



STRATENOTES

Volume 2, Issue 6 - March, 1994

The Preservice Teacher Training Project: An Inclusive Teaching Model

For over a year now, we have been working with several universities around the United States to help us translate many of the SIM and Content Enhancement Routines into a training package for use in preservice teacher education. We hope to develop, evaluate, and disseminate a model to assist teacher trainers in preparing middle and secondary level teachers to meet the instructional needs of students with mild disabilities enrolled in regular classroom settings.

This project will be implemented in five major phases over a five-year period. The phases involved in creating the Inclusive Teaching Model Training Package (This is a very tentative title !!) include:

Phase 1: Identify the content that belongs in the training package. In this phase, we will select those strategies and routines that will best help secondary general education teachers. (1993-1994)

Phase 2: Develop the process portion of the training package. The process portion of the package will deal with the best way to deliver the content of the training package in different types of training sites. (1994 -1995)

Phase 3: Develop the materials that support the delivery of the content. Adaptation of the content to general education setting and the creation of teaching guides, overhead transparency masters, and other support materials will be accomplished in this phase. (1994-1995)

Phase 4: Pilot the Inclusive Teaching Model Training Package. General and special education faculty from several universities will incorporate the training package into their teacher-education programs and provide feedback regarding its usefulness and required changes. (1994-1995)

Phase 5: Field-test and disseminate the Inclusive Teaching Model Training Package. General and special education faculty from universities across the United States will be recruited for training and will be provided with the materials that comprise the training package. (1995-1997)

What has been accomplished?

Accomplishment #1

Based on our research data from general education settings, we identified a set of characteristics that general education teachers frequently offer to describe academic failure and poor academic performance in their classrooms:

Students enrolled in content area classrooms who struggle with learning often have difficulty:

1. Distinguishing important from unimportant information.
2. Identifying how to organize information meaningfully.
3. Relating information to a limited range of background experiences.
4. Remembering large quantities of information.
5. Generating purposes and rationales for learning content.
6. Breaking down complex concepts for learning.
7. Discovering ways to understand abstract concepts.
8. Analyzing information to arrive at conclusions and solve problems.
9. Identifying and using instructional devices used by teachers.
10. Becoming more active in guiding personal learning.
11. Believing that it is important to learn how to learn.

Identification of these characteristics gave us a framework for thinking about the types of problems teachers must be prepared to respond to in academically diverse classes.

Accomplishment #2

Most of the secondary general educators who participated in our research studies indicated that they perceived their most pressing problem in responding to individuals was really related to how they should deal with the significant academic diversity among students in their classes. To describe this diversity, we developed a definition:

A class with significant academic diversity is characterized by students achieving in the aver-



age, above average, and below average ranges of academic performance as measured by teacher judgment, district academic standards, or state academic standards. This diversity in performance may be attributed to individual differences in learning needs, culture, life experiences, abilities, skills, language proficiency, beliefs, goals, personal characteristics, and values.

Creation of this preliminary definition gave us a better idea of the type of instructional setting for which we were preparing teachers through the Inclusive Teaching Model.

Accomplishment #3

The core research staff at the CRL and our colleagues at participating university teacher education programs, commented on the definition we created and also helped us develop a set of ten outcome questions for the training package. One problem identified by many of our colleagues and staff was that courses cover too much information. Therefore, to focus our work, we collaboratively created 10 questions that we wanted every new secondary teacher to be able to answer with amazing proficiency as a result of experiencing our new course. The ten questions are:

1. How do I come to understand the difficulties of students that discourage or prevent them from learning?
2. How do I define and monitor my beliefs about students who experience difficulty learning?
3. How do I help students find their "voice" and learn to listen to students' voices so that I may promote their ownership and active participation in learning?
4. What are the important elements of planning that take into account academic diversity that I can use to plan the course, unit, and lesson?
5. How do I offer students a range of opportunities that will promote their personal ownership, active participation, and success in learning?
6. How can I create and nurture a sense of community among learners in a class?
7. How can I match methods that respond to diversity with appropriate types of assessment?
8. What can I do to teach my students how to learn in an academically diverse class?
9. How can I use teaching routines to help students learn about content in an academically diverse class?
10. (We decided to stop at nine!)

Accomplishment #4

We developed plans related to the best way to infuse the training package into secondary preservice teacher education programs. The plans for the development of this package include the following:

1. The content components will be organized into five components judged by project participants to be important to understanding and promoting academic inclusion in secondary school general education settings.

