both parents and schools.

In planning a comprehensive system, schools can foster positive relationships by incorporating parent involvement into their school or district mission statements. Affirming a commitment to parents in the school's mission can help to build a belief system whereby parents are viewed as resources and partners in achieving student success. As comprehensive planning is carried out, schools need to be sure to allocate appropriate financial and human resources.

THE SOCIAL/ECONOMIC SERVICES COMPONENT

As discussed, children at risk often experience a multiplicity of problems outside of school. The convergence of educational difficulties and social, economic, and health problems speaks strongly for the implementation of comprehensive strategies and services to address these needs. Increasingly, schools are viewed as the logical place to coordinate service delivery.⁴¹

It is important to preface this section with the following caveat. In both the literature and this report, programs are described as "successful" *not* necessarily because they improve student outcomes, but because they have processes in place that enhance the capacity and ability to provide services. That is, programs are

judged to be successful on the basis of *how* they deliver their programs—not what happens as a result of the programs.⁴² Accordingly, there is consensus in the literature that:

to succeed, a community must develop an approach and tailor program design to capitalize on its particular strengths and opportunities and to respond to its citizens' unique combination of needs and expectations.⁴³

The key is that comprehensive social services derive from partnerships between schools and communities. Jointly, partners decide upon the services to be delivered and the way(s) to deliver them. Decisions will depend on a combination of factors including student and family needs, the availability of resources in the community, and the nature of the relationship(s) among all agencies or organizations involved.

Approaches to Social Service Integration*

Effectively linking social support services with schools is contingent on schools changing the way they interact with families and community agencies.⁴⁴ Schools cannot simply "add on" support services and expect them to be effective. Rather, the nature of the linkage, or means for integration, is a critical variable for successful implementation. Research indicates principles that underlie approaches for successful integration include increasing access to services, providing education for consumers *and* providers, and communicating the social acceptability of services.

* *School-linked* and *school-based* are two terms frequently used to describe programs that provide comprehensive services to students. However, a review of the literature does not always present a clear-cut distinction between the two. The distinction is not necessarily based on the location of the service delivery. For example, while one review of comprehensive service programs distinguishes terms based on where actual service delivery takes place, other literature describes school-based services housed near the school site rather than at the school site. Different analyses alternately describe school-linked service models where: a) the school controls or dominates the planning and governance and, b) the school is among the central participants in planning and governance. For the purpose of this discussion, school-linked and school-based are treated as interchangeable terms.

Several approaches are listed below that appear to be helpful for linking social support and economic services with children and families through the schools. In many cases, existing programs reflect a combination of these approaches.

- ▲ **Brokering services:** This involves having a school-based professional and/or paraprofessional who is trained and authorized to make referrals and/or secure support services for a child or family.
- ▲ **Case managing services:** Case management is similar to brokering insofar as a school-based person makes referrals and/or secures support services for children and families. Case management typically differs from brokering in that the case manager:
 - is a professional (e.g., counselor, social worker);
 - is qualified to and does provide some direct services;
 - follows up on services provided, and tracks student/family progress.
- ▲ **Co-locating services:** This involves physically locating one or more social service providers at a site on or near a school campus. Providers deliver services on-site to the clientele.
- ▲ **Building capacity to provide services directly through schools:** Typically, schools provide some support services to students through school personnel (e.g., counselors; co-op supervisors). The strategy to build capacity involves increasing the school's ability to deliver support services by hiring social workers, counselors, or other service professionals to work directly with students and their families.

Among the many existing school-linked and school-based programs, some are routinely identified in the research literature as promising. These are presented in Figure 8. However, while the examples cited in Figure 8 illustrate *good* practice, no single model is currently identified as *best* practice. Consequently, it is premature to recommend any one model as best for replication.

Nevertheless, characteristics of high quality, school-linked/school-based, social service programs are identified in the literature. Accordingly, high quality service programs —

- offer a flexible array of support, prevention, and treatment services that are easy to access (e.g., co-location).
- address the special needs of the people and communities they are serving by responding to cultural, ethnic, and economic diversity.
- involve children and families in identifying needs and planning services (e.g., community empowerment).
- deal with children in a family context and families in a community context.
- are integrated as part of a coherent plan.
- cross traditional professional and bureaucratic boundaries.

Figure 8

Promising Programs Integrating Social and Educational Services

New Jersey School-Based Youth Services Program

A program of the New Jersey State Department of Human Services, youth service centers offer one-stop shopping for all teens in a community. No single statewide model is mandated; rather, each community develops its own initiatives.

Location: 29 youth centers at or near schools across the state

- Services:**
- primary and preventive health services
 - mental health and family counseling
 - employment counseling and training
 - information and referral
 - recreational activities

New Beginnings

New Beginnings links the San Diego school system, city and county services, and the San Diego community college district in a school-based family service center that serves at-risk students and their families.

Family service advocates coordinate services and provide some direct services. Families also have access to an "extended team" of specially trained professionals in agencies throughout the community.

Location: one elementary school

- Services:**
- comprehensive case management
 - information and referrals
 - mental health counseling
 - parent and adult education programs
 - health screening and treatment

Cities in Schools (CIS)

Cities in Schools is one of the oldest models for service coordination within the schools. It provides a model for assessing the needs of children that goes beyond the school's normal sphere, and brings the requisite services, case managers, and counselors to the school site. In some cities, CIS has also developed partnerships with business to establish alternative schools.

Location: more than 300 public schools across the country

- Services:** vary among sites, but typically include:
- comprehensive case management
 - information and referrals
 - health services
 - tutoring
 - mentoring
 - recreational activities

Concerns About and Obstacles to Social Service Integration

Despite considerable support in the literature for school-linked or school-based services, concerns are also raised regarding possible problems associated with basing services in or near schools.⁴⁵ For example, Chaskin and Richman (1993) note that parents who have had negative school experiences in the past might not participate. Or, families may not always identify as strongly with the "school community" as they do with their neighborhood. Or, because of the deeply established "presence" of the school in the community, community agencies may fear being absorbed by the school's bureaucratic structure.

Other common obstacles to delivering coordinated comprehensive services have to do with administrative issues and governance. Collaborators often have differing policy mandates (e.g., confidentiality and disclosure issues) and philosophical viewpoints on issues. Staff often lack the cross-training needed to coordinate effectively. Always, there are "turf" issues to be overcome. The service integration literature presents a strong case for shared, or collaborative governance; in practice, one agency tends to dominate the process.

A principal challenge in integrating services is to mesh different professional domains, each with its own language and operating modes. Programs that appear to be successfully meeting the challenge share characteristics including strong leadership, "buy-in" by the school community (i.e., belief that social support services should be a legitimate concern of schools), and mutual understanding of a program's purpose by both school and agency personnel.

Chaskin and Richman promote a collaborative community-based model for implementing social services within or near schools. "This model promotes building on positive relationships that families have with their communities—however "community" is perceived. In this model, governance is recognized as a key issue in developing comprehensive services and dealt with up front."⁴⁶

THE HEALTH SERVICES COMPONENT

Connections between schools and health services have existed for decades, although the nature of these connections has changed over time. Initially targeting impoverished immigrant children, health services in the schools eventually were extended to all children while at the same time narrowing the scope of services (e.g., health screening and health education).⁴⁷ Now the pendulum is moving back to broadening the scope of services and serving children in poverty. More than ever, educators and health care professionals alike are interested in developing comprehensive health delivery systems to ensure that young people receive proper care.

Few disagree that good health and adequate health care are critical to the well-being of our nation's youngsters, and a wide body of literature underscores the need to ensure student access to health services. Linking adolescents' health and their success in school, the Carnegie Council Task Force on Young Adolescents concludes that "middle grade schools must accept a significant responsibility...to ensure that schools become health-promoting environments."⁴⁸ Carnegie's task force report encourages options such as school-based/school-linked health clinics and forging relationships with community-based health centers and medical facilities. Similarly, the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment says that school-based health services hold promise for addressing the health-related needs of children—especially adolescents.⁴⁹

Increasingly "new morbidities" threaten our young people. New morbidities are related to high risk behaviors and include teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, and drug abuse. Violence and depression are also factors believed to contribute to increasing rates of student mental health problems.⁵⁰ Researchers concur that the health status of children and families is most likely to improve by *enhancing access to services and decreasing high risk behaviors.*⁵¹

Increased access is a major appeal of housing health services at or near schools. School-based/school-linked service models efficiently

reach a majority of young people. Providing health services through the schools helps to overcome many barriers to access such as lack of transportation to medical facilities, lack of health insurance, and inconvenient hours of many health care providers. Regarding decreasing high risk behaviors, many argue in favor of school-based/school-linked health services as a means of providing better education and preventive services to children, and adolescents in particular since they are most susceptible to the new morbidities.

Adolescent developmental theory suggests that young people are affected greatly by social structures including family, the school, and the community. The interactions among these social structures create what researcher Price and his colleagues (1993) call "webs of influence" that can positively or negatively affect young people. Price conceptualizes an effective youth support program as one that emphasizes *preventive intervention*. He states:

We need to build, through all of our efforts, networks of social support and integration. We have to recognize the fragmentation and lack of support that exist in the adolescent's world, selves, families, and communities. With that recognition, we can build the webs of influence that can enhance the educational and health prospects of all our young people.⁵²

Viewing prevention as a primary purpose for school-linked health services is central to understanding the move toward collaboration. Collaboration stems from the desire *to prevent* school failure, *to prevent* students from dropping out, and *to prevent* physical and mental health problems that adversely affect school success. Collaborative efforts are intended to alter the way organizations relate to each other as they unite to improve support for youth.

Linking the health care delivery system with public education systems requires "bridging the gap" between health and education professionals.⁵³ Whereas public education is just that—public—the health care system is comprised primarily of private and nonprofit service providers often funded through insurance paid for by

employers. For the unemployed and underemployed, health services are generally provided through government programs such as Medicaid or the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS, Arizona's version of Medicaid). On Native American reservations, the government-subsidized Indian Health Service (IHS) is the primary care provider.

The range of private, nonprofit, and public providers within the health care delivery system includes hospitals, medical schools, community health centers, local health departments, and other community-based organizations—each with its own administrative structure. Considering the types and range of providers, and their unique administrative structures, funding sources, and institutional policies and procedures, the logistics of linking health services with schools can be daunting.

Approaches for Providing School-Based/Linked Health Services

There are many ways to link schools with health service providers. A school might obtain the services of a full-time physician's assistant through the state health department. A partnership could be formed with a group of family practice physicians. Ultimately, the adoption of a service delivery model will depend on local factors such as the type and availability of resources in the community, the school's/district's own health care delivery capacities, and prevailing community attitudes.⁵⁴

For all the possibilities, three levels of school-based health care stand out in the literature, as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Three Levels of School-Based/Linked Health Care

Level I: Screening and referral

School-based health personnel provide a traditional array of services such as health screening, health promotion, emergency first aid, and referrals for further diagnosis and treatment to a community-based service provider.

Level II: Limited primary care

School nurses or nurse practitioners provide some primary care in addition to performing health monitoring and referral duties. They may diagnose and treat a range of health conditions, relying on backup provided by an off-site consulting physician.

Level III: Comprehensive care

Comprehensive health care services are provided by a team that includes doctors, nurses, counselors and other health care professionals at a site on or near school grounds. All of a student's health care needs can be met.

Morrison Institute for Public Policy

At the comprehensive care level, school-based or school-linked health clinics are increasingly the delivery model of choice.⁵⁵ In fact, the American Nurses Association has proposed an even broader approach to clinical care, promoting the development of *family health centers* in or near schools. The family health center model embraces the notion of utilizing nurses as primary care providers and case managers, and focuses on maximizing family control of health care and providing for community ownership.⁵⁶

One caution in considering a "full service" clinic is that when such centers open in schools, demands surface for many different services including physical exams, lab tests, diagnosis and treatment of minor injuries, and health education. Many "full service" clinics also offer mental health counseling and reproductive health care services and/or counseling in addition to treating physical ailments. Obviously, delivering such primary care requires certain policies and procedures. Among the most common of these for school-based/school-linked clinics are policies that protect patient confidentiality and require parental consent to administer services.

A variety of sources can help fund school health services including state health departments, maternal and child health block grants (Title V), social service block grants (Title XX), Medicaid (in Arizona, AHCCCS), foundations, and local governments. Some schools do directly fund their own services. More typically, they garner direct funding from grants and other sources and contribute matching funds in the form of donated space, staff, and maintenance.

As in implementing any effective program, the design of a school-based/school-linked health program should rely on an assessment of the unmet health needs of students in the community. Moreover, the success of the model will depend heavily on constructing positive relationships between schools and community health care providers. Relationships are particularly critical between community providers and existing school-based health providers (e.g., school nurses).

Barriers to Providing School-Based/Linked Health Services

As a result of the nature and diversity of funding sources, a frequently cited barrier to implementing school-linked health programs is the lack of adequate and stable funding. Another barrier pertains specifically to school-based clinics that offer reproductive services.⁵⁷ Not infrequently, community beliefs and norms are in opposition to the provision of such services.

Difficulties also tend to surface around turf issues when community-based professionals are placed in schools with existing support personnel such as nurses, social workers, and psychologists. The literature highlights the importance of delineating the role of the school nurse in relation to school-linked health services. Failure to integrate these personnel, either within the health center or in parallel functions, creates the potential for problems.

School health services face other barriers as well. For example, in an analysis of 14 school-based health programs, researchers noted the prevalence of two delivery systems: school-based clinics and the use of a nurse practitioner. Both delivery models faced barriers of inadequate space in which to provide services and access to physicians. The clinic model faced a lack of physicians to provide direct services; the nurse practitioner model was similarly impaired in terms of medical back-up.⁵⁸

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

The research base on effective professional development strategies is relatively new, with most studies conducted in the past two decades. In the professional development literature, "effective" can mean that professional development activities have been shown to directly result in improved student achievement or that they have contributed to teacher professionalism and empowerment. In either case, research helps to frame some common elements that must be present if one hopes to actually impact teaching practices in the classroom.

The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) issued a recent synthesis of research on professional development. NSDC adopts the position that an effective professional development system must account for the complex political, organizational, and personal contexts in which professional development occurs.⁵⁹ Their position is based on three underlying ideas that are currently shaping public education and policy.

Results-driven education is one of the forces that NSDC says should be taken into account in designing a professional development program. The current focus on student outcomes requires new ways of thinking about learning, new attitudes toward students, and new approaches to teaching that value outcomes rather than seat time. At the same time, staff development activities should focus *not* on whether teachers participate in a certain number of workshops or accumulate a particular number of graduate credits, but rather on whether these experience results in changes in classroom practice.

Systems thinking is a second force that should shape professional development, according to NSDC. Systems thinking requires that individuals acquire an understanding of the complexity of interconnected systems and how changes in one part of a system can positively or negatively influence another part of the system---sometimes inadvertently. This complexity exists both within and between systems.

Finally, NSDC asserts that new approaches to professional development should be grounded in **constructivism**. Current teaching methods promote a constructivist approach in which the teacher acts as a model and facilitator of learning rather than a teller and director of learning. Professional development should reflect the same constructivist perspective that encourages and enables teachers to collaborate with peers, reflect on their teaching, and conduct action research in their classrooms.

The preceding discussion lays a philosophical foundation on which an effective professional development program should be based. The next section offers a variety of approaches for designing a comprehensive professional development program.

Approaches to Professional Development

Research has shown that exemplary, successful professional development programs share five basic characteristics.

- ▲ One characteristic is that *teachers are actively involved in setting their own professional goals.*
- ▲ Closely related to this, *training opportunities are customized* (i.e., differentiated) for individual teachers in recognition of the fact that they are at various stages of personal and professional development.
- ▲ In effective professional development programs, *most activities are conducted in a school setting and all activities are linked to school-wide improvement efforts.*
- ▲ Successful programs *engage teachers in planning inservice activities, and involve teachers as helpers to each other in mastering new material* (e.g., as peer coaches).
- ▲ Finally, results-oriented programs *emphasize demonstrations, supervised trials, and feedback—with ample opportunities to practice newly-learned concepts.*

Crafting a professional development system that meets the above criteria involves a repertoire of strategies, the most well known of which is training. Typically, training refers to workshops, seminars, or institutes in which an "expert" in some instructional approach or curriculum area instructs teachers in using a new approach or learning new curriculum content. Training tends to follow a traditional instructional model that includes teaching to a clear set of objectives and providing some practice and feedback.

