

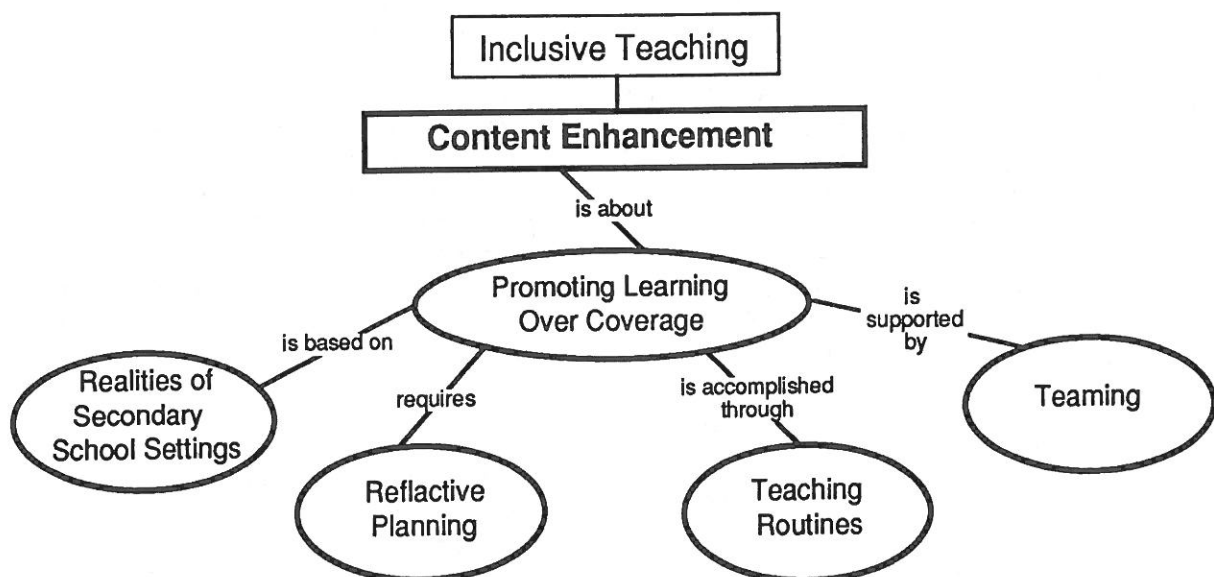
STRATENOTES

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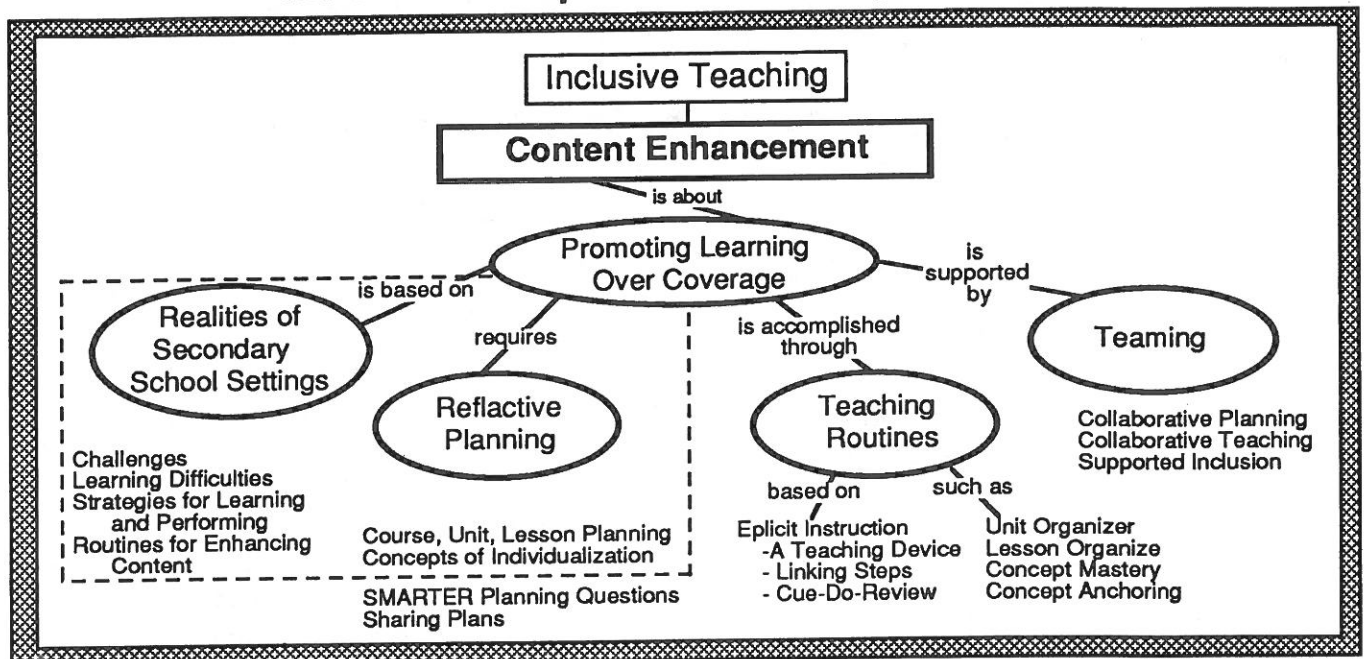
Background Information for Content Enhancement Overviews

