

Calendar

June 13-15, 2001
Strategic Instruction
Model: Writing Strategies
Workshop
Lawrence, Kansas

June 18-22, 2001
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop: Content
Enhancement

June 20-23, 2001
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level I
Lawrence, Kansas

June 20-23, 2001
Strategic Instruction Model
(SIM) Workshop Level II
Lawrence, Kansas

June 21-23, 2001
California Update Meeting
Buena Park, California
All SIM Trainers welcome

June 25-27, 2001
Strategic Instruction
Model: Reading Strategies
Workshop
Lawrence, Kansas

July 17, 2001
Preconference Workshop
Lawrence, Kansas

July 18-20, 2001
International SIM Trainers'
Conference
Lawrence, Kansas

July 30-August 1, 2001
Advanced Trainers'
Workshop: Creating SIM
Schools
Lawrence, Kansas

More calendar on page 2

Revenue. Expenditure.

The concepts these words represent are foundational to understanding school finance, and understanding school finance could be your key to **getting more funds to support your professional development efforts**, whether you are an independent trainer, an administrator, or a staff development specialist within a district.

SIM Trainer Carl Skordahl, retired director of special education for Osseo Area Schools in Maple Grove, Minnesota, was able to increase the allocation of staff development funds for his school district by understanding school finance issues. Skordahl shared his fiscal insight during the 2000 International SIM Trainers' Conference last summer in Lawrence, Kansas.

When Skordahl became involved in budgeting for his district, he came to realize how much money the district received as a result of federal legislation and was struck by how the district chose to spend that money.

Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, state education agencies receive an allocation of federal money (Federal B funds) based on the number of individualized education programs (IEPs) in effect in the state each year. The state agencies take a percentage of the money for administrative costs and special project grants (including some SIM programs in Minnesota a couple of years ago), then allocate the rest to local districts, based on the number of IEPs in each district.

"What I discovered is that a substantial percentage of the Federal B funds were targeted at the IEP population that represented approximately 20 percent of the students on IEPs (primarily the low-incidence population). In no way is the importance of supporting effective programming for these students being minimized here! All students with disabilities need effective programming," he said.

School Finance 101

Obtaining funds for staff development

Plus financial advice:

Special ed administrators—page 3

Professional developers—page 4

*Julie Tollefson, Director of Communications,
Center for Research on Learning*

*Carl Skordahl, Retired Director of Special
Education, Osseo Area Schools, Maple Grove,
Minnesota*



More calendar

July 30-August 3, 2001
Workshop for Potential SIM
Content Enhancement Trainers
Lawrence, Kansas

July 30-August 3, 2001
Workshop for Potential SIM
Learning Strategy Trainers
Lawrence Kansas

August 6-10, 2001
SIM Learning Strategies
Potential Trainers Workshop
Middletown, Connecticut

Workshop information

For a complete list of SIM workshops, visit our web site. The workshop information page, www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/workshops.html, contains links to supplemental materials, including registration forms, that may be downloaded.

Please note that **it is not too late** to register for the summer workshops. If you know of any individuals interested in attending our workshops, especially SIM Level 1 and Level 2, encourage them to contact the Center to register now.

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Contributors: Donald D. Deshler
Jean B. Schumaker
B. Keith Lenz
Jim Knight
Janet B. Roth

Editor: Julie Tollefson

The University of Kansas
Center for Research on Learning

Skordahl thought, however, that students with higher-incidence disabilities needed more funds to improve their programming and services.

As mandated by federal regulations, services for students with disabilities fall on a continuum from placement in general education classrooms at one end to placement in residential facilities and homebound/hospital placements on the other. In Minnesota, for example, these placements are referred to as Level 1 (least severe disabilities) to Level 8 (most severe disabilities). Skordahl's concern focused on students on IEPs in Levels 1 through 3, and especially on Levels 1 and 2, which have an inclusive programming philosophy. Level 1 and 2 students spend the full day in the regular education setting with minimal pullout.

"I felt this group was falling through the cracks," he said.

The effect of the disabilities these students have is more subtle than the disabilities of students with more severe problems, Skordahl said. As a result, decision-makers may not think programs that focus on their needs are as critical.

Skordahl looked at the situation and saw a different story.

Level 1 and 2 students constitute as much as 80 or 85 percent of the students for whom IEPs are in effect each year, he said, yet the bulk of the Federal B funds were funneled to programs for students with more severe disabilities.