An historical complaint about training is that too often it has not resulted in tangible changes in teacher performance or student outcomes. Several characteristics of ineffective training have been identified through the years. For example, effects can not be

expected from "one-shot" workshops and/or a lack of follow-up. Teacher training—like student education—must be held to high standards of learning if results are to be achieved.

As noted, there are some very specific elements that must be present in order for training to show results—for example, teachers should have a vested interest in participating in the training, it should be customized, and there should be follow-up to ensure integration into teaching. Furthermore, according to the research, integration of training into practice is most likely to occur when several conditions are met.

Teachers are likely to integrate training when they genuinely understand and embrace the instructional or educational theory underlying the new method, approach, or content. Trainers must provide opportunities to study and understand theory. Teachers are also more likely to integrate training when they have opportunities to observe, practice, and receive continuous feedback. That is, "good" training should involve an expert demonstrating a new method or approach through a live simulation, a videotape, or some other media. Teachers should then practice the new method in a simulated setting and then in a real classroom setting. Finally, teachers should receive structured ongoing support that involves an expert observing them using the new method in the classroom setting and providing feedback on their performance.⁶⁰

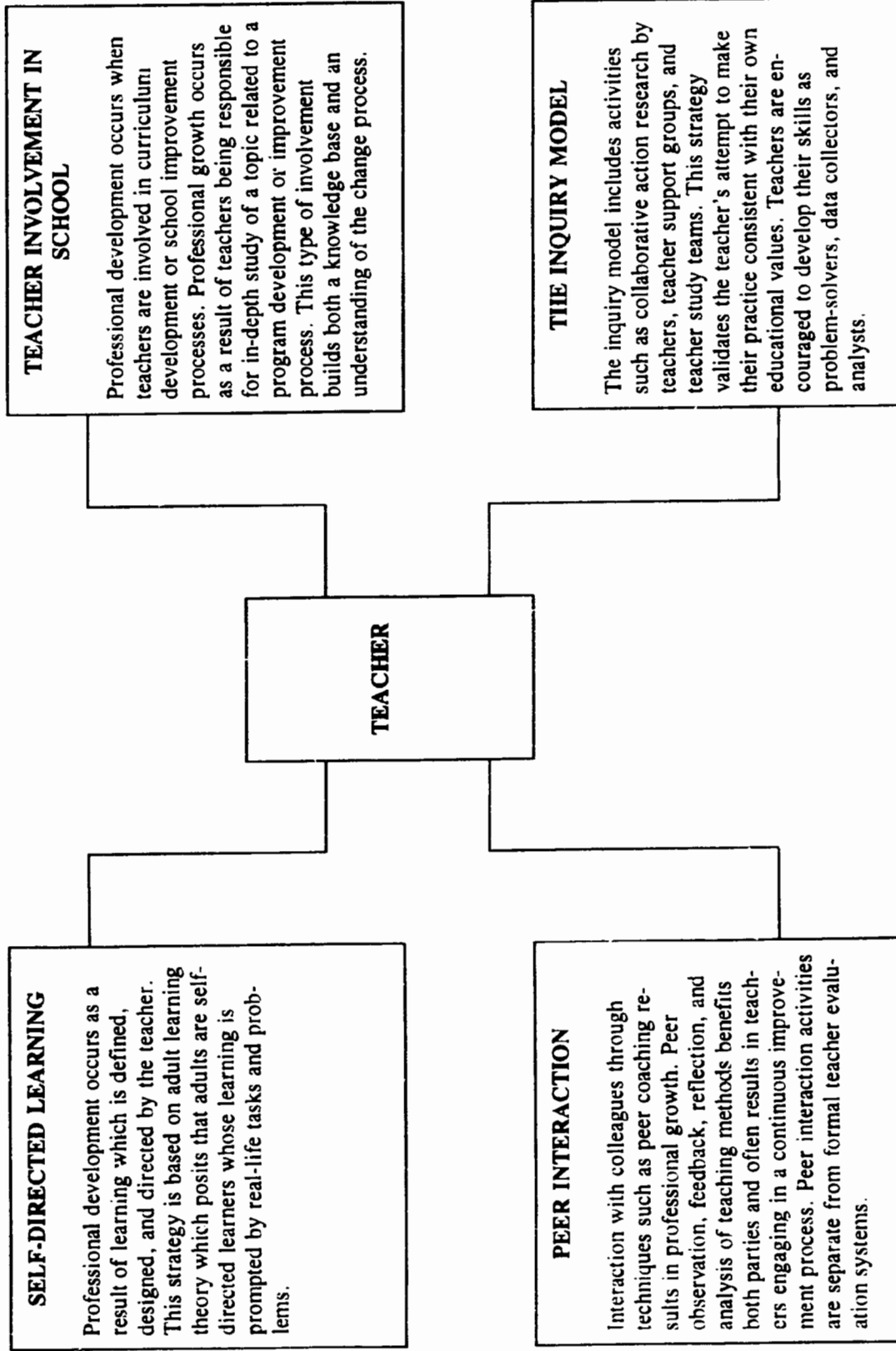
In sum, "effective" training emphasizes an understanding of theory, opportunities to observe and practice in real-life situations, and mentoring or coaching until the new practice is incorporated within the teacher's repertoire.

While training is important, it is not the only approach to professional development. There are other effective, more constructivist strategies that can augment or provide alternatives to training.

Four alternative strategies for professional development are depicted and explained briefly in Figure 10: self-directed learning, peer interaction, teacher involvement in school, and the "inquiry model."⁶¹

Figure 10

Four Alternative Strategies for Professional Development



The strategies shown in Figure 10 imply a view of teachers as professionals whose personal experiences inspire them to develop their skills and knowledge in areas of interest. These strategies, based on theories of adult learning, suggest that teachers—like their students—learn best by doing. These strategies also acknowledge that learning is perhaps best internalized when teachers have to explain or share their learning with others, or put it into practice. Finally, these strategies emphasize the individual dignity and integrity of teachers as professionals.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Schools and teachers can affect student success—especially in partnership with others who actively seek to create more positive environments for children and youth. However, after reviewing a portion of the exhaustive literature on education (especially for at-risk students), one can infer an important point regarding the design and implementation of an effective program. In short, there are no infallible strategies for consistently raising academic achievement, maintaining socially acceptable behavior through the school years and, ultimately, ensuring graduation from high school.

The design and implementation of an effective comprehensive program is not amenable to a recipe approach. It requires conscientious planning with respect to context. Planning must consider philosophy, people, partners, processes, and practices and put them all together in the unique cultural, social, economic, and geographic context in which they occur.

The way in which some Arizona schools are attempting to do just that—put all of the pieces together—is the subject of the next chapter.

It is not enough to take a little bit of Program A and a little bit of Program B, mix them together, and hope for the best.

—James McPartland and Robert Slavin

We don't have...patented processes or fool-proof recipes. We cannot be confident that the characteristics of today's effective schools and programs can be transplanted into every setting.

—Chester Finn

The evidence is spotty; there are differences among schools; the search for ways to teach students serious intellectual habits, and to assess their progress, is only started. We remain hopeful.

—TheodoreSizer

CHAPTER FOUR:

LEARNING FROM PRACTICE

◆ ◆ ◆

This chapter illustrates various aspects of comprehensive service delivery and service integration in practice. It draws upon the experiences of five Arizona public schools that serve large percentages of "at-risk" students. Machan School of the Creighton Elementary District, Somerton Primary School of the Somerton Elementary District, and Whiteriver Elementary School of the Whiteriver Unified District are elementary schools representing urban, rural, and reservation communities, respectively. The Apache Junction Unified District of Pinal County, in proximity to the metropolitan Phoenix area, was examined specifically with respect to its alternative school and programs. The newly established Villa Oasis Interscholastic Center for Education (VOICE) is located in the heart of Pinal county and serves as a regional alternative school for students in grades seven through twelve.

Schools were selected for case study based on prior research conducted by Morrison Institute in conjunction with the Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project (1988-92) and subsequent experience with these schools. Schools were selected because their past and present efforts illustrate in theory and practice the intent of current and proposed federal legislation.

Portions of their programs for at-risk youth are profiled in the publications *Promising Practices for At-Risk Youth: Blueprints for Success*.¹ Whereas *Promising Practices* more narrowly focused on specific program components, case studies and examples in this chapter aim to more holistically portray schools in various contexts and at various stages of developing and implementing comprehensive service delivery systems.

The chapter is organized as follows: Whiteriver Elementary School located on the Whiteriver Apache Reservation has a long track record of working with the principles underlying comprehensive service delivery. It represents a mature example of research in practice. At the opposite end of the spectrum, VOICE completed its first year of operations during FY 1993-94. Its evolution is informative for those seeking to build a comprehensive system "from scratch." These two schools, one elementary and one secondary, are profiled in depth. Their stories are supplemented by examples from the other three schools, used to illustrate site-based solutions in meeting student and community educational, social/economic, and health needs.

Throughout the case studies, some evaluator commentary is interwoven into the narrative. Comments are intended to illustrate particular points for discussion, or to provide additional detail for clarification.

PUTTING THE FIVE Ps INTO PRACTICE

Whiteriver Elementary School—A Mature Comprehensive Service Delivery System

The 1.7 million acre White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation spans three Arizona counties (Apache, Gila, and Navajo) and is home to roughly 13,000 tribal members. The reservation's public school system is the Whiteriver Unified School District which has two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.

About 900 kindergarten through fifth grade students each year are served by Whiteriver Elementary School (WRE), the subject of this case study. Whiteriver Elementary School is located in the city of Whiteriver, the tribal government seat and the reservation's largest population center. Roughly nine out of ten students enter school with limited command of the English language and are otherwise "unready to learn."

Much of the population lives in poverty—more than 90 percent of families are considered low-income, and unemployment is high (41 percent). Tribal agency records suggest that 100 percent of families living on the reservation are affected by alcohol abuse by someone in the immediate or extended family. Annual police reports indicate that 55 percent of all crimes are alcohol-related.

More than one-third of the school-age population is subject to family violence, abuse, and/or neglect. Agency records indicate that 20 child abuse cases are handled each week.

In 1993, the reservation earned the dubious distinction of having the highest suicide rate in the nation—six times the national average. Birth defects, chronic ear infections, diabetes, and heart disease are among the pervasive health problems on the reservation. For example, 31 percent of incoming Whiteriver students failed an initial hearing screening for 1993-94. School height and weight studies conducted over the last ten years indicate that obesity increased fourfold in males; threefold in females. Some 700 people are on the diabetes registry, and two new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each week.

Over the years, WRE has developed and continues to expand upon a comprehensive approach for dealing with the unique characteristics of their community. The following section describes key components of their service delivery system.

Philosophy

Whiteriver Elementary School's teacher handbook states:

It is the mission of the Whiteriver Elementary School to be a child-oriented educational center. Administrators, teachers, teacher assistants and parents will continue to learn and grow from what research is telling us, and will adapt to meet the needs of our unique, special children. In doing so, the quality of instruction and curriculum will be enhanced. The result is improved academic achievement and personal growth for the Whiteriver Elementary students and staff.

The school's philosophy focuses on children with a bottom-line expectation of student achievement and personal growth. Notably, the mission statement emphasizes research-based professional development for school personnel *and* parents. Adapting to unique needs—the process of customization—is also incorporated into the mission statement. Thus, the philosophy includes references to people, processes, and practices.

"Child-centered" is more than a catchphrase at WRE. It is a pervasive and ingrained belief system that guides *every action* taken at the school. The following example illustrates how thoroughly staff have integrated a child-centered philosophy into process and practice.

During one site visit, the evaluator had the opportunity to chat with teachers who comprise the School Improvement Team. By way of explanation, four teachers comprise WRE's School Improvement Team and work each year during the month of June to review needs assessment data and establish priorities for school improvement efforts for the coming year. The annual plan centers on a school improvement theme around which student education, parent involvement, and staff development evolve. One year's theme focused on science and literature-based reading; another year's theme was "Students Against Violence Everywhere" (SAVE). Themes and priorities are used by the central management team in financial planning. The yearly school improvement effort—both program and financial planning—looks holistically at past experience with an eye on the future and illustrates the fluidity of WRE's comprehensive (i.e., schoolwide) plan as a whole.

In the midst of loftier planning goals, the team planning for FY 1994-95 had addressed an increase in requests to hold bake sales on campus—sales considered both disruptive and somewhat exploitive. The team formulated a policy and procedures to grant permission *only* if the sale was related to an educational objective with all proceeds to benefit the student body.

People

One cannot observe WRE without commenting on the staff. The principal is a 40-year veteran of education who was born and raised in Whiteriver, where she has served as WRE's principal for the last 17 years. Among her many awards, she is a National Distinguished Principal. A frequent keynote speaker and presenter at local, state, and regional conferences and academies, the principal is a highly respected administrator and community member.

A central management team for WRE consists of the principal, assistant principal (and staff development coordinator), district federal projects manager, and family services coordinator. These four staff members have 61 years of combined experience in Whiteriver. Of the 40 teachers on staff, their tenure at WRE ranges from two years to 24 years; on average, teachers have ten years of experience at the school. Staff tenure (i.e., stability) appears to be a key element in the school's continuity of purpose.

New staff are often recruited as student teachers. The principal looks for innovative teachers who express a commitment to working in the community. A respect for the local culture, commitment to obtaining an ESL endorsement (if not already possessed), and appreciating the need for comprehensive service delivery are some desired traits for new instructors.

Formal and informal conversations with staff members as well as classroom observations indicate an extremely positive climate and, indeed, a child-centered philosophy. The evaluator had occasion to witness several serious and less serious incidents during site visits to the school, one of which concerned a student's aggressive and disruptive classroom behavior. The first reaction of the staff

members involved (teacher, assistant principal, and principal) was to wonder what happened in the child's life to prompt the outburst. Rather than taking a punitive approach (which the evaluator has observed in other schools on more than one occasion), the first thought was of the child's well-being.

Processes

Although there are many processes that are key to the success of WRE, this discussion focuses on how the school creates a customized comprehensive plan. This is the single plan that is used as a basis of action for *all* activities and funded projects in the school. The school plan evolves from an annual needs assessment (conducted by the district and each school in fulfillment of Chapter 1/Title I requirements). The annual needs assessment involves a review of annually-updated community and school demographic and student achievement data, the latter of which have been compiled over a ten-year period. In addition, an identical survey is administered to parents, teachers, teacher assistants, support staff, and administrative/ancillary staff.

For the past several years, the needs assessment has encompassed eight major categories of interest, each with specific topics. Categories are shown in Figure 11. Every respondent indicates which of the specific topics s/he would like to see addressed in the coming year (based on interest and need). If not on the list, respondents use an "Other" response provided in each category. The total number of responses for each item is tabulated to determine item priorities. Responses for all items in a category are summed up to determine category priorities.

Item and category priorities are calculated for each group of respondents (e.g., parents) and for each campus. Results of the needs assessment are then used by individual campus School Improvement Teams. The teams work with their principal and district federal projects director to develop implementation plans for their campus for the following school year. School-based priorities and implementation plans are then used at the district level to determine school budgets.

Figure 11

Whiteriver's Needs Assessment

- 1) **Cultural Enrichment** including: Arts/Crafts, History/Heritage, Tribal Government, Values, Food/Nutrition, Self-Esteem/Image, Literature/Library, Dance Groups/Music, and Field Trips.
- 2) **Counseling** including: Academic, Personal, Social, Career Development/Field Trips, Home/School Coordinator, Leadership Training, Youth Organization and Networking.
- 3) **Alcohol/Drug Education** including: Classroom Instruction, Referral/Prevention Programs, and Field Trips.
- 4) **Attendance Improvement** including: Dropout Prevention, Absenteeism Improvement, and Tardiness Prevention.
- 5) **Parent Involvement** including: Recruitment/Outreach Programs, Parent Involvement, Field Trip Participation, and Parent Resource Membership Pool.
- 6) **Academic Instruction** including: Basic Skills; Study Skills; Computer Education; Library Usage; Alternative Education; Native Language Proficiency; Tutoring in Math, Reading, Science, Language Arts, and/or Civics; Oral Language; Vocabulary; Arts; Gifted/Talented Program; Communication Skills; and Research Techniques.
- 7) **Summer Enrichment Classes** including: Basic Skills and Self-Help Workshops.
- 8) **Support Services** including: Transportation, Parental Costs, School Supplies, Health Services, Emergency Financial Aid/Referral, Sports Activities/Recreation, Community Methodologies, Media Center, and Staff Inservice.