In July of 1993, we developed an overview packet for Content Enhancement that we felt would provide an immediate structure for: (a) helping SIM trainers to learn what Content Enhancement was all about, (b) understanding the underlying ideas in the Content Enhancement Guidebooks, and (c) organizing presentations on the Content Enhancement Routines. Our plan was to add additional clarifying information as we found the time. In this issue of *Stratenotes*, we'll provide some additional information about a few of the overheads in the Content Enhancement trainer's packet.

One of our goals as we train teachers about Content Enhancement, has been to incorporate the use of as many of the principles of Content Enhancement as possible into the training process. Thus, in the training packet, we have included the beginnings of a "content map" for use in modeling how to introduce a map and use a map to structure a presentation. In fact, we have included several versions of this map in the training package. However, you are certainly encouraged to "build" your own map. The map that we are currently using the most in our Content Enhancement workshops starts out looking something like this:



After we work through the content of the workshop,
the content map looks something like this:



Let's take a look at some of the points that are illustrated in this map. Since we don't have room to discuss all the points in this *Stratenotes*, we are only going to discuss the parts of the map that are included in the area defined by the dotted line.

Realities of Secondary School Settings

This section of the map is used to give an introduction that sets up the need for using Content Enhancement methods. First, the challenges of teaching in the 1990s and the learning difficulties experienced by students can be summarized. Given these realities, we can then argue that we need to teach students the strategies necessary for learning and performing (many of these strategies are included in the SIM curriculum). Finally, we also need to compensate for the strategies that students have not mastered by enhancing the delivery of critical content so that students learn important information at the same time they are learning improved strategies. At this point in the overview, the definition of Content Enhancement can be presented. Some of the important points that we make when we talk about Content Enhancement include the following:



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Editor: Eleanor Nelson

Both group and individual needs are met.

Teachers adopting a philosophy of inclusive education place a value on monitoring and taking action to improve the learning and performance of all students in the classroom. The acronym "HALO" can be used to capture the idea that learning should occur for High achievers, Average-achievers, Low-achievers, and Other Achievers. Who are the "Other achievers?" They are the individuals who may fall within any "achiever" group but they encounter barriers to learning either on a short-term or long-term basis (e.g., feelings of cultural, gender, or personal exclusion, disability, family trauma, competing belief systems, etc.). **Possible Discussion Questions:** What are the dimensions of diversity around which an individual may feel excluded? Why might a teacher prefer to ignore differences between individuals as they teach? What happens when a teacher chooses to exclude perspectives during instruction? What happens if only one perspective is promoted?

Integrity of the content is maintained. Such integrity exists when the content is not watered down, and when the critical information remains as the central message of instruction. However, the teacher has the primary responsibility for differentiating critical information from less critical information and building instruction around these important ideas. **Possible Discussion Questions:** What does this statement mean: "Curriculum frameworks and textbooks are only resources; the true curriculum is actually constructed by the teacher and students on the day of instruction?"