The five components are tentatively entitled:

- (a) **Understanding and Building on Diversity.** This component will explore ways of getting to know students and of defining personally held beliefs about students, learning, and teaching. Teachers will define how this knowledge affects how they reach students.
 - (b) **Building Connected Classroom Communities.** This component will explore ways to involve and engage students in learning and how to build on student strengths to create the interactions and linkages in a classroom where all students are learning.
 - (c) **Planning for Academic Diversity.** This component will explore ways to plan courses, units, and lessons that are more likely to promote learning in the context of academic diversity.
 - (d) **Enhancing Content Learning.** This component will explore ways of using teaching routines to present content more effectively.
 - (e) **Teaching Students How to Learn.** This component will explore ways of teaching learning strategies to students in the context of the group-oriented content-area classroom.
2. Each of the five components will include the following:
 - (a) **A Case To Explore.** An example of a method or issue associated with each component will be illustrated in a story or case (e.g., a case on how a teacher and a class used the Concept Mastery Routine).
 - (b) **A Method To Be Modeled.** A specific teaching method associated with each component will be modeled by preservice teacher educators as they teach through the experience (e.g., the preservice teacher trainer could use the Concept Mastery Routine to teach concepts included in specific components).

STRATENOTES is published 9 times a year September through June except December, as part of Strateworks Trainer's Network by the Center for Research on Learning 1993-94 cost 35.00 Authors: Donald D. Deshler, Jean B. Schumaker, & B. Keith Lenz; Editor: Eleanor Nelson

- (c) **A Method to Be Taught.** In-depth instruction in one powerful method associated with each component will be provided (e.g., a second teaching routine, such as the Concept Comparison Routine could be taught and assignments related to its use given in the component related to Enhancing Content Learning.).
- (d) **An Assessment Guide.** Assessment issues related to diversity will be infused in each experience.
- (e) **A Variety of Activity Ideas.** Each experience will be supplemented with suggested readings, activities, exploration assignments, and evaluation activities.

This spring the participants from the universities with whom we are working will be coming to the CRL to review these plans and to help us decide what our next step should be. In May of 1995, we will be offering our first workshop for other university faculty. At this time, we anticipate inviting to this training session university faculty responsible for preparing secondary general educators or general education faculty teamed with faculty responsible for preparing special education teachers. University faculty who are already involved with SIM are encouraged to think about recruiting general secondary education teacher trainers for the May 1995 session, and school district-based SIM Trainers are encouraged to think about getting university faculty in their area involved in this training session.

The faculty at the following universities are currently collaborating with the CRL staff on the development of the Inclusive Teaching Model Training Package:

Jerry Ammer, University of San Diego, San Diego, California
 Barbara Duchardt, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches, Louisiana
 Peggy King-Sears and Stephanie Carpenter, Johns Hopkins University, Rockville, Maryland
 Jean Mooney and John Junkala, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts
 Jenny Platt and Jeffrey Comet, University of Central Florida, Cocoa Beach, Florida
 Juliana Taymans and Sharon Lynch, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
 Mark Pitts and Gary Adams, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, Washington

The staff at CRL is now able to communicate through Internet. Listed below are a few of the E-mail addresses:

B Keith Lenz - klenz@quest.sped.ukans.edu
 Don Deshler - ddeshler@quest.sped.ukans.edu
 Janet Roth - jroth@quest.sped.ukans.edu
 Eleanor Nelson - enelson@quest.sped.ukans.edu
 Pam Boudah - pboudah@quest.sped.ukans.edu
 We would appreciate having your E-mail address.

This is a reminder to all our trainers who would like to be listed in the National SIM Directory. Please get your information sheet back to us by May 1, 1994. We would like to have everyone represented in the directory, so send it ASAP!

TRAINERS' AWARDS TO BE GIVEN

This is your opportunity to recognize a certified inservice trainer or a preservicee trainer for her/his outstanding contributions to the efforts associated with SIM. This award is for individuals who have enabled educators to become strategic teachers and, as a result, students to become strategic learners in an exceptional way. Send a letter of nomination along with three support letters as to why the person you are recognizing should be selected for the award. In your letter, make the best case for why this person is deserving. The nominee should be an active member in the SIM Network who regularly attends update training sessions, subscribes to Strateworks, and contributes significantly to the efforts associated with SIM. Nominations and letters of support may come from teachers, trainers, administrators, parents, self, and others. A national selection committee of certified trainers will determine the awards to be presented at the July National SIM Network Update meeting in Lawrence. All letters of nomination and support should be sent to: Janet Roth, CRL, 3061 Dole, Lawrence, KS 66045 by May 1, 1994.

A REAL WINNER!!!