It is important to point out that school-based priorities and plans drive the budgeting process rather than vice versa. That is, all too often, funding applications/program specifications appear to prescribe specific activities. In most cases, those who write the school's grants and applications are careful to keep within the parameters of specific program. Unfortunately, this single-program approach to proposal writing and development is a process that allows budgets to drive programs. New grants mean new programs, generally "tacked on" to an existing repertoire of services. This process can, and often does, result in fragmentation and duplication of effort—particularly when grants and proposals are developed by different individuals.

WRE staff do not conceptualize activities within the confines of funded-program guidelines and compliance issues. Of course personnel ensure that monies from targeted programs are used to serve targeted clients and fulfill program goals; however, programs do not evolve from program guidelines. Rather, they evolve from the annual needs analysis—with one eye on where they've been and the other on where they want to go. Their process captures the heart of what is meant by *continuous improvement*.

There is a "down side," however, to WRE's process. School personnel, especially the district federal projects director and administrative staff, must spend considerable time on budgeting and program-specific financial and programmatic accountability. This is because in order to demonstrate compliance, they are forced to dissect their holistic vision and implementation plan into pieces. One purpose of the proposed federal ESEA reauthorization is to circumvent such reporting and compliance obstacles and sanction the kind of process WRE already follows by allowing schools to leverage funds and implement schoolwide programs.

Practices and Partners

As discussed, comprehensive service delivery speaks to both an array of services and their integration. Through the years, White-river Elementary has developed a repertoire of services which are described in the sections that follow. Integration is largely a

function of the schoolwide approach that Whiteriver has taken in program planning and development. All services and programs are aligned with school goals; linkages with community agencies are unobtrusively in place as a result of channeling services through school-based personnel or via co-locating services on campus.

Student Education: All of the education practices that Whiteriver Elementary School employs are in keeping with the research-based practices discussed in Chapter Three. But as one staff member put it: "We prefer to make research than to cite it." WRE encourages innovation and creativity in teaching.

Developmentally appropriate practice is reinforced in all classrooms. The school offers a preschool for handicapped children and is linked with the tribally-administered Head Start program that serves about 200 children each year. All enrolled Head Start children's records are transferred to WRE during the transition summer between preschool and kindergarten. During this time, students are assessed and receive immunizations to ensure a smooth transition.

All of WRE's kindergartens are full day. The school has offered several multi-year classrooms (e.g., first-second grade) in the past and may do so again in the future. The multi-year format depends on teacher interest; teachers who wish to experiment with this format are encouraged and supported in doing so.

Because of the high incidence of limited English proficiency and low levels of developmental readiness, language and reading are emphasized throughout the curriculum, particularly in the early grades. A cornerstone of the language curriculum is Apache language instruction, and all children are assessed in Apache as well as English upon entering WRE. Formal instruction in Apache is offered in grades K-1; informal instruction continues through the fifth grade. All teachers have (or are expected to obtain) a Bilingual or ESL Endorsement during their tenure at WRE; teacher assistants and community elders help to provide Apache language instruction.

Computers are located in every K-3 classroom, and all WRE students spend time in the language and reading computer lab. Students receive individualized tutoring as necessary. Several teachers have been trained through the Collaborative Literacy Intervention Project (CLIP) as reading tutors; one is becoming certified as a CLIP trainer to work with other WRE staff members. Cross-age and peer tutoring are also employed.

WRE also places emphasis on math skills and employs Math Their Way and other instructional models which use manipulatives. Math and science teachers, especially those who receive staff development under the Title II Eisenhower program, work with other teachers to share ideas and develop curriculum.

WRE has an extensive and diverse extended-day program which offers activities that integrate academic skills with recreation and art at each grade level (K-5). After-school tutoring is provided to about 42 students each semester. Cultural arts, notably music and dancing, are thoroughly integrated into the regular curriculum and extended-day activities. Whiteriver's student dancers are renowned statewide. WRE students may also participate in photography classes; student photos, developed by the students themselves, decorate the school library and affirm student talent to students, staff, and visitors alike.

To every extent possible, WRE maintains class sizes in the low to mid-20s range. In order to lower the adult-student ratios, all classes have teacher aides. Full-time aides are employed in grades K-3; half-time aides work in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Aides and teachers work extensively with students individually and in small groups using techniques such as cooperative learning.

Finally, WRE annually offers regular and special education summer schools targeting students in grades K-3. During summer 1994, roughly 110 children enrolled, 50 of whom were special education students.

With the implementation of the *Arizona Student Assessment Program*, WRE and all district staff have been careful to align their schoolwide programs and plans with a particular goal in mind: student mastery of Arizona's *Essential Skills*. District criteria are in place for every assessment cluster for every grade. Furthermore, a copy of the District Assessment Plan (DAP) has been distributed and explained to every teacher in the district.

Family Involvement: WRE reinforces all five types of school-family connections discussed in Chapter Three (cf. Figure 6, page 28). Program funds from several sources are pooled in order to employ a full time *district* family liaison; WRE also uses program funds to support a school-based family services coordinator, who is also a licensed social worker and counselor. The family services coordinator brokers and provides a range of services to parents and family members, and staffs a parent resource room.

Family involvement typically entails school outreach efforts, school-based involvement and participation, and family education and training. In the area of school outreach, the parent resource room has a library of home activity learning kits for parents to use with their children. The school regularly uses radio broadcasts (in Apache as well as English) to communicate public service announcements and to conduct parent education programs. And, home visits are not uncommon. Although generally conducted by the family services coordinator and/or district family liaison, WRE teachers also make home visits. Many do so in response to problem situations that occur during the school year; others voluntarily visit all parents of children assigned to their classrooms as a way to establish rapport.

Regarding school-based involvement and participation, WRE maintains a very active Parent Advisory Council (PAC) that meets monthly. The PAC is comprised of one parent representative per classroom—39 parents (36 regular K-5 classrooms; 3 special education), plus alternates. WRE practices site-based management, with the PAC having decision-making input and authority on all programs implemented at WRE. As one staff member put it: "Everything goes through the PAC."

In the area of family education and training, WRE offers or sponsors parenting classes, parent universities, topical workshops, and family literacy programs. Some classes are offered in conjunction with Northland Pioneer College, where WRE's family services coordinator is also an adjunct faculty member.

Social Support/Economic Services for Children and Families:

The integration of social support/economic services at WRE happens as a function of all of the strategies noted in Chapter Three, i.e., brokering services, case managing services, locating services, and building capacity. Most of this integration occurs as a function of having a highly qualified social worker-counselor who acts as the family services coordinator. The family services coordinator is the person who brokers, case manages, provides services on site, and works toward increasing the school's capacity to provide support services by working with and training other WRE staff in crisis intervention and counseling techniques.

The family services coordinator maintains linkages with a variety of on-and-off reservation social service/economic service providers. Families can be connected with vocational training and ESL-/GED classes and can request economic support as needed (e.g., food stamps, energy assistance, public housing, food/clothing banks, shelters). The district parent liaison assists in identifying families in need.

Many connections with social/economic support services happen as a result of the child service coordinator's participation on the reservation-wide Child Protective Team (CPT). The CPT is comprised of representatives from the schools, FBI Criminal Investigations Unit, Indian Health Services (IHS), Tribal Guidance, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Tribal Social Services, and police department. The team reviews approximately 20-30 cases each week. Cases which involve physical abuse, sexual abuse, and severe neglect receive top priority. The CPT recommends a course of action and follows up, using case management.

Other support services are conducted in cooperation with the Whiteriver Police Department (WPD). Recently, a WPD officer was assigned as a district liaison to work with schools regarding incidents of vandalism and more serious offenses such as rape. The WPD also offers the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, and works with school personnel in gang prevention and intervention programs.

Health Services for Children and Families: Mental and physical health are important issues to WRE staff who have actively pursued the development of an integrated approach to health issues as part of their comprehensive plan. WRE links health services with the school through both screening and referrals and through the provision of limited primary care (cf. Figure 9, page 33).

Behavioral health, in particular, is a critical issue on the reservation considering the incidence of family violence, substance abuse, and teen suicide. In response, the school has a fully integrated substance abuse curriculum, supplemented by other educational programs. DARE and BABES (Beginning Alcohol & Addictions Basic Education Studies)² are the most prominent supplemental curricular components for dealing with behavioral and mental health issues.

Also in the area of behavioral health, the family services coordinator is a licensed counselor and is "on call" for campus/district emergencies as well as for scheduled family or individual counseling. The coordinator counsels roughly 25 parents on a regular basis, and provides referrals for a number of others. Many other behavioral health issues are brought to light through CPT referrals. The family service coordinator's participation on this team is invaluable in the sense that the coordinator understands the nature of behavioral health issues confronting WRE students and tries to ensure that these students and their teachers are properly supported in dealing with these issues.

For children and their families seriously affected by substance abuse, WRE has initiated a child and family "After-School Intervention Program for Severely At-Risk and Substance Abusers."

This substance abuse grant-funded program requires parental participation, as it is designed explicitly for children and families in crisis. The program currently serves 25 children and their families. Children receive intensive academic support and counseling, and also participate in activities such as art therapy and physical education. Parents also receive counseling and parenting skills education. The program is staffed by WRE's Assistant Principal and family services coordinator, and an additional licensed counselor.

Regarding health maintenance and wellness issues, WRE takes several paths. The school employs a full-time registered nurse and nurse's aide who, among other duties, ensure that every child is screened (e.g., height, weight, vision, hearing). As in many schools, basic health maintenance is reinforced through programs such as "Swish-and-Spit," a weekly oral hygiene exercise, and adherence to guidelines established by the Arizona Department of Education's Comprehensive Health Unit (e.g., pertaining to school nutrition).

WRE also has aggressively pursued linkages and outside funding to support health-related programs on and off the WRE campus. Beginning in FY 1993-94, the Indian Health Services placed two pediatricians on campus, twice weekly. The doctors gave complete physical examinations, including immunizations, to all second and fifth graders. Second grade is a mid-grade at WRE; fifth grade is the last grade served. Incoming kindergartners are required to have inoculations and enter school, as much as possible, with a "healthy start." A physical examination in second grade is viewed as a good "status check," while a physical in fifth grade ensures that any health problems are noted before children leave WRE.

The pediatricians, as well as WRE staff, have identified obesity as a health threat for older children and younger adolescents. Considering the rates of heart disease and diabetes, early efforts to curb obesity receive some attention. The school/district received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, through which they serve as a research site for John Hopkins University, to plan and implement a multi-faceted program that links hospitals, schools,

and tribal agencies in the fight against obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. It is anticipated that the program will review school nutrition and implement new health programs in the classrooms. A staff health position may be funded to help implement the program and coordinate with other efforts. One other effort is the Tribal Health Fitness Program, a tribally-funded (partly through IHS) after-school fitness program staffed by tribal health personnel.

WRE is a partner in another tribal grant proposal—Healthy Nations—also funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This proposal seeks to implement a prenatal and infant care program through the tribal guidance center, IHS, and public school system. The Whiteriver Unified District already is involved in maternal and child care issues at the higher grade levels and in the community. WRE's family services coordinator teaches a "Peg-inning Life" class for pregnant teens and teen mothers through Northland Pioneer College.

One last health-related program attests to the incidence of violence against children on the reservation. The IHS has initiated a "Safe Clinic" for victims of sexual abuse, ranging from infancy to adulthood. This community-based clinic, staffed by a physician, social worker, and psychologist, conducts forensic physical examinations and provides crisis counseling and treatment.

Professional Development: As noted in Chapter Three, a key element of a successful professional development program is that *teachers are actively involved in setting their own professional goals*. This is certainly a key element of WRE's professional development program. At the beginning of each school year, all teachers are requested to complete a brief questionnaire indicating their professional development needs and interests. For example, they are asked what kinds of curriculum they might want to see developed, what inservice interests they, what conferences they want to attend, whether or not they would like a classroom demonstration, and so forth. Should their needs/interests change, they may submit a new questionnaire at any point in time. Throughout the year, teachers' interests are matched with different kinds of opportunities by the staff development coordinator. This coordina-

tor also aligns requests for professional development with school goals and the annual school improvement theme.

WRE's staff development specialist is a master teacher as well as the school's assistant principal. As the staff development specialist, she coordinates most of the professional development activities for WRE teachers, including all of the strategies discussed in Chapter Three (cf. Figure 10, page 37). In this role, she maintains records of who received what, when, and where, and what happens as a result. As much as possible, WRE maximizes professional training by investing in a trainer-of-trainers concept. One teacher is fully trained (oftentimes off the reservation) and is then expected to serve as an on-campus trainer for other interested WRE faculty members. This has resulted in a number of staff with particular areas of expertise to share.

As a master teacher and qualified university instructor, the assistant principal teaches many of the ESL classes offered to district personnel. As noted earlier, all WRE staff are required to be bilingually or ESL certified, and the assistant principal provides much of this college-credit instruction.

Yet another WRE approach to staff development—called the "Gift of Time"—is documented thoroughly in *Promising Practices for At-Risk Youth: Blueprints for Success* (Vandegrift, Greene & Heffernon, 1993). Very briefly, this involves grade level and individual planning days—literally, a gift of time. Support staff substitute for teachers on these days, during which they have time to dialogue, reflect, develop units and plans, and otherwise "recharge their batteries."

Teaching techniques and strategies are reinforced in many ways (e.g. master teacher mentoring). For example, the main office houses several filing cabinets of information packets on various topics (e.g., positive disciplinary techniques) assembled primarily by the principal and assistant principal. Whenever a classroom or teaching problem is identified, a teacher may request or be given his/her own information packet with research about and tips for dealing with that problem. At Whiteriver Elementary, positive

reinforcement is a byword not just for students, but for professional staff as well.

Teacher professionalism is likewise nurtured and supported at WRE. Notably, for the 48 certified teachers at WRE, there are no less than 15 school and/or district-based committees on which teachers voluntarily serve—many on two. Teachers have considerable input and decision-making authority. This truly results in a sense of team spirit and collaboration.

Teacher aides are included in professional development activities. Aides receive instruction through partnerships and intergovernmental agreements with Arizona State University and Northland Pioneer College.

Although professional development focuses on curriculum and instruction, teachers are also trained in health issues (e.g., otitis media), substance abuse, AIDS, and other topics. Every teacher "knows what to look for in terms of substance abuse" and is familiar with the resources available to them and the students for any number of social, economic, and health problems. Furthermore, over half of the teachers have been trained in CPR and emergency medical treatment procedures. In short, professional development activities support the delivery of comprehensive services.

One last unique element at WRE is the principal's weekly, self-prepared newsletter called the *Weekly Word!* The *Word*, which averages five to ten pages, serves multiple functions. It is a wonderful vehicle for sharing information, demonstrating appreciation, and reinforcing new learning.

The newsletter provides a day-to-day schedule of events for a given week. Meetings, special assemblies, special visitors to campus, and so on, are listed for each day, along with staff birthday congratulations. The *Word* also contains "Announcements" such as the availability of funds and other resources and materials, notifications of deadlines, conference announcements, or anything else that might be of interest. A "Bouquets" page celebrates

noteworthy personal and professional accomplishments of students and staff. A "Professional Growth" section is included to share exemplary articles, research, staff members' thematic units, and other illustrations of "good practice." Other information is presented ad hoc. For example, new titles in WRE's staff-developed "Thematic Unit Library" are regularly included "FYI." Complimentary letters are reproduced in the *Word*. In short, teachers are given access to *all* information that is vital to informed decision-making and participatory management.

Comprehensive Programs = Comprehensive Outcomes

Comprehensive programs imply comprehensive goals which in turn, imply multiple program outcomes. Student achievement is a key outcome, but it is not the only measure of program success. No matter how good an academic program might be, student scores are susceptible to many influences outside of school (cf. Chapter Three). When faced with formidable student "life circumstances," comprehensive programming—at best—can mitigate but not eradicate their influence. Comprehensive goals, multiple program outcomes, and modest achievement scores are all evidenced at WRE.

Student achievement outcome data are collected annually by WRE, and analyzed over time. Tests of academic achievement prior to ASAP (i.e., California Achievement Test, Iowa Test of Basic Skills) indicate that all students in grades K-5 have made and are making steady developmental progress (as evidenced by grade equivalent scores). Even so, WRE's norm-referenced achievement scores are not at the level that school staff and state officials would like them to be. Students tend to perform at or below grade level. The reality is that most students enter school delayed developmentally, and recouping the loss is a constant challenge. Considering the barriers facing Whiteriver students, one can only surmise that scores would be even lower without the services provided by the school. In the meantime, the school provides a safe and educationally sound environment for children.