What role does a teacher play in defining curriculum?

Critical elements of the critical content are transformed. The teacher has the responsibility for taking the critical content and transforming this content in ways that students will be able to understand, organize, and remember the information and respond to expectations to use the information. **Possible Discussion Question:** How does academic diversity affect how a teacher might need to transform information for learning?

Learning is accomplished in a partnership. In a partnership, each partner assumes responsibilities and roles. In the classroom, teachers provide leadership in guiding students in what and how to learn and invite students to be involved in making decisions about their learning and how it is best accomplished. Student experiences are used as the basis for modifying and shifting the direction of instruction. **Possible Discussion Question:** What happens to student learning when a teacher views a student's experience as less worthy than his or her own?

ReflActive Planning

We have not emphasized this part of the overview very much in the past. Here is some information about ReflActive Planning that you might review and consider for inclusion in your presentations on Content Enhancement. Some of these points you may want to emphasize in the overview.

ReflActive Planning is a planning process where a teacher raises questions, makes decisions, and monitors actions related to selecting (before, during, and after instruction) a set of critical information (related to a course, unit or lesson) and then enhancing that information to guide individuals participating in an academically diverse group of students to both learn information and learn how to learn through the use of explicit teaching routines. **Possible Discussion Question:** How can ReflActive Planning address issues of inclusive education?

Levels of Planning. Planning in secondary schools can be thought of as consisting of three levels of planning. Thus, teachers can use the ReflActive Planning Process at all three levels:

Course Planning.

Course planning focuses on thinking about how the entire course will be organized and how course ideas will be launched at the beginning of a semester or year, maintained during the course, and pulled together at the end of the course.

Unit Planning.

Unit Planning focuses on thinking about how chunks of content will be meaningfully organized for students so that they can learn the major ideas included in a course. It includes plans for launching the unit, ensuring that the big ideas in a unit are pulled together and learned, and for consolidating unit ideas for study and testing. A unit does not have to be defined by the organization of a textbook and may include one or more chapters or parts of chapters. A unit consists of two or more lessons and usually ends in some type of test or summative activity. It may last for several weeks or for a single week.

Lesson Planning.

Lesson Planning focuses on how the information in a unit is organized and taught on a daily basis. Lesson planning may focus on the activities of a single day or several days.

Characteristics of Planning.

We have found through our research that planning for diversity in secondary schools has certain characteristics that need to be taken into account as we train teachers about ReflActive Planning and Content Enhancement. Typically, this planning is:

Focused on the Unit. Course planning typically focuses on planning units and the course syllabus. Formal lesson plans consist of deciding the days that the class will read or discuss certain pages of a textbook, work in cooperative groups, see a film, be given an assignment, or complete a worksheet. However, even most of these plans are made as part of the unit scheme. Plans related to how teachers connect with students are not recorded in these lesson plans. In fact, most of the real decisions about what will happen on a given day are made in the few minutes before class and as the class is being taught. When teachers do plan, the greatest amount of attention to the quality of instruction that will be provided to students takes place at the unit level. At this level, formal decisions are made about how the entire unit will play out. In fact, many of the decisions about what will be happening in specific lessons are made as a unit is planned.

Not found in school "planning periods." For the majority of teachers, time provided to teachers in the structure of the school day for the purpose of planning is largely spent accomplishing administrative tasks (e.g., phoning parents, filling out forms, standing in line at the copy machine, meeting with students or teachers, meeting other school responsibilities, addressing interruptions, etc.). Planning characterized by reflection and decisions related to how to teach the important but difficult information to the greatest number of students takes

place when teachers are not interrupted by others and are not distracted by other tasks or responsibilities. Indeed, we have found summer to be the best time for teachers to use the ReflActive Planning Process to plan their courses, units, and lessons.

