



StrateNotes

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning • September 2004 • Volume 13, Issue 1

Calendar

January 4-8, 2005

SIM Learning Strategies
Institute for Preservice
Educators
Lawrence, Kan.

January 6-8, 2005

Instructional Coaching
Institute
Details TBA

January 13-15, 2005

Northeast Region SIM PD
Conference
Washington Marriot
Hotel, Washington D.C.
Contact: Joan Fletcher,
jfletcher@
winningwaysinc.com

March 3-5, 2005

Southeast Region SIM PD
Conference
Holiday Inn Historic
District, Charleston, S.C.
Contact: Jerri Neduchal,
neduchj@ocps.k12.fl.us

March 14-18, 2005

Maho Bay SIM PD
Conference
St. John Island, Virgin
Islands
Plan to bring families.
Contact: Ed Pieper,
piepere@hotmail.com,
or Vicki Cotsworth,
vcots@ku.edu

May 31-June 4, 2005

Teaching Content to
All: Effective College
Teaching
Lawrence, Kan.

June 13-17, 2005

Strategic Instruction
Model Institute Writing
Strategies
Lawrence, Kan.

June 20-24, 2005

Potential SIM
Professional Developers
Institutes for Learning
Strategies and Content
Enhancement
Lawrence, Kan.

Less Really is More!

Mary Little, University of Central Florida
Bev Simpkins, Cobb Middle School

As the school year begins across the United States, recently legislated state and federal accountability requirements for mastery of standards for all students, including students with disabilities, are now instituted. In regard to this legislation, the “bottom line,” to borrow a phrase from our colleagues in business, is increasing student achievement to guarantee that no child is left behind. For teachers and

administrators who already embrace this goal, the real “bottom line” is how to collaborate to continuously improve the achievement of all students, especially students identified with disabilities, to meet these increased academic standards.

Changes in special education services should be viewed within the context of reform efforts in education. Clearly, if students with disabilities spend most of their day in general education and are held accountable for the same standards as all students, it is critical to focus attention on the instruction, strategies, and supports provided

to students and their teachers within the classrooms. Collaboration that maximizes the content knowledge of the general education teacher and the knowledge of strategies and differentiating instruction of the special educator must be initiated and enhanced. Teams of educators must

implement high quality, research-based instructional methods, strategies, and programs to meet the diverse needs of all students.

The focus of this article is to share and celebrate the efforts of the teachers and administrators at

Cobb Middle School is an urban middle school of about 950 students in Tallahassee, Fla. There is great diversity in the student body, and about 20 percent of the students have been identified with disabilities.

Cobb Middle School in Tallahassee, Fla., who are dedicated to increasing student achievement school-wide, especially in literacy. Due to these focused efforts during the last five years, reading comprehension rates have improved, writing skills are infused throughout the curriculum, and research-based programs and strategies are offered throughout the school.

In the Beginning . . .

Five years ago, student achievement results indicated that reading comprehension and writing skills needed to be improved for a majority

School	1998-1999		1999-2000			2000-2001		
	Mid%	High%	Low%	Mid%	High%	Low%	Mid%	High%
Cobb	82	55	17	83	51	30	90	70

Note: Low % represents students scoring in Level 1, the lowest 25 percentile in the state. Middle % represents students scoring in Level 2 or higher. High % represents students scoring in Level 3 or higher. Information obtained from the Florida Department of Education.

Table 1. Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Results in Reading

June 21-24, 2005

SIM Reading and Writing Strategies
(Formerly SIM Level 1)
Lawrence, Kan.

June 21-24, 2005

More SIM Strategies
(Formerly SIM Level 2)
Lawrence, Kan.

June 22-25, 2005

Cal-SIM
Bakersfield, Calif.
Contact: Tony Van Reusen,
avanreusen@csu.edu, or Cindy
Hurley, churley@ptloma.edu

June 27-30, 2005

SIM Institute: Introduction to Content
Enhancement Level 1
Lawrence, Kan.

July 18-19, 2005

SIM Preconference
SpringHill Suites, Lawrence, Kan.

July 20-22, 2005

International SIM Conference
SpringHill Suites, Lawrence, Kan.
Contact: Janet Roth, Mona Katz, and
Joyce Stevens, crl@ku.edu

July 25-29, 2005

SIM Institute: More Content
Enhancement Level 2
Lawrence, Kan.