The positive impacts of this environment are indicated by measures of success other than norm-referenced achievement scores. More children and families are receiving social, economic, and health services than in the past. Retention rates have decreased and attendance rates have risen. Program records and parent surveys indicate increased levels of positive parent involvement and satisfaction with services. Staff achievements are documented and evidenced in the classroom.

Based on the most recent "cumulative file review for ESL programs" (June 1992), WRE's records show the highest percentage of students who are limited English proficient of all four Whiteriver Unified schools (as determined by scores on the Language Assessment Scale, or LAS). Of WRE students reassessed using the LAS, 46 percent went from non-proficient to proficient. This stands in comparison to the district average of 42 percent reassessed as proficient (ranging from a low of 26 percent at one school to a high of 49 percent at another). WRE's achievements in increasing English proficiency may be related to the fact that of all four Whiteriver schools, more WRE teachers are fully or provisionally certified in ESL than in any other school.

In closing, WRE staff describe their program as "a comprehensive program which is symbiotic in nature." By this, they refer to the fact that all district, state, and federal programs are integrated to meet school improvement (as well as individual program) goals. Project administration teams (e.g., the principal and director of special services) ensure program linkages. Thoughtful program planning prevents fragmentation; clear and frequent communication at all levels helps prevent friction. In short, staff maintain a united effort to ensure that all programs, services, and linkages will ultimately have a positive impact on students—not just in terms of achievement scores, but in terms of improving their quality of life.



Villa Oasis Interscholastic Center for Education: Crafting Comprehensive Services

The Villa Oasis Interscholastic Center for Education (VOICE) is a newly established accommodation school located in the heart of rural Pinal County. VOICE is a countywide alternative program intended to serve dropouts, court-referred adjudicated youth, and other "at-risk" students referred from county schools. Currently a day program targeting 60 students, a main goal of the program is to provide intensive academic, vocational, and support services until such time as students can be transitioned back to/reenrolled in their home schools. County officials hope that VOICE will eventually extend services to include residential and evening programs serving students and their families.

An alternative school is a welcome resource for Pinal County residents. For the nearly one-third of residents who are school-age children, county statistics paint a bleak picture. Since 1980, increased rates for 17 out of 23 social, economic, and education indicators suggest worsening conditions for children. For example, one of every three school-age children in Pinal County lives in poverty; reported incidents of child abuse have risen by 17 percent in the last three years alone; and juvenile arrests, including those for violent crimes, have increased.³

Educationally, student achievement is at or below the state average on the state ASAP assessments and county dropout rates exceed state averages for all groups except Hispanic youth. Over one-fourth of all African American and Native American youth drop out of school. Nearly half of the county's children receive free or reduced lunches.⁴

Pinal County has a history of attempting to reverse such negative trends and improve the economic prosperity of its children and the county as a whole. For example, a visionary project known as the "Pinal County Prevention Partnership" was initiated in 1988. Intended as collaborative countywide effort to coordinate comprehensive service delivery through the schools, the Partnership united educators, social services, and health care providers using a

school-based/school-linked case management model. Ground-breaking work towards implementing Family Resource Centers was a part of this effort; to date, at least eight of these centers operate on or near school sites.

During this same time period, the Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project for grades 7-12 funded the Pinal County Consortium, comprised of eight county districts and one school. This school was the Central Arizona Alternative School (CAAS). Housed in a trailer (later two) located on the Central Arizona College campus, CAAS served dropouts and other school- and self-referred students from the cities of Casa Grande, Coolidge, and Eloy.

For many reasons (e.g., turfdom, fiscal management, logistics), the Partnership—as conceptualized—never came to fruition, although a network of service providers who share a vision continues to be active and visible. Similarly, primarily due to governance and fiscal management issues, CAAS was forced to close in spring 1992 in spite of its reputation as a needed and successful community resource.

In one sense, VOICE is a reincarnation of CAAS insofar as: 1) both can be characterized as countywide alternative programs, and 2) the principal/director of VOICE held the same position at CAAS. In another sense, VOICE has its own unique identity, stemming from new and participatory county leadership with fresh perspectives on the issues.

VOICE is located one-half mile off of the main interstate connecting Phoenix and Tucson, just outside of Eloy, Arizona. The focal point of the 11-acre campus—known originally as Villa Santa Cruz—is a two story, southwestern-styled stucco building complete with red-tiled roof and courtyard. Built in 1916, the Villa (as it is called) and its adjacent facilities have served as a private residence, hotel, and medical clinic. From 1964-89, it was a private school under headmaster John Steinbeck, son of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author. Owned by the Steinbeck family, the Villa was unoccupied for four years until its purchase by Pinal County Schools in August 1993.

In one year, VOICE has established the core elements of a comprehensive service delivery system for at-risk youth. The section that follows summarizes the results of VOICE's evolution.

Philosophy

VOICE's mission statement is as follows:

Villa Oasis Interscholastic Center for Education (VOICE) is a program of the Pinal County School Superintendent's Office which provides academic/vocational education and social skills training in a safe, supportive environment. VOICE serves families with youth grades 7-12 at risk of not completing their secondary education, and seeks the empowerment of students through the development of skills essential to responsible, independent living.

The mission statement clearly communicates the philosophy of comprehensive service delivery by integrating academic, vocational and life skills. Notably, the mission statement specifies the kind of environment that the Villa represents. VOICE is not about "fixing children"; it is about creating an educational and nurturing haven for disenfranchised youth with histories of academic failure.

The principal/director has a personal philosophy which lends itself to ensuring a "safe, supportive environment." By word and deed, this philosophy is communicated to staff and students alike:

If a man has a hundred sheep, and one becomes lost, shouldn't he leave the ninety and nine and go into the mountains and find that which is lost? And if he should find it, he will rejoice more over that sheep than over the ninety and nine which did not become lost. Let not one of these little ones perish.⁵

The significance of this philosophy lies in its compassion toward troubled adolescents, who are often viewed less empathetically. The point is that most youth in trouble—like most people—respond

to intervention strategies, including firm and fair discipline, as long as they feel cared for and valued as individuals.

People

There are many key people in Pinal County who were and continue to be involved in developing VOICE. However, as with any new idea, someone must take the lead in promoting it. In this case, a newly elected county school superintendent became committed to developing a countywide alternative program. He was joined in this effort by other Pinal County School Office (PCSO) staff, notably a new assistant superintendent (formerly the superintendent of one of the smaller, rural school districts in Pinal County). Together, they recruited the former director and principal of CAAS to become part of the planning effort.

Despite the uncertainty of the venture at the time, the principal/director accepted the challenge to help create VOICE. She resigned as principal at another school to pursue her interest in working with at-risk youth. With 22 years of experience as a special education teacher, school principal, and program administrator, the director/principal developed an interest in alternative education early in her career. She initiated CAAS as one of the first alternative programs in Arizona to be located on a community college campus, i.e., non-affiliated with a traditional, comprehensive high school campus. She is a 30-year resident of Arizona, the last ten of which have been spent in Pinal County.

School staff are one of the most important elements of the "people equation" for a successful program. The VOICE administrative team is committed to recruiting the "right" people to work with their unique and multiculturally diverse student body. The school began serving students in January 1994 with four full-time certified teachers. One teacher was replaced mid-semester because the "fit" was not right. The midterm replacement teacher and one other will continue at VOICE for the coming year. The two other teachers are not returning for the 1994-95 school year for personal reasons; three new teachers have been recruited. Time will tell the staff's role in creating an "effective" program.

Processes

In beginning to craft a comprehensive system, *process* is fundamental. Formative processes related to garnering public support, establishing governance and financing, and program development were critical and have evolved in detail since early 1993.

This section analyzes just one of the processes involved in establishing VOICE, namely, how the PCSO created community "buy-in." Creating buy-in is one of many complementary processes that contribute to program success. Failure to attend to such processes often helps explain why some programs never quite come together.

In formative work, whether one is starting a new school or a new program, creating buy-in is a critical, somewhat elusive, and often-neglected process. Buy-in means personally investing in an idea...advocacy and commitment...a willingness to sustain support over the long haul. Fostering buy-in implies valuing community input and being willing to act on this input. Creating buy-in, by nature, is a participatory process.

Beginning in March 1993, county educators, social service and health agency personnel, juvenile justice representatives, local government officials, and other interested parties were invited to share their ideas for the kind of program they felt would best benefit county youth. Discussions dealt with a wide range of topics. Should a program be for younger or older adolescents? Should Villa Oasis be used as a residential facility (since dormitory facilities are on campus)? If so, could it serve as a facility for homeless children? Pregnant teens? Youth transitioning from detention facilities? Who would staff the facility? How would it be financed? Wouldn't a new program duplicate the dropout prevention and intervention efforts of established county schools and compete for money, thus "taking away" from other educational programs?

Not everyone agreed as to what the Villa's intent should be. Some thought the program should target emotionally and behaviorally disturbed youth; some felt that it should be a facility for adjudicated youth; some felt that it should be for dropouts.

In part, answers to these questions were sought through public hearings and community meetings. However, this more participatory approach to program planning had its down side. According to one of the planners, when the superintendent presented the idea for an alternative program to the community:

In some cases he met very, very strong support and in other respects he met strong opposition. And the biggest concern for the public was that whenever he was asked 'What is your program going to be?', there wasn't a definite answer. And the reason there wasn't was because he didn't know. He didn't want to have the program drive the children, but have the children drive the program. And to this day, that's still a problem because we are not even what we started off to be.

Moreover, as one person recalled, "When [the superintendent] went to the County Board of Supervisors to ask for approval to purchase Villa Oasis, there were people who stood up and begged the county to purchase this facility for an alternative program for children and then there were people who stood up and just said, 'We don't want these delinquents and criminals in our community.'"

Many of the public's questions and concerns were echoed by county school superintendents. Early efforts were undertaken to work with these superintendents to ensure a program would be designed to supplement, rather than supplant, ongoing county alternative efforts. A needs assessment was designed and distributed to all county schools. Questions addressed:

- ▲ populations of students *not* being served (i.e., suspended/expelled students and dropouts) and reasons for suspension, expulsion, or dropping out of school;
- ▲ the kinds of alternative programs currently in place in county schools and their logistics (e.g., when and where offered);
- ▲ the kinds of programs and/or services the Villa could provide to complement district efforts; and
- ▲ advice on policies and procedures to best link Villa services and programs with feeder schools.

Furthermore, PSCO staff designed publicity brochures and disseminated this information to every member of the Arizona House and Senate Education Committees, the Governor and several of his key staff members, and local representatives. Information was sent to private Arizona foundations and national organizations. Newspaper articles were written. In short, PSCO staff used every channel available to them to spread the word about plans for Villa Oasis.

As a result of community input, the Villa was designed to serve students not being served elsewhere. The Villa reviews applications and conducts interviews with dropouts, at-risk students referred by county schools, and court-referred adjudicated youth. Initially, it is targeting 60 of the county's most at-risk youth.

Over time, a cadre of people emerged as actively committed to seeing through the development and implementation of an alternative program, and became the initial Steering Committee for the Villa. This committee involved a variety of community members including county educators, social service providers, juvenile justice representatives, and a parent whose child had attended CAAS. Meetings were facilitated by PSCO staff.

This core group helped to develop VOICE's mission statement and has provided input and guidance on a variety of school programmatic and procedural issues. As of fall 1994, the group has

evolved into an Advisory Board which acts much like a site-based management team. They do not have full decision-making authority. Ultimately, the county superintendent is accountable for the fiscal and legal management of the Villa. They do, however, advise PSCO staff on a variety of issues pertaining to the Villa's day-to-day operations.

Practices and Partners

In starting the VOICE, the student body is purposely small (less than 60) and services are intensive. What is striking about VOICE is the number of programs and services in place after such a short period of time, and the number of additional programs and services in planning stages. Because VOICE is committed to creating a "safety net" for at-risk students, and because staff fundamentally recognize that they "can't do it alone," a variety of partnerships and programs have been established to create and maintain a positive environment. Program design is predicated on past experiences and research-based practices (cf. Figure 5, page 24). The following sections capture a part of what has been achieved through coordinated and collaborative efforts.

Student Education: VOICE's academic program is designed to ensure that students have multiple opportunities to succeed. VOICE students are individually assessed using the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) upon entry into the program. Small class sizes, accelerated and self-paced learning, and tutoring, are all research-based strategies employed to individualize and customize instruction. For FY 1994-95, a computer lab will also be available and used to supplement student instruction.

Where does one begin in planning an academic program?—with the basics. VOICE offers instruction in four areas:

- ▲ English (Applied Communication for the Work Environment, English Literature, and English Composition);
- ▲ Math (General Math, Applied Math, Algebra/Geometry);

- ▲ History (World History/Geography, American History/ Geography, Free Enterprise/Government); and
- ▲ Electives including Physical Fitness, Career Planning and Work Experience, Study Skills and Test Taking, Drama, Culture Appreciation, Journalism, and Teen Issues.

Many of the subject areas are team taught or coordinated between instructors to ensure an applied and integrated focus. All subject areas emphasize practical applications in the "real world."

Electives provide more than academic balance. Students, by their choice of electives (i.e., personal interests), are assigned to a "Personal Success" group which meets for the first 20 minutes of each day. A kind of homeroom, the Personal Success learning/discussion groups are facilitated by an academic instructor and provide for taking attendance, making announcements, and exchanging ideas and concerns. According to VOICE staff, "Personal Success will serve as a 'family group' within the school setting, providing not only academic incentive but also emotional support, encouragement, and the building of self-esteem."

Students are required to study two core content subjects and one elective for intense eight-week sessions. Classes are 90 minutes in length. This format—two eight-week sessions of three subjects each—equals one traditional semester of six subjects. The short session scheme allows for more frequent awarding of credit, which helps instill in students a sense of accomplishment.

VOICE has expanded its offerings for FY 1994-95 to include more vocational instruction and training. In concert with the Eloy Chamber of Commerce, the Junior Achievement curriculum, which integrates history and math, will be taught. Junior Achievement will provide the student workbooks, teacher manuals, and curriculum and provide the classroom instruction (a private industry volunteer, once per week).

In addition, in partnership with JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act), the local community college, and local businesses, plans are for younger students to participate in "job shadowing" or volunteer work experience. Students over the age of 16 will be eligible to participate in two days each week of on-site work experience for credit. Plans are to include apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities. Tentative commitments have been procured from the following employers:

- ▲ Through Holiday Inn and Central Arizona College, students may receive hotel/motel management training and apprenticeships.
- ▲ Casa Grande Regional Medical Center may offer training and job experience in health care careers.
- ▲ Evergreen Air Park may assist in training skilled sheet metal workers.
- ▲ Ross Laboratories may train participants for manufacturing jobs and quality control.
- ▲ Frito-Lay may offer job training in product development and distribution.

Family Involvement: VOICE staff are only too aware that many of the students referred to them come from economically deprived and/or dysfunctional families. They are also aware, through previous experience, of how difficult it can be to solicit family support for older youth who are often perceived, and characterize themselves, as chronic troublemakers.

Nonetheless, parents/guardians are involved in initial interviews leading to placement in the Villa Oasis program, and are kept apprised of student progress through frequent communiques. Beyond this, the VOICE Advisory Committee, PCSO, and staff have instituted the following program goal:

90% of the students will have a family member/guardian involved in the VOICE education program on a monthly basis.

To this end, multiple strategies are being put into place to accomplish two main objectives. First, it is the intent that every enrolled student's family will have information about and access to desired services and programs. This objective will be met by having a family-school liaison who will interview families and use a case management approach for matching family needs with appropriate resources (e.g., economic assistance, GED preparation/Adult Education, vocational training, parenting classes, family counseling). Currently, plans are for the Arizona Department of Economic Security to help fund this position and co-locate the worker on the VOICE campus. The family-school liaison will be a licensed counselor/social worker obtained through the Pinal Hispanic Council. The Council will contribute to the salary.

Second, VOICE intends to actively recruit family participation in school events. A parent newsletter and school calendar will be mailed, and staff plan to personally contact parents (e.g., phone calls, notes, home visits). From past experience, the principal/director notes that many parents of "at-risk" youth are only contacted when a student has violated an academic or behavioral code of conduct. In contrast, VOICE emphasizes contacting parents when the student has accomplished something noteworthy (e.g., attendance). VOICE plans regularly scheduled recognition ceremonies and other social events that celebrate accomplishments, not failure.