Not found in lesson plan books. Lesson plan books are used primarily to list activities. These books include the page number of the textbook where the lesson's content may be found, reading and work assignments, and lists of general activities associated with how student's time will be spent in class. However, these lesson plan books do not include descriptions of how teachers will address the learning difficulties of students (e.g., those difficulties listed in Overhead #2 of the training packet). Planning for individual student needs occurs mentally and may never be written down. When these plans are written down, they are embedded in unit notes and may be represented by a few simple words or phrases decipherable only to the teacher. This mental planning may occur while showering, jogging, driving, shopping, etc. It may occur during the actual lesson as a learning difficulty becomes apparent or a new idea emerges and the teacher decides to take a detour from planned activities.

Concepts of Individualization.

Teachers are asked to respond to the diversity of their classes in a variety of ways. In general, teachers are typically expected to individualize or accommodate learning difficulties by planning for:

Presentation Variety. The designers of traditional content-area classes assume that students have the skills and strategies to listen, take notes, and read the textbook. However, many students don't have the skills to accomplish all of these tasks effectively and efficiently, given the rate and amount of information covered in secondary classrooms. Therefore, teachers are expected to make sure that students have a variety of teacher-directed opportunities to acquire information. For example, teachers are expected to present important information verbally for those who can't read well, to direct students to appropriate text pages for students who can't listen and take notes well, to provide concrete and participatory experiences for students who have difficulty understanding abstract concepts, and to visually represent and organize information for students who have difficulty understanding relationships between pieces of information.

Alternate Methods to Demonstrate Competence. Many students may understand the content but have difficulty demonstrating their knowledge through traditional forms of evaluation such as tests and quizzes. Teachers are expected to develop alternate ways to evaluate student progress.

For example, teachers may be asked to schedule private oral tests, allow someone to read a test to a student, develop alternatives to essay items for students who have difficulty with written language, develop portfolio systems that document progress in learning, and allow demonstrations or projects in lieu of traditional tests. In addition, teachers may be expected to lengthen the amount of time allowed to take a test or to make arrangements for alternate testing conditions.

Adjustments in Assignments or Practice Opportunities. Teachers may be expected to make adjustments in assignments in the same way that adjustments might be expected in evaluation activities. However, since assignments and practice opportunities are intended to be instructional in nature, modifications usually will require teacher guidance, support, and individual explanation. For example, teachers may be asked to break assignments into parts to focus student attention, and to provide more practice opportunities.

Individual Checks and Feedback. Increased academic diversity increases the likelihood that students will perceive and remember information in different ways. Therefore, teachers are expected to increase the degree to which they monitor how both the group and individuals in the group are processing information. When students do not understand the important information or do not learn the appropriate skill, teachers are expected to explain what the student(s) have done correctly, explain what is wrong with the response, explain how to correct the information, and then make sure that the student corrects the mistake and understands how to avoid making the same mistake in the future.

Instruction Based on Shared Background Knowledge. Increased diversity means that students bring different levels of knowledge into the classroom. As a result, teachers are expected to explore what students already know from their previous learning and life experiences. Teachers are expected to construct examples and explanations from a shared knowledge base. This knowledge base should take into consideration the various kinds of diversity found in classrooms. For example, teachers are expected to provide examples that all students can relate to, not just students who are achieving or who represent certain subgroups in the class.

While teachers are expected to individualize to accommodate individual differences, most teachers feel they must address the needs of the group while being sensitive to the needs of individuals. As a result, secondary teachers most frequently respond to the expectations listed above by planning three types of activities:

Arranging Peer-Assisted Activities. While peer-assisted learning experiences may be structured as

formal Cooperative Learning Group activities, most peer-assisted types of experiences provided in secondary school classrooms can be described as students being asked to work together on a task or be involved in some type of class-wide demonstration or activity. Asking students to be a part of an activity or work in a group with other students on a task seems to satisfy several criteria important to secondary teacher's understanding of how to accommodate individuals in the context of the group. Specifically, group work:

1. Allows peers to provide explanations of concepts through examples and language with which students might be familiar.
2. Increases the number and variety of explanations that might be simultaneously provided to students in a classroom.
3. Increases student involvement in learning tasks.