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Research-Based Instruction	Programs	Students	Goal
Learning Strategies (Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing) (KU)	Co-taught language arts classes and resource settings	General education and ESE students in selected grades 6, 7, 8	To improve writing scores for targeted students
Content Enhancement Routines (Concept Mastery, Framing, Clarifying, Assignment Completion) (KU)	Mandatory and elective classes	All sixth grade students.	To provide content routines in reading and to improve assignment completion to all incoming sixth graders.
School-wide social skills (Great Expectations) (Oregon)	School-wide implementation	All students	To improve student behavior throughout school environment.
Explicit, intensive instruction of strategies in content classes. (Oregon)	History and math-grade 8	Targeted students in specific content areas with developed resources.	To improve student mastery of reading skills and content within content classes

Figure 1: Pilot programs instituted during first year of school reform initiative.

of students. At the same time, students with disabilities were experiencing success and great academic gains as a result of instruction in the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) reading strategies developed and validated at the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KU-CRL). In addition, teachers and administrators attended professional development to learn more about the research-based instructional strategies of the BIG Accommodation Model that was developed at the University of Oregon. The BIG Accommodation Model is a comprehensive, direct instruction, school-wide model designed to teach content and higher-level thinking skills in a manner that benefits all students. The model has been shown to be extremely successful with students with disabilities, students of poverty, and students learning English as a second language. The instruction uses technology, media, and materials that focus on **B**ig ideas, **I**ntensive instruction, and **G**reat expectations (BIG), a school-wide social skills program.

As shown in Figure 1 above, at the outset of this school reform initiative, teachers and administrators on the School Improvement Team at Cobb Middle School instituted several pilot programs

that focused on reading comprehension in targeted, specific content areas and grade levels.

After the initial year, students at Cobb Middle School experienced tremendous gains in both reading and writing. Table 1 on page 1 indicates the positive results yielded on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (state assessment measure) during those initial implementation years.

Figures 2 and 3 on page 3 show updated and recent student impact data.

Next Steps

From that beginning, the members of the literacy planning subcommittee of the School Improvement Committee continued to monitor both classroom results and state assessment data to continuously improve programming for students. During Years 2 and 3, both the content and process of the professional development for teachers for high-quality implementation of research-based strategies were enhanced. A core group of teachers implemented the *Concept Mastery*, *Unit Organizer*, and *Course Organizer* routines. Also, the *Concept Mastery* and *Framing* routines have been included in professional development for all content teachers within the school.

FCAT Sunshine State Standards: All Curriculum Groups for Cobb Middle School

Grade	Subject	2002			2003			2004
		Mean Scale Score	Percent at or Above Grade Level	Average DSS Change From 2001	Mean Scale Score	Percent at or Above Grade Level	Average DSS Change	Mean Scale Score
6	Reading	309	64	+79	318	69	+122	316
7	Reading	312	63	+89	323	66	+115	325
8	Reading	318	58	+83	312	56	+117	315

Figure 2: FCAT Sunshine State Standards

High quality and consistent use of the routines are modeled and expected. For example, at a faculty meeting, the topic of school-wide expectations was developed, discussed, and shared through the use of the Framing Routine. Figure 4 on page 4 is a product of that faculty meeting.

Exceptional Student Education teachers continued to participate in professional development in SIM Learning Strategies (*Fundamentals in Sentence Writing, Proficiency in Sentence Writing, Paraphrasing, Word Identification, Self-Advocacy*, etc.). To assure high-quality implementation of the Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines, an on-site SIM Professional Developer provides job-embedded coaching, feedback, and support, as well as continuous updates of resources and research. During Year 4, this SIM Professional Developer facilitated an action research process with the research question focusing on increasing essay writing scores using the *Framing Routine* for pre-writing organizing or planning. Results were shared with the language arts department, administration and district staff development office.

Building on the success of implementing these research-based programs that addressed the needs of students, Cobb Middle School now is developing a comprehensive literacy program based in part on KU-CRL's Content Literacy Continuum (CLC). CLC is a framework that describes five levels of literacy support involving a continuum of services, programs, and student instruction. It is designed for schools to develop and sustain comprehensive and integrated programs that promote student achievement.