Furthermore, once the school's computer lab is up and running, it is hoped that some educational services can be provided to parents and family members by opening the lab for community use in the evenings.

Social Support/Economic Services for Children and Families:

Social support/economic services for families will be provided using a case management approach coordinated primarily by the DES family-school liaison. Otherwise, there are multiple pathways for providing social/economic support to students. Personal Suc-

cess groups, integrated academic and vocational instruction (including tutoring and mentoring), and counseling (see Health Services below) are some of the services offered.

One unique type of social support is provided by a very special partnership. By way of explanation, the Villa Oasis structure is an historic and beautiful facility with considerable space. At present, not all of the facility is used for educational programs, and therefore, there is room for other organizations.

The Sunland Visitor Center, staffed by senior citizens, provides tourist information to passers-by traveling on I-17. Formerly housed in another facility, the Center relocated to an area of the Villa that is easily accessible to the public (without coming directly onto the campus). VOICE students can volunteer to work at the Visitor Center, and are mentored by the senior citizens. Additionally, several of these seniors have volunteered extra services at the school (e.g., one helps in the school office; two help serve breakfast). It is a reciprocal partnership with mutual benefits to students and the senior citizens alike.

In addition, the Pinal County Juvenile Court Services has leased part of the Villa to house six full-time employees: one secretary, three probation officers (POs), and two field officers. Although not all of the clients are VOICE students, co-locating court-managed support services at the Villa makes sense because of the number of referred students attending the school.

The three probation officers provide intensive probation services for youth considered "one step away from the Department of Corrections" (e.g., those at risk for continued criminal activities such as burglary). POs typically carry a case load of 15 students (not all of whom are Villa enrollees) with whom they meet an average of four times each week. Field officers handle about 60 cases and serve as a liaison between students and services. They are responsible for youth "two steps away from DOC" (e.g., those with curfew violations; driving under the influence).

Health Services for Children and Families: Most, if not all, students arrive at the Villa with histories involving trouble at school, at home, or with the law. Many students are adjudicated youth referred by Pinal County Juvenile Court Services. Many have substance abuse problems. Some are teen parents or pregnant teens. Almost all have low self-esteem. Therefore, mental and behavioral health are emphasized at VOICE.

Besides the Personal Success groups, all students participate in weekly individual and/or small group counseling sessions. The Pinal-Gila Behavioral Health Authority, through its regional provider—the Pinal-Gila Hispanic Council (PHC)—has located one full-time mental health counselor on the VOICE campus. The counselor provides crisis intervention, one-on-one and small group counseling, and co-teaches a class on "Life Skills." This class provides basic instruction in everyday issues such as balancing a checkbook, organizing a grocery shopping list, applying for a driver's license, interpreting rental/lease agreements, and buying on credit. In addition, issues such as time management and conflict resolution will be explored.

The PHC counselor also spends one day each week at clinical staffings. At these regional meetings of PHC counselors, each counselor may discuss up to five case files for group problem-solving. PHC also has a contract with Juvenile Justice to conduct urine analyses as part of the treatment and counseling intervention for youth referred by the courts.

Other health partnerships have been established with a county Rural Health Outreach program, family resource centers in Eloy, Coolidge, and Casa Grande, and a teen parenting program (TAP) administered through the Coolidge Unified District. These partnerships link eligible students with substance abuse counseling and services, prenatal health care, teen parenting programs, nursery and preschool services, and other physical health services.

Professional Development: The VOICE administrative team is strongly committed to professional development and to fostering the professionalism of VOICE staff. During the first semester of operations (January 1994 - June 1994), a variety of speakers from agency partners were brought in to speak with VOICE staff and provide training. During summer 1994, a VOICE team also attended the annual, week-long, ADE-sponsored "At-Risk Academy."

There was, however, considerable staff turnover during summer 1994. Therefore, professional development activities began anew for the FY 1994-95 school year. Teachers received two weeks of inservice on topics including integrating *Arizona Essential Skills* and the Arizona Student Assessment Program into lesson planning and the curriculum, fostering student self-esteem, conflict resolution, and the workings of the juvenile justice system in Pinal County. With the installation of a new computer lab, all staff also received hands-on training with the hardware and software that will be used to supplement student instruction.

An inevitable challenge for most alternative programs is maintaining classroom discipline. Although the Villa has a no-nonsense philosophy regarding student behavior, it also promotes sensitivity toward students and the use of positive disciplinary strategies that encourage students to reflect on and modify their own behavior. For the 1994-95 school year, the school has adopted a specific goal for all teachers to consistently and positively reinforce expectations for student behavior and to follow a process for dealing with behavioral problems.

This process includes an initial student warning in conference with the student. As appropriate, the PHC counselor and parents/guardians may be contacted. Depending upon the nature of the offense, a student warning may or may not include detention (either during lunch or after school). Repeated behavioral problems result in a sequence of progressively severe consequences—from referrals to a multidisciplinary study team and intervention, to short-term suspension, to termination.

The principal/director and PHC counselor will follow up on training and provide ongoing support to teachers throughout the year. The counselor will assist staff to deal positively with students. The principal/director will review staff lesson plans and provide feedback, bring in speakers to reinforce ideas and expand upon them, and hold weekly staff meetings that encourage reflection and dialogue. Student staffings, or "team meetings," are also held weekly and involve teachers and adjunct staff (e.g., the family-school liaison, juvenile justice workers, PHC counselor) in discussing specific students and their diverse needs.

Finally, teachers may request personal support and training as needed or desired and efforts are made to accommodate these requests.

Other Community Partnerships and Linkages: The Villa has multiple partnerships and linkages that do not fit neatly into the previous discussions, but are nonetheless worth noting.

▲ Needless to say, funding a brand-new school was an initial challenge. The Villa campus was purchased and facilities restored; staff were hired; materials were obtained. One obvious partnership exists between the Villa and the office of the Pinal County School Superintendent. The PCSO is the fiscal manager for the school and provides overall leadership for its continuing development. Additionally, the PCSO provided a vehicle for the Villa, and county maintenance workers did and continue to perform considerable repair work. The county superintendent successfully petitioned to establish the Villa as an accommodation school beginning in FY 1994-95, thus ensuring a continued source of revenue for its operations through a small levy countywide.

▲ Partnerships are also in place with the county schools that refer students to the Villa. These schools transport their own students, and pay tuition until such time as students are transitioned back to the home school.

▲ The Toltec Elementary District (serving students in grades K-8) is located within a mile of the Villa. Until the Villa's kitchen facilities are renovated, the Toltec Elementary District is providing breakfast and lunch to Villa students (for a fee). Meals are transported to the Villa campus.

▲ The Villa also has a partnership with a Pinal County Special Education vocational training program. Older special education students regularly come to the Villa to provide custodial services. They receive training; the Villa receives free custodial services.

▲ The Villa also has a full time VISTA worker who, in addition to working in the school office, recruits volunteers and coordinates volunteer efforts on campus.

▲ The Villa has established a partnership with the Casa Grande-based "Seeds of Hope--Project YES," a community-based organization's youth community service project. Students performing community service do grounds maintenance at the Villa and project staff hold their weekly counseling group on the Villa campus.

▲ Villa grounds include the Smoketree Residential Lodge which provides dormitory-style housing for up to 25 persons. The Lodge is adjacent to a conference center and meeting facility complete with stage. These facilities are available for lease to community agencies, schools, and other interested parties. To date, the county has leased the facilities to hold a student leadership retreat, gifted mini-camp, and science olympiad.

Not only does leasing facilities generate revenue for the Villa, but using facilities for multiple purposes helps establish Villa Oasis as a multi-faceted community resource, not just an alternative school.

A Successful Venture?

If success was defined solely on the basis of how many initiatives had been put into place in a short period of time, there is no doubt that the Villa could be considered successful. Ultimately, however, its track record with students will be its most important testimony.

For its first semester of operations (January 1994-June 1994), 58 students were enrolled at VOICE. Thirty-eight of these students (65.5 percent) successfully completed credits and were transitioned back to their home schools or were promoted from eighth grade. An additional 8 students are returning to the Villa in fall 1994, remaining enrolled in school. These successful outcomes account for 79 percent of the student body. Of the remaining 12 students, six dropped out of school; 6 were referred back to their home school for failure to attend. In dealing with the county's most at-risk youth, a 79 percent success rate is a good start.

Although successful transitions are the primary measure of VOICE's success, staff recognize that multiple indicators of success are necessary for continuous improvement. They have created other program goals that address grade-level completion, attendance, and conduct and discipline. Additionally, each student is expected to be able to articulate his/her personal academic and vocational goals.

As noted in the section on parent involvement, VOICE has a parent involvement goal which complements program goals, and a goal for staff as well: To provide a consistently responsible, professional role model for students. In concert with the Advisory Committee, staff are determining/implementing appropriate methods for evaluating each of these goals. These measures will be supplemented by case management tracking records and independent evaluations conducted by support service personnel/agencies.



MORE STORIES FROM THE FIELD

In addition to Whiteriver Elementary School and Villa Oasis Interscholastic Center for Education, Morrison Institute analysts studied three other schools and their comprehensive delivery systems. Somerton Primary School, located near the U.S.-Mexico border, serves students in grades K-2 and their families. Machan School serves students in grades K-6 in inner-city Phoenix. And, Apache Junction Unified District offers multiple interventions for at-risk youth in grades 7-12.

For the most part, the student educational components of these schools reflect many of the same research-based strategies described in the Whiteriver and VOICE profiles. Rather than repeat much of the same information, although each school has customized strategies to match the unique needs of its respective populations, this section focuses a bit more in-depth on a specific component of each school's comprehensive service delivery system. Somerton Primary's **Family Involvement** component is profiled. Machan School's **Professional Development** component is described. Finally, Apache Junction's **Support Services** (social, economic, health) are outlined.

Parent/Family Involvement in the Somerton School District

Somerton is an isolated, rural, agricultural community located in southwestern Arizona. Bordered by the Cocopah Indian Reservation, Somerton is 12 miles south of Yuma and 11 miles from the Mexico border. It is an economically depressed and underdeveloped area, with a high unemployment rate that fluctuates with the seasonal harvesting of crops.

The Somerton School District has four schools, serving students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Eighty-six percent of students come from homes where the primary language is other than English (predominantly Spanish), and most families in the district are considered to be at risk.

Somerton Primary School, serving pre-K through third grade, was a pilot site for the *Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project* and continues to receive state at-risk funds. The school focuses considerable resources on helping students improve language and literacy skills. From the beginning, part of the school's approach has been to view parents as part of the "solution" to address students' language and literacy needs. Activities are designed to increase parents' achievement while equipping them to assist their children in related literacy and language activities.

The philosophy of the district superintendent and special programs director (who also serves as the at-risk project director) sets the direction and tone for meeting students' needs in a holistic, comprehensive fashion. It promotes a collaborative and integrative framework which is operationalized through weekly meetings of administrators and program directors, where projects' goals, progress, and overall direction are reviewed.

The at-risk project involves two interrelated program components. LERTS (language enrichment resource teacher service) focuses on language enrichment activities for students, and PACE (parent and child education) offers parents a variety of ways to become involved with the school. At the end of the evaluation of the at-risk pilot project, the LERTS program was profiled as a model in *Promising Practices for At-Risk Youth* (Vandegrift, Greene & Heffernon, 1993). The following discussion looks at the "parent part" of the equation for addressing the needs of at-risk students.

Guiding the evolution of parent activities in Somerton Primary and in the district is the belief, as the at-risk project director notes, that "things change...there is nothing static." The district is currently in the process of trying to bring all aspects of parent participation under one umbrella. While LERTS activities continue at Somerton Primary, PACE has expanded in concept to a district-wide effort, with a range of parent activities available on all four campuses.

Critical to the comprehensive approach in Somerton is the integration of various programs such as K-3 at-risk, migrant education, Chapter 1, special education, and adult education. For example, the migrant and Chapter 1 programs conduct annual needs assessments that also identify parent involvement needs. And, since most families come through their offices, these programs also perform some case management functions.

While PACE activities provide a focal point for involving parents, the other programs also include parent involvement. School and district administrators understood from the beginning that in tackling the problems of language and literacy for Somerton parents and students, it is counterproductive to plan isolated parent activities for each individual program. Rather, they have developed a repertoire of services and activities to support *all* parents and to help parents work with their children, a plan that ultimately benefits the school and the community.

The following statement from the project director suggests how the school and the district think about parent and child education.

Because the PACE/LERTS project enhances pupil and parent literacy skills and interactive literacy endeavors, parents become an integral part of the educational fabric of the community. The school district and the Somerton community become a single strand striving to weave each citizen into a pattern of educational enhancement.

In support of this concept, local community and government agencies provide child care that enables parents to participate in activities. Community agency staff also present workshops on topics of interest to parents.

In its current framework, PACE undergirds all parent activities and outreach regardless of the specific program with which it is connected. As noted, the array of services provided under the PACE umbrella is funded from several sources. The expansion of PACE from Somerton Primary to the other schools underscores the district's commitment to parents, both in terms of enhancing

their school involvement and supporting their educational achievement. Evidence of this commitment was the hiring this year of a bilingual family literacy specialist (a certified teacher), to ensure a high level of educational services to parents. Support for this position comes from at-risk funding, Chapter 1, and migrant projects. In addition, adult education grants fund a teacher for GED, ESL, and citizenship classes. Prior to this year, parent involvement activities were coordinated by two bilingual PACE parent trainers.

Aligned with a research-based framework for parent participation (cf. Figure 7, page 28), Somerton has developed an array of *high commitment and low commitment parent participation activities*. High commitment activities include parent education classes, adult education, and volunteer training, along with participation in workshops and advisory councils. Nearly half the parents participating last year were involved in high commitment activities. Parents are also offered involvement in low commitment activities, such as take-home projects with their children and topical workshops.

The philosophy guiding Somerton's parent activities is truly one of empowering parents. The idea is not simply to "get parents into the building," but rather to enable them to reach higher levels of personal achievement, and learn specific skills that will help them support their children's academic success. Descriptions of some of these parent participation activities follow.

Parent education classes are offered twice weekly. Although there is open enrollment, class participation is typically stable over time. Parents learn *developmentally appropriate practices* in specific subjects/activities (e.g., social studies, language arts, math, self-esteem, child development), to help them work effectively with their children. PACE staff also follow up with parents whose children take the EPSF assessment (Early Prevention of School Failure), which is used to screen all pre-K and kindergarten students. Staff explain the screening process and provide parents with information about their children's strengths, areas for improvement, and methods to deal with them.

Volunteer training assists parents who want to volunteer as helpers in classrooms and special programs. Parents are trained to work with students in programs such as LERTS, Chapter I, and special education. Again, one is struck by the level of training provided to build parents' skills. An example is the HOST program ("helping one student to succeed"), in which a bilingual certified special education teacher trains parent volunteers to work one-on-one with students who have reading problems.

Presentations by parents at regional/state conferences give them an opportunity to introduce PACE activities and parent involvement strategies. Through these presentations, parents gain experience in assuming leadership roles.

Adult education classes are also offered to enhance parents' own literacy and language achievement. Activities include GED classes to improve parents' education attainment, ESL classes, and citizenship classes for immigrants who want to become citizens.

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In summary, Somerton school district has taken a collaborative, integrative, holistic approach to addressing a key issue for its students, namely, enhancing language and literacy skills. Fundamental to its philosophy is the integration of parents as the child's primary teacher. As a result, Somerton district parents are being provided a wide array of opportunities that are increasing their own educational achievement, and at the same time making them important contributors to their childrens' academic success.



Professional Development at Machan School

William T. Machan Elementary School has been the subject of many accolades during the past few years, as it has developed a continuous, cohesive, and comprehensive child-centered program designed and delivered by a team approach. Machan staff and administration view the school as a pivotal resource to its surrounding community, which is located on the eastern fringe of inner-city Phoenix. Machan's community is comprised of a largely low-income Mexican-American population.

Machan's comprehensive child-centered approach has been recognized both locally and nationally. Two of its programs were profiled as models in *Promising Practices for At-Risk Youth*, at the completion of the evaluation of the Arizona At-Risk Pilot Project. The Coalition of Advocates for Children, a national organization, highlighted Machan in a recent publication as a model for meeting the needs of migrant students. The Center for Collaborative Education (the elementary branch of the Coalition of Essential Schools), based in New York City, has invited Machan to be a founding school in its newly formed network. This national network is composed of schools that are restructuring around the belief that schools should view children from the perspective of their strengths, and build programs to meet the needs of the whole child. Machan received an award of excellence for language arts instruction for at-risk children from the National Council of Teachers of English, and the principal received a National Distinguished Principal Award from the U.S. Department of Education.