To change the way this money was

spent, Skordahl set out to methodically change district attitudes toward the budget and the students who needed the money.

Skordahl wanted to increase the amount of Federal B funds spent on professional development for both general education and special education teachers because, he said, Level 1 and 2 students benefit most from teachers who have been through

intensive inservice programs focused on their needs. In addition, preparing general education teachers to work effectively with students who have disabilities can actually reduce the number of referrals to special education.

"The case I made is that if we had 80 percent of the money in Federal B being generated by these students, then a substantial

amount of these funds should be targeted at programming and service for these students," Skordahl said.

To generate support for the shift in funds, Skordahl began by "planting seeds" with individuals he considered to be the strongest staff members—those who were more verbal, more challenging, unafraid to ask the tough questions at meetings. He also planted seeds with building principals, focusing on how SIM helps students with disabilities.

Discussions with principals was focused on a staff development partnership between general and special education teachers targeted at improved programming for students in Levels 1 and 2 with an inclusionary

The two sides of school finance

Sources of **income** (revenue) for most school districts consist of funds allocated by local, state, and federal governments as well as any special grants the district receives.

Expenditures encompass capital, transportation, food services, community services, and a general fund. Most staff development, instructional salaries, benefits, and retirement program expenses come out of the general fund. Budgeting for these expenses requires not only considering current-year needs but also future needs.



Financial advice: Special education administrators

First, understand the funding mechanisms as well as the program requirements. Special education administrators cannot say “I’m not going to get concerned about money. I’m too busy in program,” Carl Skordahl said. The two go hand in hand.

Second, conduct a careful needs assessment for students with less severe disabilities—those who are placed in general education classrooms or in partial-pullout programs—to determine in what areas staff development efforts can be most beneficial. Keep in mind that the goal is for teachers to help these students become more successful in competing with their non-disabled

peers academically.

Third, work closely with general education. Special educators and general educators must work together closely for these students to be successful. It is especially important to work with curriculum and instruction directors and principals. A connection with the classroom also is important.

“District-wide administrators need to be out in the buildings working with the teachers and talking with principals,” Skordahl said. “You can’t do it from an office. It’s got to be real active.”

Fourth, be sensitive to the pressures everyone is under for staff development in all other areas.

Discussing finance issues with building principals can be helpful. They may know about an initiative that you aren’t aware of, for example.

“In my work over the years as a special educator, I was very careful to work with building principals to help them really understand the importance of making sure there’s equity in terms of staff development targeting skills to use with kids with disabilities and kids without disabilities,” Skordahl said.

Finally, stay focused. “Never compromise your passions,” Skordahl said. “If you do, especially as a person in a leadership position, you will become unpredictable.”

philosophy. Putting more money into professional development to help general and special education teachers work together made sense to them, Skordahl said.

The next year, Skordahl talked with administrators, who had the final decision-making authority for the budget to get their support.

The next challenge facing Skordahl was to work with the district’s teachers to sell them on the changes. Some teachers resisted, seeing little benefit to changing their approach.

Skordahl’s argument that more of the money generated by Level 1 and 2 students should be spent for their benefit eventually succeeded. The last time he developed a budget, he was able to allocate a substantial increase in the percentage of the district’s Federal B funds for

professional development.

That year, Skordahl’s district had a total of 2,450 students on active IEPs. Of that, 1,286 were in general education classrooms with some pullout activities (Level 1), and 800 received more pullout instruction (Level 2). Level 1 and 2 made up about 66 percent of the district’s IEPs.

The district received about \$550 per IEP in Federal B funds that year. Of that, federal regulations required \$12 per IEP be allocated to professional development activities. Skordahl went beyond that and allocated another \$100 per IEP for staff development.

Skordahl’s budget success meant that many more teachers were exposed to effective, research-validated ways of improving the educational experience for students

with disabilities, just the result he expected.

“I’ve always had a belief that effective instruction and inclusion is critical to kids with disabilities if they’re going to be successful in society,” he said. “I’ve always maintained that passion as a special educator.”

How SIM fits

Underlying Skordahl’s financial message is a second message: His unwavering belief in the effectiveness of the Strategic Instruction Model.

Skordahl achieved widespread implementation of SIM in his district by consistently and methodically promoting the program based on its effectiveness and success.

Administrators must be accountable for the money they spend, ➤

Sleuths sought

Help us solve a mystery!
Here are the clues:

- The item we are looking for is a book (we think).
- The title of the book may be *Writing for Readers*.
- The author's name may be George Bramer.
- The book may be out of print.
- The book includes chapters such as *Predictable Patterns: Introduction, Conclusions, and Paragraphs*.