We've always known that Don Deshler was a winner, but someone else recently noticed that he was one, too. At the International LDA Conference in Washington D.C., Don was awarded the prestigious LDA Award. This award is given annually in recognition and appreciation of outstanding leadership in the field of learning disabilities. Previous award winners include Samuel Kirk, James Gallagher, Janet Lerner, and Larry Silver. Congratulations, Don, on an honor that was richly deserved!

REMEMBER: YOU MUST ATTEND AT LEAST ONE TRAINER'S UPDATE SESSION EVERY TWO YEARS TO MAINTAIN YOUR CERTIFICATION.

WHAT'S NEW AT THE CRL

CRL Leads Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Research

The Center for Research on Learning (CRL) will play a major role in the development of the new National Adult Literacy and Learning Disability Center (National ALLD Center) based Academy for Education Development in Washington, D.C. Activities at the National ALLD Center will focus on the development and maintenance of (a) a National Information Exchange Network for literacy providers related to the latest research on what works with adults with learning disabilities, (b) linkages between literacy providers, agencies, and groups concerned about adult literacy, (c) a best practice "tool kit" of screening instruments and approaches to literacy intervention, and (d) effective training materials related to applying best practices in literacy programs.

The National ALLD Center staff in Washington is led by Neil Sturomski, the Center's Director. Eve Robins is responsible for developing and managing the National Information Exchange Network. Neil and Eve will work with their staff to prepare and disseminate documents generated by the Center, refer questions about adults with learning disabilities to appropriate sources, and coordinate the development of training materials and programs.

Our involvement with the National ALLD Center is part of the ongoing research on learning disabilities being conducted under the auspices of the CRL's Institute for Research on Learning Disabilities. Keith Lenz, Daryl Mellard, and David Scanlon from the CRL are joined by Hugh Catts from KU's Department of Speech and Hearing to lead National ALLD Center's research and development efforts to develop a model for organizing best practices for adults with learning disabilities. Keith will serve as the director for the development of the model. Daryl will provide direction for identifying and evaluating screening practices, and David will coordinate the identification of best intervention practices. Hugh will focus his attention on both screening and intervention practices related to adults with learning disabilities who have severe reading disabilities or "needs."

What does this mean for SIM trainers? We will be identifying a wide range of practices related to teaching adults with learning disabilities. These practices may be helpful to your schools, community agencies, and employers in your area who provide adult literacy services. Many of the components of the SIM will be examined more intensively for use with adults as well as numerous other programs. We will be working closely with the adult literacy programs in the communities surrounding Kansas City, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and San Francisco, and we will be asking for input and field-test assistance from community colleges and adult basic-education programs in these areas and throughout the country.

For information, contact Neil Sturomski or Eve Robins at the National ALLD Center, AED 1875 Connecticut Ave, Washington, D.C. 20009-1202. Also, send copies of screening instruments or procedures and intervention programs that you believe are worthy of our attention. Neil and Eve will work with us to evaluate and field-test screening instruments and programs that meet minimum standards of excellence.

The Development and Validation of a GED Proficiency Attainment

Model for Students with Learning Disabilities and Severe Emotional Disabilities

The Office of Special Education Programs has funded two four-year projects that are intended to benefit students with learning disabilities (LD) and severe emotional disabilities (SED) who have left school prior to high school graduation or age 21. The KU-IRLD was awarded one of the projects.

This project will work with the Adult Learning Center staff in Topeka's (KS) school district to develop a recruitment and intervention package that will increase student participation and successful completion in the GED preparation coursework. In addition, the plan is to develop the materials such that they can be used in training staff at other adult education centers. Part of the research is to monitor the participants and two cohort groups in their occupational, educational, and community activities over the four years.

Training and Evaluation Activities Provided for Educational Testing and Evaluation to the Adult Education and GED Program Services

This is the second year of a project to work with staff at the Kansas State Board of Education. Kansas has approximately 40 GED centers that are state supported. This project conducts evaluations at these centers, provide technical assistance on their student databases, and in collecting, analyzes, and report on the quarterly progress made by students at each center.

Special Studies Program: A Feasibility of Outcomes for Kansas Students with Disabilities

This eight-month evaluation project was awarded to the Kansas State Board of Education, which in turn contracted with the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation at K.U. CRL staff will lead the work on this project. As a part of the educational reforms of the state, the legislature mandated that all students be assessed on their attainment of educational outcomes. Unfortunately, not all students are assessed. Approximately half of the students with disabilities are assessed. The question then is why these students are not being assessed, and secondly, is their participation feasible? This topic sparks quite a bit of debate on both sides of the issue.