Led by a principal in her eighth year at the school, Machan's growth and development have not occurred by accident, but rather by an unrelenting commitment to change and improvement. Sometimes faced with state and district policies and requirements that are incongruous with their goals, the principal and staff have stayed focused on creating a completely child-centered program and learning environment. Machan provides a comprehensive program with a wide array of linkages. This section, however, details Machan's sophisticated system of *professional development* for teachers.

The Machan teaching staff are viewed by many as models for implementing a child-centered developmental curriculum in a developmentally appropriate environment. The daily visitor's sign-in sheet is long, reflecting the many people from throughout the valley and state who want to see Machan School in action. Machan teachers are accustomed to being "observed"!

Student work is displayed everywhere, as are signs of the learning process in action. Students in a K-2 multi-age classroom can be seen exploring hundreds of books about sea animals, trying to narrow down a research topic. A bilingual kindergarten collaborates with a neighboring first grade class, practicing a performance about Africa that includes a native African dance and a Swahili song. Maps of Africa, surrounded by a web of questions students have asked about the country, hang on the walls. Children in another class sit cross-legged in a circle, as the teacher asks how they should deal with a disruptive classmate; they decide he should have one more chance to participate in circle time since he probably really wants to "be good."

Professional development is not an add-on at Machan, where all members of the school community are viewed as learners. The individual professional growth of teachers is at the very heart of the school's success. Teachers are not just accumulating credit hours to move on the pay scale; they are committed to the intensive study that is required to improve teaching and learning. They demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of child development and learning theory, as well as mastery of the practice of teaching. Virtually all of the research-based approaches to professional development outlined in Chapter 3 are in place within the school. The Machan program is self-directed, based on the professional interests of individual teachers. It provides time for reflection and collegial sharing. It encourages risk-taking and rewards innovation. Several of these approaches are elucidated below.

On-site support for professional development. A key member of the Machan staff was hired five years ago to assist the principal in implementing the K-3 At-Risk Project. In addition to coordinating services for students and parents and developing linkages with

outside agencies, this "assistant project coordinator" also has a major role in implementing training and staff development. These duties include working with outside consultants, scheduling professional development sessions, and providing a fair share of direct training to the staff. Having an on-site staff person to support and coordinate staff development activities has been a key ingredient to the success of the professional development component at Machan.

Long-term relationships with "experts." The Machan staff has developed long-term professional development relationships with several recognized experts in constructivist curriculum. The most long-standing example of this is the seminar series provided by Pat Carini on "Another Way of Looking." This approach builds an understanding of the whole child and assists teachers in how to construct the curriculum and the learning environment from that understanding. Carini provides two-and-one-half days of training three times per year, which is typically attended by three or four Machan teachers. "Reunions" can be attended by any teacher who has ever participated in the training and allows them to keep up to date about the approach and reflect on their own teaching experiences. In addition, during summer 1994, eight staff members and two parents from the school participated in a week-long descriptive review of the school, a self-reflection process which uses "Another Way of Looking" as a framework.

Teacher study groups. These informal groups meet approximately twice per month, after school on the early release day. Groups are organized around teacher interests in specific areas related to teaching research and practice. Teachers gather research, practice new approaches in their classrooms, and share experiences and ideas with their colleagues. Groups typically stay together for one semester or one year. When study groups are in the early formative stages, they may require substantial administrative support and facilitation. As groups mature, they become quite independent from the administration. Examples of study group topics include the following: a technology group, a group which is studying and implementing the constructivist approach to mathematics developed by Constance Kamii, a group which is exploring research on emergent reading and writing, and a group

which is implementing "Another Way of Looking" descriptive process.

Professional development support for new programs. Implementing new programs and adopting innovations requires not only training but ongoing support. At Machan School, this means providing the time and structure to support a new program after the initial training occurs. A recent example of this component is the adoption of the *Work Sampling System (WSS)*, a system of observing, documenting, and reporting student progress which is based on national curriculum standards as well as children's developmental stages. Machan teachers and parents in grades pre-K through three were presented the option of adopting this system and made the consensus decision to proceed.

After the school-based staff developer attended the initial week-long training, she then provided training to the teaching staff on the many aspects of the system. In order to provide teachers the ongoing support they need to fully implement the WSS during the year, a system was devised that involved a rotating substitute teacher. Each regular classroom teacher was relieved of classroom duties for two hours each month by the substitute. During this time, small groups of four to six teachers would meet to discuss problems and questions, share strategies, and develop their local parameters for using WSS. In addition, all pre-K through three teachers meet monthly to discuss implementation issues, and small groups met during the summer to review the portfolios and the narrative reporting process. WSS will be phased in to fourth grade in the 1994-95 school year and fifth grade in 1995-96. This is just one example of the extensive training and professional support provided to the Machan staff in order to implement a new program.

Teachers as researchers. Machan teachers are encouraged and supported in sharing their professional expertise with other educators; it is not uncommon for teachers to present at local, state and national conferences. Some teachers are participants in studies, such as the longitudinal case study research being conducted by an ASU professor of bilingual education. This research involves

following children through the elementary grades as they transition from Spanish to English. Although they started out as teacher-participants, the teachers have developed their own research interests and have been encouraged to conduct action research in their classrooms and to present the research at conferences.



In conclusion, the cohesive, continuous and comprehensive program that has evolved for Machan students has been underpinned by an equally cohesive, continuous and comprehensive professional development process. This process has resulted in a school staff which shares a common understanding of and philosophy toward children, as well as an educational approach that is recognized as a model for Arizona and the nation.



Social/Economic/Health Support Services in Apache Junction

Located in Pinal County at the base of the Superstition Mountains, the community of Apache Junction has a permanent, year-round population of about 20,000. The influx of winter visitors drives the total population up to about 45,000. The population is predominantly Anglo; minorities comprise about 5 percent of the total and school-age population. The permanent community is classified as lower socioeconomic.

Apache Junction Unified School District is comprised of one high school, one middle school, and four elementary schools. The district serves roughly 4,000 students annually. The student population follows a seasonal pattern with about 900 high school students in attendance at the beginning and end of the school year. The winter influx adds an additional 300 to 600 students during the year. The Apache Junction High School, and specifically its support services for alternative students, is the subject of this case study.

Apache Junction personnel note absenteeism, behavioral problems, and low levels of achievement for many secondary students. In addition, the combined incidence of parental child abuse, student depression, substance abuse, violent behavior and teen pregnancy is disturbing. Nearly half of the students are eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches; some students have dropped out and hold daytime jobs to supplement their own or their family's income.

In the mid-80s, the district set a goal of reducing dropout rates and increasing the graduation rate. They realized the need for "alternative services" for at-risk students and through the years, have developed several academically-oriented intervention programs. In addition to the traditional comprehensive curriculum, an "intervention curriculum" (1 or 2 hours per day), and an alternative school are offered for students in grades 9-12 who experience academic or behavioral difficulty.

Students referred to any alternative program participate in the development of an individualized academic/vocational/behavioral contract. Intervention programs operate during the school day; the alternative school offers after-school and evening hours. Academic and vocational instructors utilize small group, one-on-one, and computer-assisted instruction. Staff addendum contracts pay for certified teachers; peers and community volunteers assist in providing tutorial assistance.

Apache Junction has recognized that at-risk youth need multiple "safety nets" in order to keep them in school. The district and high school have crafted an array of support services that are integrated into the school in some unique ways. Services are designed to support and mesh with educational goals, and are buttressed by staff commitment and development.

In the discussion that follows, it is not the services per se that are of special interest, but rather the variety of strategies and mechanisms in place to provide the services. Some of these strategies are described below.

Prevention Specialist and Counselors. The district employs a full-time "Prevention Specialist" who is a fully certified counselor, in addition to three full time counselors and a school psychologist. The prevention specialist individually assesses students, provides referrals, conducts case management, provides direct services (e.g., counseling, crisis intervention), and coordinates many of the ongoing support activities for alternative students and their families. She is a pivotal "point-of-entry" for a majority of the alternative students and serves as an important community-school liaison (e.g., recruiting business and community support for support services).

The three full-time counselors, as well as the prevention specialist, and two off-campus counselors, conduct individual and/or group counseling with parental permission. In addition, group activities such as "rap groups" or "bitch sessions" are provided to students and do not require parental permission. The topics in these groups cover a variety of issues (e.g., grief counseling, teen depression and suicide).

Project HELP. Project HELP is a unique school-based delivery system for brokering and providing a wide array of social and economic support services. The goal of this project is to provide whatever assistance a family needs to keep children in school. On campus, it is referred to as their own "Salvation Army."

Project HELP maintains a small "store" on campus that stocks personal hygiene articles, clothing, and food for needy students and families. The project also provides emergency financial assistance (e.g., to help meet rent payments, pay utilities). Family requests for assistance are individually evaluated by Project HELP and district personnel. Besides need, the only eligibility requirement for a family to receive assistance from Project HELP is that the children of the family must be registered and actively attending school in the district. That is, the family must be making a "good faith" effort to ensure that children attend school. In the words of the prevention specialist: "If it is a truant family, services are stopped because we are not going to support laziness...[Project HELP] is designed to help the family get back on their feet."

In cases where financial assistance is provided, payments are made directly to the landlord or utility company. No direct money payments are made to the family. Moreover, an affordable repayment plan is negotiated with the borrowers, as the money is expected to be paid back. Clothing donations are also expected to be returned, provided they are in good condition, once the child outgrows them. Project HELP reinforces family responsibility, and in so doing, allows a family to retain their dignity within the community.

Other project support centers around assisting families during the holidays. Programs promote the adoption of a family for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter by teachers, buildings, and administration. Families are provided with complete holiday meals and/or other needed items.

Project HELP has established linkages with the Salvation Army, churches, and other organizations when personnel can not provide a service themselves. Project HELP also brings in WIC, DES, and AHCCCS workers on a regular basis. These people provide follow-up on post-natal care, nutrition, transportation, and assistance for Spanish speakers (e.g., in filling out forms).

One of the more unique aspects of Project HELP concerns its funding. *Project services are primarily funded through voluntary payroll deductions by district employees.* District funds support a full-time project director and clerical assistance. Other staff support is provided by volunteers, who also donate money and goods.

In short, Project HELP is viewed as the community's version of the United Way, and receives a lot of support because the effects of the donations are observable within the community.

Volunteers. A strength of this community is its high level of volunteerism coupled with the perception of the school as the "home base" of the community. "Winter visitors," many of whom are retired teachers or business people, volunteer in the district. Many provide one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to alternative students. Others provide a great deal of assistance in the area of

clothing. District personnel have stories of winter visitors who look for clothing when living in their permanent communities and bring it back with them when they return to Apache Junction. Items such as Levi's, blankets, sweaters, and toys are provided. Some volunteers even make these items.

Customizing Partnerships and Program Linkages to Meet Specific Needs. Apache Junction has nurtured a wide variety of partnerships that serve different functions to meet different needs. For example, the cost of summer school is a barrier to many students and especially those at risk. Through public relations efforts by the Prevention Specialist, a variety of civic organizations such as Rotary, Elks, Lions, Moose, Optimists, and Soroptimists contribute funds for summer school scholarships.

Accessing health services can be problematic for many students and their families. Apache Junction does not have its own hospital, nor are there any community-based clinics. Medical service in Apache Junction is either through private physicians or the county health department. There is a school nurse in every building, but many services rely on program linkages and partnerships.

For example, a mobile health unit visits the campus to provide dental services. They are provided free if a student qualifies based on financial need. The Lions Club provides vision services. Other community service groups such as the Elks, Masons, Shriners, or the Optimists will pick up the medical bill for a "notch group" child (i.e., ineligible for AHCCCS, yet uninsured). There is also a private doctor in town who discounts services, often billing Project HEI.P.

Behavioral health is of special concern in Apache Junction, and multiple programs and partnerships deal with related issues. The Abuse Prevention Council is a true community-linked organization. Membership on the board is comprised of school personnel, a nurse, a police officer, a retired person, members of the community service organizations, and other community representatives. The Council meets once a month to discuss needs of youth in the community. The Council sponsors the Youth Center. It

purchased an old house which was remodeled through the generosity of community donations. Recreational/entertainment items such as a pool table and video games were donated by location organizations and businesses. Other items were provided at a very low cost if a direct donation was not possible. The Center is open from 3:00 PM to 8:00 PM to provide an alternative to the streets. The Center also serves as a dissemination point for information and education on many issues (e.g., AIDs, unemployment).

Maternal and child health are addressed through prenatal and parent education classes called the "pregnant hour." A community-based organization behavioral health counselor and the school nurse provide support counseling and a prenatal class. This class covers the whole process from conception to birth. Participants return after birth for parenting classes. A WIC representative comes to campus to check on the nutrition of the mother and child. "Pregnant fathers" are encouraged to attend the prenatal and parenting classes.

Additional youth and adult education, counseling, and mentoring services are provided through several linkages. One partnership program is the Student Work Achievement Program (SWAP) which allows alternative students (and others) to work while attending school, through the participation of local businesses. In order to participate in SWAP, students must maintain their grades and attendance, and be motivated (e.g., be responsible and make correct choices). To reinforce students, weekly meetings are held including the employer, student, alternative school director, and counselor to discuss what is working and what is not. Businesses providing jobs under this program are recruited very carefully, usually by word of mouth.

Additional program linkages and community partnerships that provide support services in relation to vocational training have been established with JTPA, Central Arizona Community College, and the East Valley Institute of Technology. Through these linkages, students receive more individualized career counseling in addition to job training. Transportation is provided by the district.

School partnerships with municipal agencies reinforce the school-community connection. The police department provides DARE curricula and officers for classroom presentations. The police also provide on-campus block watch/gang prevention services. They also have provided scholarship money for students, school supplies (e.g., Polaroid cameras, a tape recorder) and unofficial support to families as well as students if needed.

The fire department is involved with students through its Fire Explorers program. This program exposes students to the work of fire fighters through a program that requires a high level of discipline. Grades and attendance are tracked as a condition of participation. It helps students to "clean up their act," i.e., they need to show that they can take responsibility for their own lives before they can work with other people's lives.

The Gang Prevention Task Force—which includes the Pinal County Sheriff's Department—promotes block watches and graffiti removal. This Task Force also includes probation officers, business people, the county attorney, and the city manager.

Yet another partnership program is in place with the county's juvenile justice system. If a student is incarcerated, Project Link is a means for students to continue their studies and remain on track as far as schooling is concerned. Moreover, a probation officer is located on campus part-time. This enables students to meet their release requirements without traveling to another location. It also reinforces the concept of the campus as the home base.

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In closing, multiple social, economic, and health services are in place for alternative students (as well as other students in need). Such services could easily be fragmented; however this is *not* the case, due largely to the coordination of services by the district prevention specialist. Moreover, the district has invested in training other staff so that there are multiple points-of-entry into the system. For example, in-house training for district/school personnel is provided through most of the behavioral health agencies

linked with the district. Phoenix Adolescent Recovery Center (PARC Place) is an example of an organization that has provided in-house training for staff on the problems of at-risk youth. Samaritan Health and Desert Vista Hospital have also provided training.

Finally, part of the integration of services as a "cohesive whole" occurs by involving students, alternative and traditional, as active participants in various roles. A special program, the PATH program, trains student peer counselors to be good listeners (not counselors). Training is provided by an outside consultant who specializes in this area. Moreover, students play other important roles in many support programs. For example, they are active members on the board of directors for Superstition Mountain Medical and the Abuse Prevention Council.



THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

In the schools that Morrison Institute has profiled, components are aligned and work together in a symbiotic way. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts. In each of these sites, shared information breeds unified efforts to create new solutions and a commitment to action. There is an enthusiasm for learning and program improvement that is almost contagious.

The former Prime Minister of England, Benjamin Disraeli, once said: "The secret of success is constancy of purpose." That is what the schools profiled appear to manifest: constancy of purpose. And that, indeed, may be the secret of their success in creating, modifying, and refining their own comprehensive service delivery systems.