Someone (it may have been you!) gave us copies of some of the pages from this book, and they fit well with the work we are doing on theme writing. We would like to build on these ideas and credit the appropriate people.

If you have a copy of this book, please contact Janet Roth (jroth@ku.edu) or Julie Tollefson (jtollefson@ku.edu). We are especially interested in a portion of the book called *Eight Ways to Conclude*.

Send your news to Julie Tollefson at the Center for Research on Learning, 521 Joseph R. Pearson Hall, 1122 West Campus Road, Lawrence, KS 66045 or e-mail Julie at jtollefson@ku.edu.

Financial advice: Professional developers

For administrators or trainers seeking more money for professional development, it is imperative to learn about finances in the district.

Carl Skordahl recommends looking at data for a particular district, including how the district allocates money from various sources. This information is public record. In addition, Skordahl recommends trying to find statistical data about the success rates of students with disabilities. Look for data for the past five years or so to try to uncover patterns that you can address.

Once you have an idea of the district's finances and professional development needs, request to have a meeting with the special education director. In this meeting, Skordahl advises that you talk about your professional

development ideas in the context of what you perceive as potential staff development areas of need.

The next step is to request a discussion with a principal or group of principals. Try to understand their perspective, the constraints on the budget, the pressures they face. Find out whether the district or individual school is involved in any initiatives. Get a handle on what kind of activity is covered in the budget for the current year as well as what the principals anticipate for the future.

Once you have gathered the relevant information, you will be ready to craft and present a professional development plan that meets the school's or district's needs.


he said, so the programs that get the money must be effective.

SIM meets the effectiveness test for Skordahl on several fronts:

- It is thoroughly field tested and backed by data.
- It is a complete program that teaches specific skills and then helps students generalize those skills to other settings.
- It is cost-effective.

Skordahl is retired but still active in education both locally and in the SIM International Training Network. He was in education as a classroom teacher, program supervisor, and director of special education totaling 34 years. On

a limited basis, he is doing some teacher recruitment work for Osseo Area Schools in Maple Grove, Minnesota. He is concerned about the critical shortage of both general and special education teacher candidates. He believes active recruitment will be necessary to compete for quality teacher candidates.

Skordahl and his wife, who is retiring from teaching this spring, have many travel plans in mind in their future. However, he says he will always stay connected with the SIM Network and its staff, who he believes has made some of the greatest contributions in the improvement of education for both disabled and non-disabled youth. 

2001 conference

See the tentative conference schedule on page 6.

In light of the movement toward establishing state standards for education, we are pleased to be able to present a special conference session focusing on this topic.

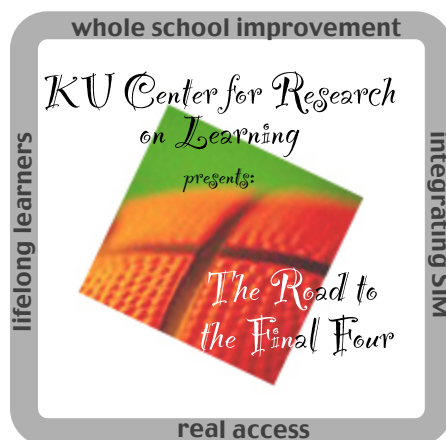
John Poggio, professor in the Department of Psychology and Research in Education and co-director of the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas, will kick off "Standards and SIM: A round table discussion." The presentation is tentatively scheduled as a general session on the morning of the second day of the conference (Thursday, July 19).

"John has a superb understanding of the whole standards movement," said Don Deshler, director of the Center for Research on Learning.

Poggio has been asked to outline the basics of understanding standardized tests, including how they are developed, and address the topic of alignment between what teachers teach and state tests. Although Poggio's work with CETE involves developing standards and tests for the state of Kansas, he will talk about the standards movement in general.

The session will include representatives of the Center for Research on Learning and the SIM International Training Network to respond to Poggio's presentation with questions directly relevant to SIM. Audience questions also will be encouraged.

This session is designed to help SIM Trainers answer the increasingly frequent question: "How do Learning Strategies and Content Enhancement Routines align with standards?"



New manuals

The following new manuals will be presented during the conference:

- *LINCing Routine*, an adaptation of the *LINCS Vocabulary Strategy* for use in the general education classroom
- *Following Instructions Together*, the second manual in the *Community Building Series*.