However, assigning group work can actually inhibit individual accommodations if:

1. Students don't have the social skills to participate in group work.
2. Students don't know how to effectively work in a group.
3. Students don't value the process of working in a group.

Including Choices in Work. Another major way of accommodating for individuals in the context of the group is to offer students choices related to tasks. These choices may involve presenting options in: a) how a task might be completed; b) what the topic of the assignment might be; or c) how the format of the task might be altered. Providing choices related to a task can:

1. Allow students to focus on their strengths and avoid their weaknesses in skills or strategies associated with completing tasks.
2. Allow students to approach or shape tasks around their interests.
3. Allow students to build on what they already know and have experienced.

However, providing choices to students may actually inhibit individual accommodations if:

1. Students aren't aware of their strengths and weaknesses.
2. Students have difficulty connecting self-knowledge about interests and experiences to classroom tasks.
3. Students don't have the skills and strategies for making choices and decisions.

Making Creative Presentations. Teachers also believe they can accommodate the needs of most students by making creative - almost entertaining-presentations. To accommodate students in this

manner, a teacher selects concepts from the curriculum and then builds a lesson around a novel approach to presenting the concepts. These presentations can include demonstrations, simulations, role-plays, stories, analogies, participatory activities, films, etc. The basic idea is to create presentations that depart from the traditional modes of presentation used by the teacher. These presentations usually focus on a difficult but important concept and require more planning and class time than other lessons. In general, creative presentations are designed to:

1. Ensure that more students are paying attention to the content embedded in the activity.
2. Increase student motivation to understand.
3. Distinguish a concept that is difficult but important from other concepts that may be less critical.

Again, these efforts to accommodate can go awry if:

1. Students focus only on the creative and entertaining qualities of the presentation.
2. Students don't have the strategies and skills to distinguish the important from the less important elements of the presentation.
3. Students are passive participants during the presentation.

Possible Discussion Questions: How can we summarize the planning challenge given to teachers and their response? What is the best course of action? What are the barriers? What are the solutions? Given the current structure of schools, what can be done? What changes in schools need to be made to promote more inclusive planning? What are the ethical responsibilities of the teacher in planning for instruction for all students? What types of planning activities pay the greatest dividends in terms of student learning?

We hope this information will help you with your Content Enhancement Overviews. We have enclosed a figure in this issue of Stratenotes showing how Content Enhancement fits into SIM. Let us know if you have any questions.

IN MEMORIAM

Sandra Stevens, a certified SIM inservice trainer, Burnsville, Minnesota, died in May, 1994. She had thyroid cancer. Attending the Potential Trainers' Workshop in Kansas in 1991, Sandy was a co-trainer with Sharon Saunders. The SIM trainers who attended the 15th anniversary in July 1993 in Lawrence may have had an opportunity to meet Sandy. The members of the staff at CRL extend their sympathy to Sandy's family, colleagues, and friends.

Two-Way Interactive Video Sessions: We need some volunteers!

As we mentioned in previous Stratenotes issues, the Center has received funding to conduct some two-way interactive video sessions with groups around the country. Two-way interactive video means that two groups of people are communicating with each other live. They can talk to each other, hear each other, and see each other. This is different from the satellite broadcasts which are really like watching a T.V. program. For each satellite broadcast, one group (the KU-CRL) will be talking, and the other groups (study groups around the country) will be listening and watching. Study groups for the satellite broadcasts are now forming around the country. For more information about the study groups and satellite broadcasts, see the October issue of *Stratenotes*.