Norm-Referenced Tests - SAT/9 and FCAT 2001-2004

Grade	Subject	2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
		Mean Scale Score	NPR	Mean Scale Score	NPR	Mean Scale Score	NPR
6	Reading	309	64	+79	318	+122	316
7	Reading	312	63	+89	323	+115	325
8	Reading	318	58	+83	312	+117	315

Figure 3: Norm-Referenced Tests

This model enables all faculty—content experts, special educators, reading educators, and education specialists and therapists—to address the development of literacy at the secondary level from their unique perspectives.

During this fifth year of implementation, Cobb's student population has grown by more than 25 percent from 2003-2004 due to a district voluntary transfer policy to meet the mandates of "No Child Left Behind" and the excellent student results at Cobb Middle School. These outstanding student results have earned the teachers and administrators at Cobb an "A" rating for the fourth year in a row, as determined by state indicators for student achievement. To address the changes for this new school year, 15 additional teachers have been hired at Cobb. All teachers (including all of the new teachers) have received initial professional development and implementation support through coaching (see Figure 5 on page 5) in the *Overview of Content Enhancement, Concept Mastery Routine*, and the *Framing Routine*.

Several supports are in place to pro-

mote quality implementation of SIM throughout the school:

- An experienced SIM Professional Developer employed full time at the middle school has been released from some direct teaching responsibilities to provide specific, job-embedded coaching at least two periods each day, through support and funding provided by the school administration.
- A professional development coach is provided at each grade level.
- All teachers maintain a portfolio illustrating their implementation of the SIM interventions. The portfolio includes an individual professional development plan (mandated for teacher accountability in the state of Florida), teacher and student products of the SIM interventions, student outcomes (test data, pre/post results, etc.), and action research data and reports.
- An observation tool for administrators outlines specific and observable teacher behavior to assure the high-quality implementation of SIM. Administrators attend workshops and conferences and conduct class-

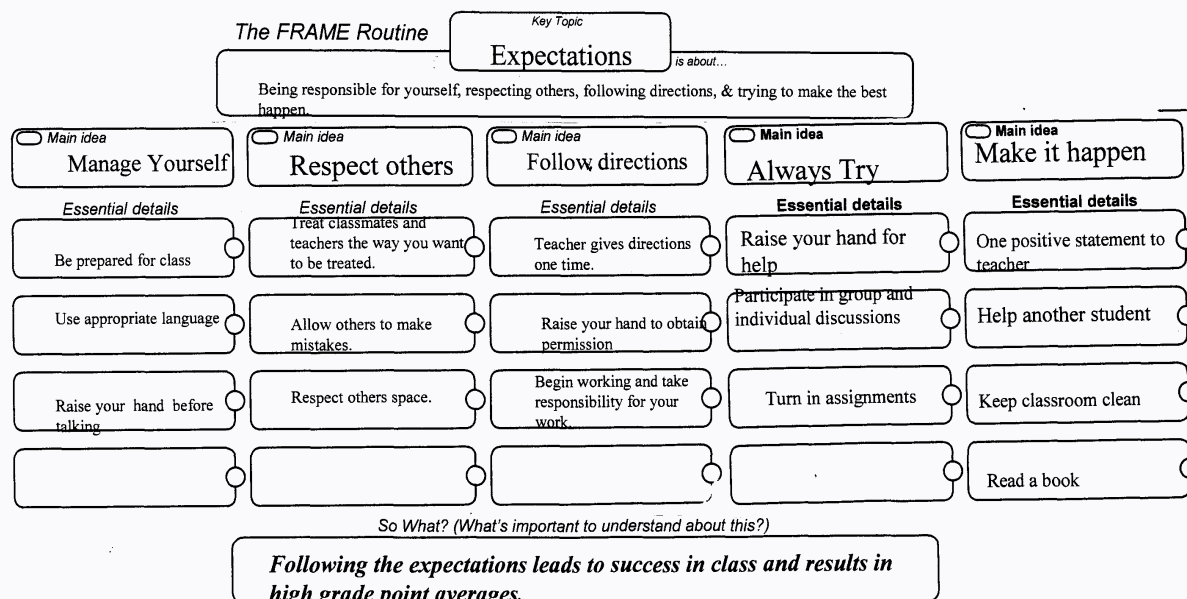


Figure 4: Schoolwide expectations frame.

room observations to ensure teacher accountability.