CONCLUSIONS

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Educational reform in the 1990s is about creating the best possible environments for *all* children in order to improve the quality of learning. And while school environments are the logical target for reform efforts, environments outside of school are increasingly recognized as contributing to how children experience school success and failure. Therefore, the concept of providing comprehensive services—integrating educational programs with parent/family involvement activities, social and health services, and staff development—is viewed as essential to the school improvement task.

This report synthesizes theory and practice with respect to these, and related, issues. In summarizing the chapters of this report, certain lessons stand out.

LESSONS LEARNED

▲ Schools cannot affect learning single-handedly.

Schools can and do make a difference in student's lives, but they cannot single-handedly turn the tide of poverty and its consequences. Schools need help. Current federal legislation recognizes this indisputable fact, and has numerous provisions to enable schools to more effectively implement schoolwide programming, leverage funds, and establish linkages with other agencies that serve children and families.

▲ Comprehensive services promote: unified efforts to improve learning for *all* children by supporting the "whole child" and families.

Children and adolescents have personal social, emotional, and health needs that often overshadow the pursuit of academic excellence. Comprehensive services are intended to provide

integrated academic, vocational, social, economic, and health services through "seamless" webs from preschool through high school and beyond. Comprehensive services seek to improve the well-being of children in order to improve their capacity to learn.

Because the well-being of children depends on the well-being of their families, comprehensive services include families. And because the effective delivery of services depends on competent, trained staff, comprehensive services address professional development. In sum, a good comprehensive service delivery system is an integrated system of complementary services that address student education, family involvement, and social/economic/health support services for families and children.

▲ Numerous specific strategies can be thoughtfully crafted into an "effective" program, but five general principles underlie success.

In theory and practice, five general principles recur as correlates of program success. This report calls these principles the Five Ps standing for Philosophy (or Purpose), People, Processes, Promising Practices, and Partners. That is:

Philosophy: Effective programs are based on the philosophy that all children can learn.

People: Effective programs are run by highly committed staff within highly supportive environments.

Processes: Effective programs are characterized by a site-based focus, reflection, and commitment to improvement.

Promising Practices: Effective programs incorporate multiple, proven strategies.

Partners: Effective programs extend services beyond those typically ascribed to public schools; i.e., they are comprehensive.

- ▲ **Comprehensive services need to be customized for individual schools—no two schools' systems look alike.**

This report has described how some Arizona schools have put services and programs together to form more cohesive and integrated delivery systems. These systems share many common themes and program elements, but no two schools look alike. Local ownership is important!

- ▲ **There are lots of recipes for planning, but no one recipe guarantees success.**

The literature is replete with commercial products and publications that outline, step by step, "how to" plan, implement, and evaluate programs.¹ Such tools are valuable resources, but using them does not ensure a good product.

The key to good planning is to involve in development the people who must implement the plan. The more that those who are charged with implementation understand the data, identify the problems, and create their own solutions, the more invested they become in the success of whatever is implemented. No how-to book, template, or replicable model substitutes for thoughtfully thinking the issues through at the local level.

DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS

From lessons learned, it is clear that implementing an effective service delivery system is not easy. It is a complex and uniquely different experience for each and every school. And yet there are several tips for thinking things through at the local level which can make crafting a service delivery system easier.

Build on what is known. Knowing where one wants to go is largely dependent on where one has already been. New philosophies, new processes, new programs—ideally, all should be implemented with a sense of history. Many new school employees, although well-intentioned, experience rough transitions when they repeat history thinking that they are doing something new.

Building on what is known means compiling existing information and data that, when aggregated, provide direction for designing or redesigning a service delivery system. Core information, which addresses key principles underlying success, consists of:

- ▲ Evidence of an existing formal or informal mission and purpose;
- ▲ An indication of staff "buy-in" and commitment;
- ▲ A descriptive snapshot of the school and community context;
- ▲ A program/services inventory;
- ▲ A financial resources inventory; and
- ▲ Data to support or refute the efficacy of programs/services.

Once these types of data are gathered, most schools will find that they already have a combination of educational services, family involvement, and professional development activities in place. Many established linkages and partnerships with service providers outside the school will also be evident. Does this mean that the school has a comprehensive, integrated system? Probably not.

While most or all pieces of the comprehensive services puzzle might exist, they may not be constructed as a coherent whole. Too often, services and programs are implemented independently of one another and tend to duplicate efforts, thus wasting precious financial and human resources.

Therefore, a second consideration in crafting a coherent service delivery system is to *consolidate knowledge*. This can be done by conducting a "side-by-side" analysis of programs and services.

A "side-by-side" analysis is a comparison of multiple program goals and objectives. It effectively consolidates diverse and complex data. It graphically illustrates where and how programs overlap and where there are gaps in the service delivery system. This type of analysis is illustrated in Appendix B (based on real examples of program applications from Arizona schools).

A side-by-side analysis is a useful foundation for additional analyses as, for example, of how resources are allocated, how staff are assigned and used in delivering services, what training is provided and to whom, and so on. One can also look at programs depicted in a side-by-side analysis, and their supporting goals and objectives, in order to determine whether individual *program* goals conceptually support *school improvement* goals, or whether there is fragmentation in the system. The goal of such analyses is to figure out if there are better, more efficient ways to deliver services and maximize financial and human resources toward improving student performance.

Side-by-side analyses can be easily updated and should be, regularly. By consolidating school information, this type of analysis meets multiple reporting and planning functions and can ultimately reduce program paperwork. Used in an ongoing fashion, this type of analysis is more than a record of the past; it is useful in strategically planning for the future. This is the third point to consider in (re)designing a comprehensive plan: *think long-term*.

Thinking long-term means anticipating improvement and expansion. When reapplying for funds, writing for new grants, or justifying new funding, school planners should have an idea of where they want to go based on data and experience. Program activities, funds, staffing, and so forth should be designed accordingly to support areas targeted for improvement and expansion. In short, school improvement goals should drive the use of funds; funding should not drive goal-setting. Aligned around school

goals, new programs and resources can effectively complement existing services. This promotes "cohesiveness" in the system at the local level.

Ultimately, thinking long-term means that planning is not an end in itself. Plans are fluid and constantly subject to change. Plans are a means to an end, where the end is student performance and well-being.

THINKING COMPREHENSIVELY

This report was intended to clarify the components of a comprehensive plan for delivering research-based services. Such components have been explained and illustrated as based on input from Arizona practitioners, case studies of Arizona schools that are models for planning and delivering comprehensive programs, an extensive review of the literature, an analysis of recent legislation, and years of combined experience in working with schools, and Arizona schools in particular.

As elaborated upon throughout this report, the components of a comprehensive plan revolve around educationally-sound instructional and curricular programs and strategies designed to improve student performance. The student education component is supplemented by services for families designed to involve them in schools as well as to assist them to meet social, economic, and health needs. Professional development is the glue that holds the system together at the school level. School staff are needed who are trained in the most current educational theories and practice and who are sensitive to the non-academic needs of students and families. District staff are needed who will enable and support school-based practitioners to make the decisions that directly affect the school and its students.

The report adopts the position that such comprehensive, integrated planning and services promote school improvement and systemic reform. However, not all practitioners share the assumption that comprehensive services are a "good" thing. Over the years, Mor-

rison Institute researchers have found that some school personnel view such services as just one more thing that schools are asked to do. Perceived as a burden, the conventional attitude holds that comprehensive services are not the school's job.

Educators who say "It's not the school's job" are at least partially right. Improved student learning—through school improvement, collaboration with other agencies that serve children and families, and systemic reform—is *everybody's* job.

Practitioners and policymakers alike need a new mind-set in the current era of educational reform. Comprehensive, integrated planning and service delivery use a *systems* approach that requires *systemic* thinking resulting in *systemic* reform. This takes the full and active commitment and participation of many organizations and people to see beyond the immediacy of short-term goals and quick-fix solutions to more enduring and meaningful change

Thinking comprehensively about education reform requires a deep and profound understanding that schools, alone, can not countermand the multiple economic, social, cultural, and political factors that influence children's learning. These contextual factors are directly related to schools' successes and failures. They *must*, therefore, be taken into consideration in efforts to improve our nation's schools.

A holistic approach is needed to analyze and understand student learning, and the educational system in which learning takes place. This is the promise of comprehensive services—a holistic approach to a holistic set of problems and solutions.

If you plan for a year, plant a seed. If you plan for ten years, plant a tree. If for a hundred years, teach the people. When you sow a seed once, you will reap a single harvest. When you teach the people, you will reap a hundred harvests.

—Chinese proverb

REFERENCE MATERIALS

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CHAPTER NOTES

Introduction

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26. Ibid., p. v.
27. For example, Levin (1989) documents trends in the "demography of at-risk populations" citing a rise in minority enrollments, poverty, and the number of single parent households among other indicators. Hodgkinson's *The same client: The demographics of education and service delivery systems* (1989) cites similar statistics, as does the U.S. Department of Education's *The condition of education* (1991). Closer to home, the *Kid's count factbook: Arizona's children* (the 1992 edition by Kornreich, Sandler & Hall, and the 1994 edition by Bierlein & Mulholland) and *Sights unseen: Children's issues in rural arizona* (Sandler, Kornreich & Hall, 1993) document declines in the well-being of Arizona's children, ages birth through 18, on multiple indicators in the areas of child poverty, health, safety, education and juvenile justice.
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Chapter Three

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2. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
3. *Accelerated Schools* 1(4), Fall 1991, p. 2.
4. Kofman & Senge, p. 16.
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7. This discussion is based largely on Teddlie and Stringfield's (1993) research, which incorporates the study "Principals' Roles in Stable and Changing Schools" by R.K. Wimpelberg. Readers may wish to consult the extensive references cited in the text for additional citations pertinent to principals and leadership.
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9. Page 207, Sizer, T.R. (1992). *Horace's school: Redesigning the american high school*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.
10. Page 143, Eubanks, E.E. & Parish, R. (1992). Leadership that promotes instability: A hope for at-risk students. In H.C. Waxman, J. Walker de Felix, J.E. Anderson & H.P. Baptiste, Jr. (Eds.), *Students at risk in at-risk schools: Improved environments for learning*. (143-159). Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
11. Kofman & Senge, p. 6.
12. These conclusions are drawn primarily from Teddlie & Stringfield's (1993) discussions on the "Theory of School Effectiveness and Leadership" (see pages 45-48, in particular).
13. Teddlie & Stringfield, p. 40.

14. See, also, conclusions drawn in Levine, D.U. & Lezotte, L.W. (1990). *Unusually effective schools: A review and analysis of research and practice*. Madison, WI: The National Center for Effective Schools Research & Development.
15. Teddlie and Stringfield, p. 218.
16. This section is based largely on analyses conducted by Andrea Greene, who is currently an evaluator for one of the 32 federally-funded Head Start-Public School Transition Projects. Interested readers should also see her research on the effects of the Arizona transition project for children, families, and participating schools and agencies, documented in two annual reports both titled: *Head start goes to school* (Greene, Mulholland & Shaw, 1993) and (Greene, Mulholland & Whitman-Ahern, 1994).
17. See Seppanen, P.S., Godin, K.W., Metzger, J.L., Bronson, M., & Cichon, D.J. (1993). *Observational study of early childhood programs, final report volume II: Chapter I-funded early childhood programs* (Contract No. EALC890980). Washington, DC: U.S.Department of Education, Office of the Undersecretary. This study included a longitudinal substudy of the programmatic features children experience when they move to kindergarten from Chapter 1, Head Start, and other preschool programs.
18. Love, J.M., Logue, M.E., Trudeau, J.V., & Thayer, K. (1992). Transitions to kindergarten in American schools (Contract No. LC88089001). Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.
19. See, for example, Arizona Department of Education. (1993). *Guidelines for comprehensive early childhood programs*. (1993). A report by the Early Childhood Advisory Council in collaboration with Success by 6, a project of Children's Action Alliance, submitted to the Arizona Board of Education; Bredekamp, S. (Ed.) (1987). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children; National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. (1985). *Guide to accreditation: Self-study, validation, accreditation*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
20. Page 19, Sparks, D. (1993). Insights on school improvement: An interview with Larry Lezotte. *Journal of Staff Development*, 14(3), 18-21. See also Gutierrez, R. & Slavin, R. *The achievement effects of the nongraded elementary school* (Report No. 33). Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students.
21. See, for example, Clay, M.M. (1991). *Becoming literate: The construction of inner control*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann and (1985). *The early detection of reading difficulties* (3rd ed.) Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Also, Bloom, B. (1984). The 2 sigma problem: The search for methods of group instruction as effective as one-to-one tutoring. *Educational Researcher*, (June/July 1984), 4-16; Ehly, S., Keith, T.Z., and Bratton, B. (1987). The benefits of tutoring: An exploration of expectancy and outcomes. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 12, 131-134; Sheley, J.F. (March/April, 1984). Evaluation of the centralized, structured, after-school tutorial. *Journal of Educational Research*, 77(4), 213-218; Slavin, R.E. & Madden, N.A. (1989). What works for students at-risk: A research synthesis. *Educational Leadership* 36, 4-13.
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27. McPartland, J. (1994). Dropout prevention in theory and practice. In R. Rossi (Ed.), *Schools and students at risk*. New York: Teachers College Press, 255-276.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 266.
29. For the literature base and research supporting these contentions, see Sandler, L. & Vandegrift, J. (1992 and 1993) and Vandegrift, J. & Sandler, L. (1993). Specifically, the report *Students serving arizona* (Sandler & Vandegrift, 1994) illustrates positive pre-posttest differences in the attitudes of at-risk participants upon completing community service programs. Notably, these programs combined academic, vocational, and support services in a caring environment with supportive staff.
30. See Vandegrift, Bierlein & Greene (1991a).
31. The importance of staff, and staff development, in alternative programs is well-documented. See, for example, Kelter, D., Addis, S. & Fowler, R.W. (1991). Total staff development: Do not begin dropout prevention without it. *Journal of School Leadership* 1, 400-409.
32. Glosoff, H.L. & Koptrowicz, C.L. (1990). *Children achieving potential: An introduction to elementary school counseling and state-level policies*. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

33. See also Young (1990); Catterall, J.C. & Stern, D. (1986). The effects of alternative school programs on high school completion and labor market outcomes. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 8(1), 77-86; Price, T. & Swanson, K. (1990). Reaching and teaching the whole student: A comprehensive approach for at-risk students. *Thrust* 19(4), 13-16; Reilly, D.H. (1986). An alternative school program: Five year follow-up. *Journal of Instructional Psychology* 13(2), 99-108.
34. For example: Center for Workforce Preparation. (1994). *New century workers: Effective school-to-work transition programs*. Washington, DC: Author; Council of Chief State School Officers. (1991). *State initiatives for school and the workplace*. Washington, DC: Author; Kazis, R. (1993). *Improving the transition from school to work in the United States*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum, Competitiveness Policy Council, and Jobs for the Future; Pauly, E., Kopp, H. & Haimson, J. (1994). *Home-grown lessons: Innovative programs linking work and high school*. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation; William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship *et al.* (1991). *State and Communities on the move: Policy initiatives to create a world-class workforce*. Washington, DC: Author; Youth Policy Institute. (1993-94). *Creating a successful, comprehensive school-to-work system: Three solutions. Youth Policy 15 & 16*(12 & 1), Washington DC: Author.
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39. Epstein & Dauber, p. 301.
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49. See U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (November 1991). *Adolescent health-volume II: Background and the effectiveness of selected prevention and treatment services*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, Author. Note: The literature on linking schools with health service delivery generally focuses on adolescent health needs and school-linked/school-based health clinics. This discussion has a similar focus. For reference, adolescence is commonly defined as encompassing youth ages ten through 18.
50. Dryfoos, J.G. (1993). Schools as places for health, mental health, and social services. In *Teachers College Record 94*(3). New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, 540-567.