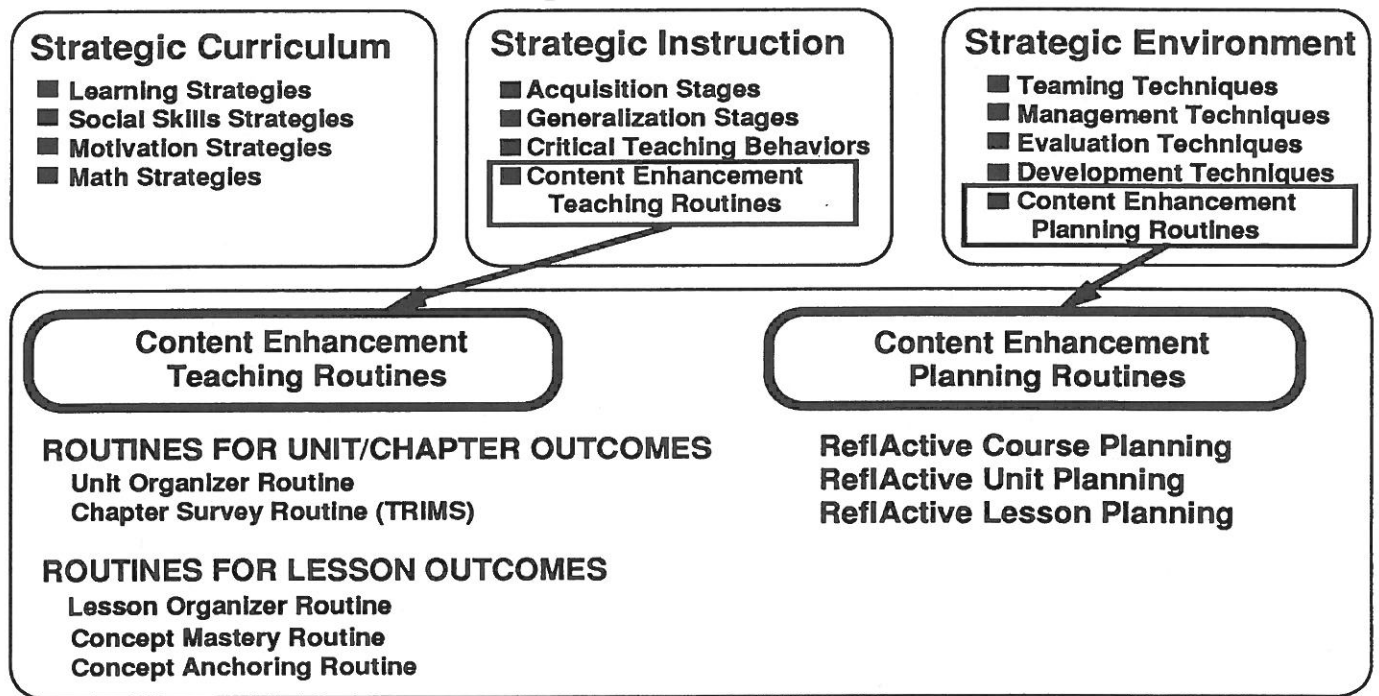
Now we need some volunteers to help us with the two-way interactive video sessions. We need people who have access to the equipment for two-way interactive video sessions to help us get this part of our network system up and running. This equipment might be available at a college or university in your area or at a Sprint office or other commercial communications facility. Typically, the equipment for a two-way interactive video system includes the following:

- At least two video monitors: one for receiving the video feed (or picture) from the remote site and one for showing the picture being sent from the local site.
- At least one video camera to send the video picture to the remote site. Another video camera might be needed to send an image from an overhead projector.
- A radio-controlled video switcher. This allows an operator to select which video picture is to be sent to the remote site if there is more than one camera being used.
- An audio amplifier with feedback suppression.
- A compressor/decompressor (CODEC). This unit compresses the video and audio signals sent from the local site such that they can be sent over high bandwidth telephone lines (56K). The unit also decompresses the video and audio signals received from the remote site.
- A 56K telephone link.

Please ask around in your area about the availability of this equipment and determine whether it might be available for the use of a group of trainers. If the equipment is available, if you are able to use it, and you have a group of trainers (and teachers, if you wish) who would like to communicate with KU-CRL staff through this medium, please call Jan Roth at 913-864-0622 to make arrangements for the session.

How do the current components of Content Enhancement fit into SIM?