Sessions

Our keynote speaker on Wednesday, July 18, will be Russell Gersten, director of the Eugene Research Institute and professor in the College of Education at the University of Oregon. His address will be "What the Research Really Says about Factors that Lead to Sustained Change in Classroom Teaching."

Other session topics planned for the conference include:

- an integrated look at current CRL research projects
- the Theme Writing Strategy (note: we will present a session, but the manual has not been published)
- how SIM fits with other reading programs
- how SIM fits with other writing programs
- integrating Learning Strategies, Content Enhancement Routines, and secondary curriculum

Conference info

www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/announcements/conference.html

Requests: Trainers who plan to attend the conference may request sessions on specific topics. See the Call for Presentations form on our web site.

Hotel: Rooms are available at the Lawrence Holidome, the conference hotel, for \$67 per night plus 10.9 percent tax. Reservations may be made with the hotel by calling (785) 841-7077. Please specify that you are with the National SIM Trainers' Conference to ensure special group rates. A block of rooms will be held for SIM Trainers until June 20, 2001. After that, reservations will be taken on a space-available basis, and the hotel cannot guarantee the special rate.

Transportation from Kansas City International Airport:

- Superior Shuttle Service, (888) 795-3914. Make reservations 12 to 24 hours in advance. As of May 20, fares will be \$27 one way, \$50 round trip.
- Midwest Limousine Services, (888) 467-3729. Rates begin at \$60 per trip for a limo holding 4; groups are welcome to split fares.

Transportation in Lawrence:

- Lawrence Taxi Service, (785) 842-8294. Rates begin at \$6 for a ride of less than 10 blocks.
- Lawrence Transit System, (785) 312-7054. Bus fares are 50 cents. More information: www.lawrenceks.org.

CRL tour

SIM Trainers who attend the 2001 conference will have the opportunity to visit the Center's new home in Joseph R. Pearson Hall. We hope you'll join us when we open our doors for a tour at the end of the second day, Thursday, July 19.

Poster, kaleidoscope sessions

The 2001 International SIM Trainers' Conference again will feature the popular **kaleidoscope session**.

During this session, participants move through several stations, hearing short presentations at each one.

If you have an idea that doesn't lend itself well to a poster or a full-length conference session, consider presenting it during the kaleidoscope session.

The conference **poster session** is another valuable way to share your ideas and accomplishments with other members of the SIM Network. Our poster session coordinator will work directly with you to ensure you have the materials you need. Please be thinking of ideas you can share in this way.

You may download a Call for Presentations form from our web site:

www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/announcements/conference.html

The form also appeared in the January issue of *Strate-notes*.

Conference schedule

(tentative)

2001 SIM International Trainers' Conference The Road to the Final Four

Wednesday

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m.-8:45 a.m. | Registration |
| 8:45 a.m.-10:00 a.m. | Opening Session <i>"What the Research Really Says about Factors that Lead to Sustained Change in Classroom Teaching"</i> Russell Gersten, University of Oregon |
| 10:15 a.m.-11:45 a.m. | Concurrent Sessions |
| 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. | Lunch on your own |
| 1:15 p.m.-5:00 p.m. | Concurrent Sessions |
| 5:15 p.m.-6:30 p.m. | Social |

Thursday

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 7:45 a.m.-8:15 a.m. | Registration |
| 8:15 a.m.-9:30 a.m. | General Session <i>"Standards and SIM: A round table discussion"</i> John Poggio, University of Kansas |
| 9:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m. | Concurrent Sessions |
| 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. | Recognition Luncheon |
| 1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m. | Poster Session |
| 2:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. | Concurrent Sessions |
| 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. | Tour of Center for Research on Learning's new offices |

Friday

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 7:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m. | Kaleidoscope with Continental Breakfast |
| 9:15 a.m.-10:15 a.m. | General Session <i>"An Integrated Look at CRL Research Projects"</i> Keith Lenz, CRL |
| 10:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m. | Concurrent Sessions |
| 1:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m. | Closing Session Don Deshler, director, CRL |

Preconference

This year's preconference workshop, which will be July 17, will look at lessons learned in our *Pathways to Success* project. *Pathways* uses a variety of methods to implement SIM on a large scale. Participants at this workshop will learn about new methods and adaptations for teaching learning strategies in general education classrooms as well as new materials that have been developed as student readings for the *Paraphrasing* and *Visual Imagery* strategies.