51. See, also: Commissioner of Education, Department of Programs and Instruction. (January 1993). *Family and community support: Coordinated education, health and human services*. The Commissioner's Critical Issue Analysis Series: Number II. Washington, DC: Author; Morrill, W. (1992). Overview of service delivery to children. In *The future of children: school-linked services* 2(1), 32-43. Los Altos, CA: Center for the Future of Children, The David and Lucille Packard Foundation; National Commission on Children. (1993). *Next steps for children and families: Improving health (majority recommendations)*. Washington, DC: Author.
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53. National Health/Education Consortium. (1992). *Bridging the gap: A health care primer for education professionals/An education primer for health professionals*. Washington, DC: National Commission to Prevent Infant Mortality and Institute for Educational Leadership.
54. See Igoe, J.B. & Giordano, B.P. (1992). *Expanding school health services to serve families in the 21st century*. Washington, DC: American Nurses Association; and Millstein, S.G. (1988). *The potential of school-linked centers to promote adolescent health and development*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. Also: Dryfoos (1993) and Fox, Wicks, & Lipson (1992).
55. Dryfoos (1993).
56. Igoe & Giordano (1992).
57. These can and generally do include counseling on birth control methods and referral to other agencies for examinations; some schools conduct gynecological services on site. A 1993 study of school-linked/school-based health centers revealed that only 25 percent that serve middle or high school-aged students provide on-site contraceptive services (Dryfoos, 1993; Center for Population Options, 1994).
58. Fox, Wicks & Lipson (1992).
59. Caldwell, S.D. (Ed.). (1989). *Staff development: A handbook of effective practices*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council; Sparks, D. (1994, March 16). A paradigm shift in staff development. *Education Week*, 42.
60. Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1988). *Student achievement through staff development*. New York: Longman, Inc.; Loucks-Horsley, S., Harding, C.K., Arbuckle, M.A., Murray, L.B., Dubea, C., & Williams, M.K. (1987). *Continuing to learn: A guidebook for teacher development*. Andover, MA: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands; Sparks, D., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1990). *Five models of staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
61. Adapted from Sparks & Loucks-Horsley (1990).

Chapter Four

1. All schools except VOICE are profiled in *Promising Practices*. VOICE, however, is modeled after the Central Arizona Alternative School (CAAS) which is profiled in Volume 2: Secondary Programs (Vandegrift, Greene & Heffernon, 1993).
2. School profiles presented in this chapter draw heavily upon school-authored documents including grant applications, handbooks, and other material. Morrison Institute gratefully acknowledges permission to cite information from these materials.
3. Beginning Alcohol & Addictions Basic Education Studies (BABES) is an alcohol and substance abuse prevention program for children. Materials are copyrighted through the National Council on Alcoholism & Other Dependencies, 17330 Northland Park Court, Southfield, Michigan 48075.
4. See Bierlein & Mulholland (1994).
5. Ibid.
6. This philosophy is adapted from the "parable of the lost sheep" from The Holy Bible, Luke 15:3-5.

Conclusions

1. *Promising Practices*, volumes 1 and 2, (Vandegrift, Greene & Heffernon 1993) contain a chapter on planning and evaluation. Numerous publications address these topics, e.g.: Kaufman, R. (1992). *Mapping educational success: Strategic thinking and planning for school administrators, Volume 1*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc. and O'Sullivan, R.G. & Tennant, C.V. (1993). *Programs for at-risk students: A guide to evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

APPENDIX A

ARIZONA PRACTITIONER VIEWS ON COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES AND RELATED ISSUES

- one wouldn't be able to distinguish sources of funding for particular services

Rural Viewpoints

- *everyone* is working toward the same goal, and shares a school vision
- "lines" between/among programs are eliminated
- there is a "total school" program design, and a common evaluation of programs
- curriculum is integrated across grade levels; there is an articulation of curriculum
- staff are not labelled according to funding source (e.g., Chapter 1 teacher)

Reservation Viewpoints

- there are "authentic activities" (i.e., life-like learning)
- a child is treated as a whole person (home health, safety); part of a family (social)
- there is integration of educational and other social services
- there is professional development on context-specific needs
- there is parent development (when you help parents, you help kids)

Morrison Institute researchers began this project by looking to Arizona practitioners to help frame some of the key issues surrounding comprehensive, integrated service delivery. At two *Arizona At-Risk Project* meetings (one for K-3; one for 7-12), site personnel from the 55 funded sites were asked several questions, including how they defined this comprehensive, integrated services. Responses from these meetings are provided below. Responses for site personnel serving students in grade K-3 are broken out by region; 7-12 responses are aggregated, since a majority of these latter sites are rural.

K-3 AT-RISK MEETING (October 4, 1993)

- ▲ How do you define "comprehensive, integrated" services (i.e., holistic programming)?

Urban Viewpoints

In a comprehensive, integrated program...

- the school provides needed services (i.e., academic, health, social, economic) to whomever needs them
- *all staff* are viewed as a "resource pool" available to serve all students; staff have the freedom to "cross boundaries;" they have similar goals and a shared belief system
- at a building level, it is *critical* for staff to have time to dialogue; the system needs to value time to dialogue
- services are not pullouts; the child's day is "seamless" (i.e., all special services are integrated within the child's day in his/her classroom)

▲ **What data/evidence really says something about program success (i.e., provides compelling evidence)?**

Urban Site Responses

- Longitudinal data (i.e., anything that goes beyond 9 months)
- Measures of student performance (possibly through random sampling)
- Measures of: self-esteem, attendance, ASAP/Essential Skills Mastery System, Running records (e.g., Reading Recovery, CLIP), Portfolios with rubrics

Also important (but may not be what legislators view as compelling):

- Records of parent participation (e.g., home contacts)
- Records of staff development
- Teacher surveys
- Anecdotal data is powerful but needs to be presented with numbers

Rural Site Responses

- Measures of academic achievement (e.g., ASAP, ITBS, Stanford, EPSF)
- Measures of parent participation (e.g., Numbers of parents completing GED/ESL, Numbers of parents who attend work-shops, volunteer, etc.)
- Attitudes/evaluations of teachers, parents, and students (through surveys)
- Other (e.g., Demographic data, Attendance records, Percentage of homework returned)

Reservation Site Responses

- Measure growth instead of mastery
- Growth in high school completion/lower dropout rate
- Use of portfolios to demonstrate growth in writing & reading

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Also look at parent involvement (e.g., parent attitudes toward education; number of parents coming to activities)

▲ **What helps/hinders your school/district toward implementing holistic programming?**

Urban

Helps

- Strong leadership
- Time for team meetings
- Strong belief system, articulated vision (i.e., school mission statement), and positive school climate
- Integrated with Chapter 1/school-wide Chapter 1 projects
- Authority to do things at a building level
- Structural changes in the delivery system (e.g., multi-age groupings; teacher resource teams) that serve students (regardless of their labels) and effectively utilize teacher skills (regardless of their labels)

Hindrances

- Data collection by program (at-risk) or population (K-3) as opposed to district-wide data; Continuing to collect data per program encourages fragmentation
- Labeling children, thus hindering a resource team (holistic) approach
- Competition within and among schools, principals, programs, and teachers--leads to territorialism at all levels (i.e., "turf conflicts")
- Lack of leadership (school-based/district level) in developing and maintaining an appropriate school climate
- Lack of time for teachers to dialogue
- Lack of recognition by leadership of the need to make staff development ongoing due to staff turnover/new staff

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Rural

Helps

- Workshops, academies, etc. [Staff development opportunities that are hands-on, ongoing, accessible]
- "Buy-in" of staff

Hindrances

- Everyone has their own agenda
- Separate program reports are still required
- Each program has its own mandates, etc.

Reservation

Helps

- Home visits (creates sensitivity to cultural differences)
- Communication with community; within staff

Hindrances

- Teachers' developmental readiness (e.g., many teachers lack professional commitment; narrow definition of teaching role)
- Limited pool of teachers- need specialized recruitment efforts
- Resources
- Accessibility of technical assistance;
- Technical assistance...
 - needs to be on-site
 - needs to create community awareness and sensitivity to unique issues
- needs to understand comparative/ relative value of success
- must act as advocate of concerns; exhibit cultural sensitivity
- interpret issues to ADE

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▲ What kinds of technical assistance would you like to see available at the state level to assist school personnel develop evaluation plans/holistic programs?

Urban

- Data entry clerk at each district
- Workshops that address the needs of participants—provide opportunities to meet with peers in small groups
- ADE consistency re: technical assistance personnel (Never speak to the same person twice)
- Early Childhood Academy (state training)

Rural

- Interactive TV
- Audio or video taping of sessions
- Staff collaboration time
- State Department Support/Technical Assistance:
 - regional meetings
 - referral bank for curriculum support
 - exemplary program/cadre
 - Teacher's Academy
 - curriculum alignment with ASAP
 - canned reports on disk (e.g., computerized forms; E-mail)
 - for state to recognize staffing problems in small, rural schools; require less administration (Staff are there to teach!)
 - provide districts/schools with ASAP test results (if they are to be used) so that district/schools can incorporate them in their own self-evaluation reports

Reservation

- On-site
- Create community awareness: sensitivity
- Understand comparative/relative value
- Advocate

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7-12 AT-RISK MEETING (October 29, 1993)

All items noted with an asterisk (*) indicate multiple respondents

▲ How do you define 'comprehensive, integrated' services (i.e., holistic programming)?

A comprehensive, integrated program...

- provides academic as well as behavioral counseling, and work programs with the community. All basic needs are met, and all cognitive and affective areas are addressed.
- would include psychological evaluation services, greater access to state and private social services, expanded funding to pay for summer training of teachers, and more extensive contact of at-risk students with computer technology.
- provides services to meet the academic, personal, and vocational needs of students—elements=alternative school/classes, social service programs, linkages with community agencies, on-campus and off-campus vocational programs. Individual needs are evaluated and linkages are made with appropriate services.
- includes a holistic plan which takes into account the clients' academic and personal/social needs and individualizes a program to meet those needs. This is evidenced by the coordination of efforts by the service providers.

... attempts to meet the needs of the "whole" child—i.e., educational, vocational, social/emotional.

... provides for the total student. This means that more than the academics are provided. Other considerations must be given to counseling (e.g., emotional status). Planning for students' transition into the world of work or further school is also necessary.

▲ What data/evidence really says something about program success (i.e., is compelling evidence)?

Descriptive/qualitative information

- Numbers served
- Description of risk factors
- Student stories are powerful; not all "success" is measurable

Measures of student performance

- Retrieved dropouts/reduced dropout rates.*
- Graduation rate of students receiving services.*
- Improved academic grades*
- Reduced absenteeism*
- Credits earned*
- Reduction in suspensions/fewer referrals
- Improvement in test scores
- Success in promotion
- Improved self-esteem

Cost per student

Student evaluation of services provided

▲ What helps/hinders your school/district toward implementing holistic programming?

Helps

- District support; willingness to work together
- Smallness of district/community
- Staff including mentors and volunteers
- Local authority to invent, integrate and implement programs without specific stipulations or guidelines to the contrary

Hindrances

- Money; funding*
- Changes in school leadership/structure
- Philosophy of school/district
- [Lack of] availability of vocational and social services in the area
- Resource availability
- Transportation
- Staff overload
- Arbitrary guidelines [governing programs]

▲ **What kinds of technical assistance would you like to see available at the state level to assist school personnel develop evaluation plans/holistic programs?**

- Evaluation instruments/instrument development*
- Computer training in data collection
- Expanded opportunities to examine practices being implemented at other project sites
- Network for resources/information—possibly a newsletter
- Distribution of a comprehensive list of current, ongoing holistic programs
- Additional training and "what works" and how it can be adapted in other settings
- Periodic meetings among program coordinators
- What community agencies there are and what services they can provide students and parents

APPENDIX B

ILLUSTRATION OF A SIDE-BY-SIDE PROGRAM ANALYSIS

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As discussed in the conclusions of this report, examining the "fit" of programs within a comprehensive framework can be facilitated by conducting a side-by-side analysis of multiple program goals and objectives. A hypothetical analysis is presented on the following pages in Table B-1(a) and (b). The analysis uses real examples of goals and objectives taken from program applications submitted to the Arizona Department of Education from Arizona schools.

Table B-1 lists "goal/activity areas" in the left-hand column. The column includes each component of a comprehensive service delivery system—student education, parent/family involvement, integrated services (including social, economic, and health services), and staff development—as well as category for "systems" or other goals. Individual program goals and objectives are then aligned within this framework. Reading across each goal/activity area, it is possible to see areas of overlap, as well as gaps in the service delivery system.

Such an analysis can be expanded upon—to examining staffing patterns, resource allocation, and so forth. A thorough analysis allows one to determine the degree to which a comprehensive, integrated system is in place. In the case of the analysis shown in Table B-1, there is *much* room for improvement in creating more descriptive goals and objectives that are aligned with and support one another.

Table B-1 (a)

Key Goals and/or Objectives for Select Federal and State Grant-Based Programs Supporting "At-Risk" Children and Families

Goal/Activity Areas	Chapter 1*	Chapter 2*	Migrant Child Education	Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs (TAOD)
Student Education - Academic Goals	<p>Goal 1: Provide one-on-one tutoring sessions using the H.O.S.T.S. model.</p> <p>Goal 2: Provide students additional instruction using multi-media lab.</p> <p>Goal 3: Provide additional assistance to students in reading and language in small intervention groups.</p> <p>Goal 4: Provide additional instructional provided by instructional assistants.</p> <p>Goal 5: Provide instructional assistant through pull-out program.</p> <p>Goal 6: Provide supplemental reading instruction w/ Reading Specialist and CAI.</p> <p>Goal 8: Provide extra assistance through the schoolwide model plan.</p>	<p>Activity 1: Provide additional staff for instructional services for at-risk students.</p> <p>Activity 2: Acquire materials, computer hardware/software for instructional use.</p> <p>Activity 6: Supplement foreign language program.</p> <p>Activity 7: Logistical support for extended learning/gifted program.</p> <p>Activity 8: Foundational skills program (preschool, primary grade programs).</p> <p>Activity 9: Homework hotline/educational TV.</p>	<p>Goal 1.0: To provide needed supplemental instructional services to eligible migrant students.</p>	
- Career Goals				
Parent/Family Involvement	<p>Goal 7: Coordinate parent involvement activities, recruit parents, etc.</p>		<p>Goal 3.0: To involve parents in the education of their eligible migrant children.</p>	
Integrated Services (Social/Health)			<p>Goal 2.0: To provide needed support services for effective education of eligible migrant students.</p>	<p>Goal 5: Continue w/ support groups for students needing assistance w/ problems re: chemical, physical and emotional abuse.</p>
Professional Development		<p>Activity 3: Provide staff training on EEI, foreign language, other program enhancements.</p>		<p>Goal 3: Improve teacher awareness of the need for supportive, positive self-esteem enhancement for all students through staff development, motivational talks, and selected readings.</p> <p>Goal 6: Provide training in "True Colors" for all certified and classified staff.</p>
System/Other		<p>Activity 4: Improve arts activities/programs.</p>	<p>Goal 5.0: To operate a coordinated and efficient program.</p>	<p>Goal 4: Continued participation in the District Substance Prevention Task Force to assist in the planning, implementation and evaluation of program.</p>

* Note: The sample program applications for these projects did not contain specifically written "goals," therefore, charted information was extracted from program objectives/descriptions.

Table B-1 (b)

Key Goals and/or Objectives for Select Federal and State Grant-Based Programs Supporting "At-Risk" Children and Families

Goal/Activity Areas	Indian Education (JOM)	Even Start	Eisenhower Math and Science	Homeless*
Student Education -Academic Goals	Goal 1: Indian students who are tutored will improve their grades. Goal 3: Provide an opportunity for Indian students to attend summer school.	Goal 1: Prepare children for success in school.	Activities: Purchase of calculators and manipulatives to support student instruction (as well as teacher training).	Activity 1: Provide educational assistance for homeless students.
- Career Goals	Goal 4: We will improve high school course planning and career awareness.			Activity 2: Assistance w/ course, college, and career choices will be offered.
Parent/Family Involvement	Goal 2: Provide parental costs which cover educational expenditures which directly benefit the student in the classroom and related school activities.	Goal 2: Encourage parental support in the education of their children. Goal 3: Promote adult education.		
Integrated Services (Social/Health)				Activity 3: Assistance to find lodging and other support services.
Professional Development		Goal 4: To participate collaboratively with other agencies and programs to create a network of services and support.	Activities: Training and retraining of staff on science and math issues.	
System/Other				

* Note: Sample program applications for these projects did not contain specifically written "goals," therefore, charted information was extracted from program objectives/descriptions.

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INDEXED BY SUBJECT

This bibliography includes references cited and additional selected resource materials used in the preparation of this report. It is indexed by subject as follows:

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SECTION A: COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

▲ Student Education

This section contains selected references on: at-risk education in general, dropout prevention and alternative programs, effective educational strategies, preschool, transition and early childhood education programs, and school-to-work transition programs. Some sources could be listed in more than one category; they are listed only once in the category judged most salient in the source.

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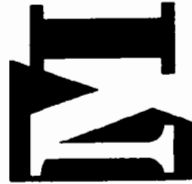
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