



# STRATENOTES



Volume 1, Issue 2 -- October, 1992

## IS SIM AN INCLUSIONARY MODEL?

From what we at the KU-IRLD are being told, some administrators are choosing to abandon intensive support services for students with disabilities in favor of placing them in regular classes for the whole day. Some special education teachers are being asked to consult with mainstream teachers; others are being assigned to team-teach with mainstream teachers; others are quite simply losing their jobs because their positions have been eliminated. We have also been told that the Strategies Intervention Model (SIM) is being questioned in some schools because people do not perceive it as an "inclusionary" model.

The fact of the matter is that the SIM is an inclusionary model in many respects. When the KU-IRLD was founded, the assigned mission was to develop an intervention model for adolescents with learning disabilities (LD). One of the major goals that the KU-IRLD staff set forth at the beginning of the project was to enable students with LD to succeed in the mainstream, i.e., to be **included** with their non disabled peers within the educational process and to **succeed** in the process. In school districts in which a scope and sequence of learning strategy instruction is in place, this goal is being met. Students who previously might have dropped out of school are now able to enroll and succeed in regular classes with very little monitoring and support during their junior and senior years of high school. These students are not only **included** in regular classes, they are able to succeed and to feel good about themselves because they are doing the work themselves.

Second, the SIM contains two major components. The first component focuses on teaching students the skills and strategies they need to meet the demands of the regular class setting. People might look at this component and say that it is not "inclusionary" because the

students are receiving instruction, often in a support class by a special education teacher, that is different from instruction that is traditionally delivered in regular classrooms. What they have lost sight of is that it doesn't matter **where** this instruction is delivered or **who** delivers it. The classroom can be blue or brown, or be labeled the Learning Center or Mrs. Smith's classroom. The teacher can be the regular class teacher or the special education teacher. Our research has shown that what matters is that the instruction must be delivered to the students daily for a relatively short period of time in an intensive fashion and in a way that ensures mastery and generalization. As a result of this instruction, students can really be included in regular classes at a level where their self esteem can be enhanced. Thus, helping people to think of this component of the model as having "no walls" is important. What matters is that someone or several someones within a school are responsible for teaching strategies somewhere within that school using the appropriate instructional procedures. In some schools, this responsibility is being shared by several teachers (e.g., special education teachers, English teachers, reading teachers, content teachers) and takes place in several classes.

The second component of SIM focuses on delivering instruction in regular classes in such a way that all students can understand and remember the information. This component focuses on instruction in classes in which diverse populations of students are enrolled (including students with LD and other at-risk students). This component of the model again embraces inclusionary principles. Over the past nine years, we have worked to develop teaching and planning routines for regular education teachers to use for these purposes in their regular classes. The underlying principles upon which this work has been founded are: the routines must be easy to learn and practical to implement; they must result in gains for and be accepted by all students in the class; they must result in socially significant outcomes for at-risk students (e.g., previously failing students become passing students); they must not require the sacrifice of major portions of the content to be delivered;



and teachers must accept them. The planning and teaching routines that we have developed embody these principles.

We understand that this second component of the model requires us to become serious about training regular education teachers to use planning and teaching routines. We recently received funding to enable us to begin national dissemination of this part of the model. We will be working cooperatively with teacher-training institutions around the nation on this project for the next five years. We anticipate that our work on this project will result in many new training materials being made available to the Network.

In conclusion, we all need to help people keep the inclusionary focus of SIM in mind. We need to educate them to have a broader concept of "inclusion" than simply enrolling a student in a regular class. Indeed, inclusion should never be defined as enrolling a student in a regular class without providing that student with the strategies that will enable that student to be successful in that class. As we are seeing the inclusionary movement evolve, we are very concerned that people are losing sight of the bottom line. The bottom line, as far as we are concerned, is that students need to leave their schooling experience with diplomas, the academic and social competencies, and the knowledge necessary for them to succeed in our society. They need to feel good about themselves and their abilities with regard to being independent learners and performers. The goals typically associated with the inclusion movement (e.g., social and academic integration) are too shallow when compared to the goals that are needed to create the bottom line. We need to work with people to advocate for this bottom line and for a different kind of inclusion program--an inclusion program that results in capable members of society.

### National Trainers' Conference.

On July 8, 9, and 10, 1992, the KU-IRLD will be hosting the annual Trainers' Conference in Lawrence, Kansas. We will be celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the founding of the Institute during the conference. Please mark your calendars now, and start making plans to join us for this special occasion. We will be soliciting input from you in a future issue of *Stratenotes* with regard to the activities you'd like us to sponsor.

### Regional Update Sessions

Two regional update sessions are being planned for this spring. They will be held in conjunction with the LDA Conference in San Francisco on Feb. 27 and in conjunction with the CEC Conference in San Antonio on April 7. Watch for more information and registration forms in upcoming editions of *STRATENOTES*.

### New KU-IRLD Grants

Three new grants were awarded to the Institute this year. The first, as mentioned above, is a five-year grant to disseminate the teaching and planning routines and strategy instruction to teacher-training institutions around the nation. Participating colleges this year include Boston College and the University of Mississippi. Other universities and colleges with on-site SIM Trainers are encouraged to participate. Please contact Keith Lenz if you are interested. The second grant, being led by Jan Bulgren, will focus on the development of an instructional package for teaching reasoning strategies within mainstream secondary courses. Work is now centered on gathering information from teachers on the types of reasoning they want their students to learn. The third grant is a leadership grant for training doctoral students. Five students are now on-board and participating in this exciting training experience: Dan Boudah, Brenda Oas, Joe Fisher, Jim Knight, and Mike Hock.

### Training Manual Updates

We are in the process of gradually updating the Strategy Manuals so that they correspond to the new acquisition and generalization stages. The Paraphrasing Strategy Instructor's Manual has already been updated and has been available for purchase for some time. The updated version of the Word Identification Strategy Instructor's Manual is currently being typeset at the printer. We will let you know when the new manual is available for purchase. If you plan to do training sessions with these manuals, you will need to get the updated versions so that your manual corresponds to the manuals your teachers will be referring to during the training session.