Advanced workshop

The Advanced Trainers' Workshop: Teacher-Guided Professional Development will be July 30-August 1, 2001, in Lawrence, Kansas. The workshop will enable participants to work on real problems as they learn. Participants will build presentations shaped around partnership principles, learn and practice new skills, and learn and practice process structures for solving problems or creating implementation plans. More information is available on our web site.

New on the CRL web site

The CRL's web site links to all of the items listed below. To reach the web site's Table of Contents page,

- visit **www.ku-crl.org** then click on **Contents**
or
- use the following direct address:
www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/core.html
- The **Concept Anchoring Routine** is featured in the new issue of the University of Kansas research web magazine, *Explore*. Check out *Explore*: at **www.research.ukans.edu/explore/v2n2/toc.html**. The CRL web site also links to the article.
- A group of students from **Landon Middle School** in Topeka, Kansas, visited CRL recently. The students are working on a "companion" web site for the *Pathways to Success* project. See photos of the visit on our site.
- In case you missed the lead article in the March 2001 issue of Stratenotes,

you may read it in the May Spotlight on our web site. In **Smarter Planning**, Keith Lenz discusses why educators must think differently about selecting content to reflect learning expectations specified in state and local standards.

- A new draft of the **Secondary Program Self-Evaluation Rubric** has been posted on the web site. The rubric is posted in two parts: The first is a description of quality indicators by which schools may evaluate the effectiveness of their special education programs. The second contains self-evaluation charts matched to the rubric's quality indicators.
- We have added a **"search" function** to the web site. The function is available from the Table of Contents page. Check the left-hand side of the page for the search box. The search function also is available at the bottom of the Site Map page.

Web links

- Pathways to Success
www.ku-crl.org/pathways
- Teacher-Guided Professional Development
www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/tgpd.html
- Conference and preconference registration forms
www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/announcements/conference.html
- Advanced Trainers' Workshop
www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/announcements/advanced.html
- California update meeting
www.ku-crl.org/htmlfiles/california.html
- Strategic Learning Center
www.smarttogether.org

Describing the network

Recently, we asked SIM Trainers who subscribe to SIMTRAINER-L, an e-mail discussion list, to jot down a few words that describe the SIM Training Network, SIM Trainers, and the work SIM Trainers do.

The responses painted a portrait of a network of talented, intelligent people who are dedicated to their work; who value collaboration; who approach their work in a fun-loving, energetic, and creative way; who inspire and are inspired by others; and who never cease to learn.

This picture will help us shape a current project related to the network.

To add your 2 cents to this discussion or to start a discussion of your own, see the instructions at right for subscribing to SIMTRAINER-L.



SIMTRAINER-L

To engage in discussions for SIM Trainers, subscribe to our e-mail discussion list. Send an e-mail message to

listproc@ukans.edu

In the body of the message, type

sub SIMTRAINER-L Your Name

Replace "Your Name" with your name. Note that SIMTRAINER-L is all one word; do not type any spaces in the list name. Do not type anything in the subject line of the message.

SIMville

SIMville is the first place to look for training and classroom activities. From the Center's web site,

www.ku-crl.org

click on "SIM Trainer Resources." When you select the log on option, you will be asked for a password. Type **"strategic"** in the box (do not type the quotation marks). The password is case-sensitive, so you must use all lowercase letters. Click on the "OK" button. To bypass the password screen in the future, bookmark the first SIMville page.

Open house draws attention to Strategic Learning Center

An open house and ribbon cutting ceremony drew quite a crowd April 11 to the University of Kansas Strategic Learning Center, a project of the Center for Research on Learning.

The KU Strategic Learning Center offers affordable services to students of all ages and educational backgrounds. The center's tutors are trained in the CRL's learning strategies.

"Our goal is to nurture self-sufficient learners and give them the skills and tools needed to experience immediate success in the classroom through a personal, research-based approach to tutoring and learning," said Lisa Walsh, director of youth



KU professor Gary Clark talks with Mike Hock, CRL research associate, during the Strategic Learning Center open house.

services at the center.

Learn more about the KU Strategic Learning Center and an affiliated center in Seattle on the web: www.smarttogether.org.

FIRST CLASS

University of Kansas
STRATENOTES Volume 9-Issue #8
CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEARNING
Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities
521 Joseph R. Pearson Hall
1122 West Campus Road
Lawrence, Kansas 66045