Student Achievement and Lessons Learned

Teachers and administrators at Cobb are proud of their achievements. It has not been an easy road, but to see increased student achievement, the school stayed true to its plan and continues to follow it today. The changes that have taken place are attributed to these key factors:

- The belief that all students can achieve
- The vision, leadership, and guidance of a principal who believes in research-based instructional programs
- The presence of an experienced SIM Professional Developer on campus, which increased opportunities for professional development, follow-up, and coaching
- The belief that middle school students need routines in academics and social skills
- The belief that the school needs continuing support from collaborative partners in the university and business communities to make it happen

- The belief that teacher and administrative collaboration is the key to survival
- The participation of the administration in staff development and follow-up activities
- The ability to use existing funding for staff development and to apply for additional grants to enhance programs

‘These outstanding student results have earned the teachers and administrators at Cobb an “A” rating for the fourth year in a row, as determined by state indicators for student achievement’

- throughout the school
- The use of continuous progress monitoring of student results to learn from mistakes and turn them into an action plan for solutions
 - The belief that change takes time and fidelity of implementation is critical
- As the student results show, these beliefs and the resulting actions truly make a difference for the learning for our students at Cobb Middle School. (See Figures 2 and 3 on page 3 for recent student results.)

Where Do We Go From Here?

At Cobb, we believe in our school mission: “The community of Cobb Middle School strives to encourage and establish academic excellence and social and personal growth in a creative learning environment.” SIM, with its “less is more” approach to instruction, complements our mission. As we go forward, we will continue to promote the use of SIM interventions to help teachers select critical course content and teach using research-based instructional methods. The results we have seen so far confirm that we are on the right path.

StrateDirectory information

If you were not listed in StrateDirectory last year or if you need to correct or change directory information, complete the form on pages 6 and 7 and return it to CRL by November 15 to be included in the 2005 StrateDirectory. If you were listed in last year’s directory and you do not need to change any information, you do not need to complete this form.

Request for Coaching

Name _____ Preferred Class Period _____

Need Assistance with:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm up routine
<input type="checkbox"/> Dismissal from the door
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Science Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade book
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Routines, specify _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions
<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Math Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson Plans
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Student(s) performance concerns:

Specify: _____

Coaching Implementation

Coach _____ Date _____ Period _____

Assisted with:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm up routine
<input type="checkbox"/> Dismissal from the door
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Science Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Grade book
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Routines, specify _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions
<input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Math Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies Routines
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesson Plans
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Student(s) performance concerns:

Specify: _____

Other assistance: _____

Follow-up Plan :

Cobb Middle School 2004

Figure 5: Request for Coaching

Living in 'Survival Mode'

In a note that probably sounds entirely too familiar to many members of our network who live in Florida, **Judy O'Malley** wrote on September 13 of coping with the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan: "Just thought I'd let you know that we are all fine here in Palm Beach. It was pretty scary for a while, but everyone survived. We had some trees down in our yard, but the roof held on the house. We were

without electricity for a week...I now know what it means to live in survival mode. My only source of cooking was our charcoal grill. We burned candles at night and went to bed early, because there was nothing to do. One morning, I took my cast iron skillet and cooked 1 1/2 lbs of bacon and a dozen eggs on the grill. Took me about an hour, but they didn't go to waste."

SIM PD News

David Scanlon, a former CRL researcher and a member of the SIM Network, has been named editor of *Learning Disability Quarterly*. He assumed his duties July 1. David is the author of the *ORDER Routine*, published this summer.

...

From **Jean Piazza**: "Things are not dull out here in Wyoming. We have all new administrators here at the high school. I am busy keeping our SIM efforts moving forward. In one of my first meetings with our new principal, as I was reviewing what we had done with SIM reading strategies last year, I asked him if he was at all familiar with SIM. His response was to reach down into a desk drawer and pull out an old draft of a TOWER diagram. He went on to explain that 100 years ago, he was at a workshop in Cody put on by Conn Thomas and that he has used this device ever since to organize himself!! I loved it!!!

"Our assistant principal from last year is now an assistant superintendent in Meeteetse, Wyo., (total teaching staff of 25 K-12). He has contacted me and asked that "I do for Meeteetse what I did for Cody." In other words, SIM reading strategies are their school improvement plan.

"And, just when I thought my plate was pleasantly full, I got a call from a new teacher in Greybull, Wyo., who just graduated from St Cloud State in Minnesota, had strategies as part of teacher prep, and wants to bring them to Greybull. The exciting thing about this is Conn did quite a bit of training there 10 or 12 years ago and I did some more about five years ago, so I was able to hook him up with teachers on staff there with knowledge of strategies. He is also going to work with his administration to have more training and follow-up."

Date: _____

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone: _____

Primary Employment Site: _____

Title of Position _____

Work Address: _____

Phone: _____

Note: If you do not want your phone number to appear in the directory, do not list it here.

Preferred Mailing Address: ____Home ____Work

E-mail Address: _____

Fax Number: _____

Check the professional categories that describe you:

- ☐ college/university professor
☐ full-time staff developer
☐ high school teacher
☐ junior high school teacher
☐ middle school teacher
☐ elementary teacher
☐ administrator
☐ post-secondary teacher of students with learning disabilities
☐ general education teacher
☐ special education teacher
☐ independent trainer
☐ other _____

Check the category or categories that best describe the school districts in which you are the most comfortable or experienced in providing training:

- ☐ inner city
☐ suburban
☐ rural
☐ other _____

Indicate the student populations with which you are most familiar:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ESL | <input type="checkbox"/> TMR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMR | <input type="checkbox"/> At Risk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LD | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADD | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BD | |

Check the strategies and routines in which you feel that you are an expert and are willing to advise others.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Collaborative Problem Solving | <input type="checkbox"/> 24. Concept Comparison |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Concept Mastery Routine | <input type="checkbox"/> 25. Surface Counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Self-Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> 26. Paired Associates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Error-Monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> 27. Clarifying Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. FIRST-Letter Mnemonic | <input type="checkbox"/> 28. Survey Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Lesson Organizer Routine | <input type="checkbox"/> 29. Theme Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. LINC'S | <input type="checkbox"/> 30. Course Organizer Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Math Strategies | <input type="checkbox"/> 31. Framing Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Paragraph Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> 32. Recall Enhancement Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Paraphrasing | <input type="checkbox"/> 33. Quality Assignment Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Progress Program | <input type="checkbox"/> 34. InSPECT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. SCORE | <input type="checkbox"/> 35. THINK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Sentence Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> 36. LEARN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14. SLANT | <input type="checkbox"/> 37. BUILD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Social Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> 38. Strategic Tutoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16. Teamwork | <input type="checkbox"/> 39. Talking Together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Test-Taking | <input type="checkbox"/> 40. Following Instructions Together |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Visual Imagery | <input type="checkbox"/> 41. Vocabulary LINCing Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Word Identification | <input type="checkbox"/> 42. Question Exploration Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Concept Anchoring Routine | <input type="checkbox"/> 43. Possible Selves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21. Unit Organizer Routine | <input type="checkbox"/> 44. ORDER Routine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22. Self-Questioning | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 23. Assignment Completion | |

What are your main areas of interest related to SIM?

About how many teachers do you train annually?
(*KU-CRL may use this information for writing grants.*)

Comments/Questions:

Time to renew

It's time to renew your *Strateworks* membership for 2004-2005. If there is a green dot on your mailing label below, you have already renewed your membership. If you see a red dot, however, you are in danger of losing these important benefits of *Strateworks* membership:

- *Stratenotes*, a newsletter for SIM Professional Developers published nine times a year
 - *Strategram*, a newsletter for teachers published six times a year
 - SIMTRAINER-L, an e-mail discussion list, and SIMville, a web site just for SIM Professional Developers
 - *Stratepubs*, two recent articles published by KU-CRL researchers
- Don't miss out! Renew now.

Remember, you must maintain a current *Strateworks* membership to be considered an active SIM Professional Developer.

Strateworks Renewal 2004-2005

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP: _____

Work Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Please indicate where you prefer to receive mail: ____home ____work

E-mail address: _____

VISA/MasterCard Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Authorization: _____

Mail completed form and your payment of \$35 (U.S.) to KU-CRL
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Lawrence, KS 66045-3101

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