The Strategies Intervention Model



STUDY GROUPS

The following people are organizing study groups in their areas: Roseann Arvine, Mary F. Luysterburg, Judy O'Malley, Connie Gentle, Camille Park, Sandy Soper, Bonnie Burch, & Luann Jordan from Florida; Shari Schindele & Joan Bigler from Minnesota; Luanne Todd & Katherine Ferro & Mary Petrucha from Illinois; Larry Bemish & Susan Woodruff from Michigan; Alice Zadina from Nebraska; Alice Henley from Connecticut; & Barbara Davis from West Virginia.

Are you interested in forming a study group? Read the October issue of *Stratenotes*, complete the form found there, and mail it to Janet Roth at CRL, 3061 Dole Center, Lawrence, KS 66045.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

As part of our commitment to the National Council for Learning Disabilities, which is sponsoring the regional training meetings this year, we need to collect data on the outcomes related to Content Enhancement training sessions. Each time you present a training session on one of the Content Enhancement Routines, please ask your participants to complete the form on page 6 of your October *Stratenotes* at the end of the training session. Mail the form to us. We need to receive each participant's name, position, plan for implementation (a brief description of where the routine will be used such as "in my 9th grade health class"), and his/her rating of the information presented in the workshop. You can use this form or the one that will be shipped with the Content Enhancement books.

Also, please share with us any video-tapes, student products, games, posters, and other ideas that we might use during the satellite broadcasts. If you have any student (photos, videos, products), use the consent form from the October issue. (We will need permission from parents to show any student's face or product as a part of a broadcast.) We are looking forward to working with you in this new venture, and we want your great ideas included as much as possible! Thanks for your help in this regard.

The Latest on Strategy Books

The Unit Organizer Routine books (\$8.00) and the Self-Advocacy Strategy books (\$14.00) are now available through Edge Enterprises. The Self-Questioning Strategy books are being printed and should be available from the KU-CRL (\$12.50) shortly after you receive this issue of *Stratenotes*. The Strategic Math Series is now complete with seven volumes and is available through Edge. This is the only math program that we know of that has been shown to work within inclusive class settings for **all** students in those settings. You will be receiving flyers in the mail describing the Content Enhancement Series and the Math Strategies Series shortly. Please use these flyers to inform your training sites about these very effective methods for creating successful inclusive classrooms.



1995 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- February 16 & 17, 1995 - Institute of Texan Cultures @ Hemifair Plaza, San Antonio, TX: *Midwest Region Update Meeting*
- February 24 & 25, 1995 - Stardust Hotel Resort & Casino, in Las Vegas, NV: *Far West Region Update Meeting*
- March 10 & 11, 1995 - Sheraton Inn in Charleston, SC: *South East Region Update Meeting*
- May 5 & 6, 1995 - Glenbrook South High School, Glenview, IL: *North Central Region Update Meeting*
- May 31-June 3, 1995 - Lawrence, KS *Inclusive Teaching in the Secondary School Setting* (This workshop is by application only.)
- July 6-8 - Eldridge Hotel in Lawrence, KS: *National SIM Trainers' Conference & Update Meeting*
- July 18-22, Lawrence, KS: *Initial Training Workshop in Learning Strategies*
- July 24-28, Lawrence, KS: *Advanced Training Workshop in Learning Strategies*
- July 31-August 4, Lawrence, KS: *Potential SIM Trainer's Workshop*

Satellite Broadcast Dates

- February 15, 1995 4:30PM-6:30PM CST
- April 11, 1995 2:00Noon-2:00PM CST

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!!

IDEA May be In Trouble

As many of you know, IDEA is up for reauthorization in 1995. We expect that it will be on the docket in Congress during late winter or early spring. From what we have heard and read, due to the results of the recent election, IDEA, or parts of IDEA, may be in trouble. Each of us needs to take a very active role in expressing our support of IDEA to our congressional representatives and other policy makers within the first weeks of January. Please do everything you can to ensure education for children and youth with disabilities.

INFORMATION ON SATELLITE BROADCASTS can be found inside this Stratenotes.



*All of your friends at the Center for Research on Learning
would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a
Very Joyous Holiday Season and a Great New Year!*



The University of Kansas

STRATENOTES

THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEARNING

Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities

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FIRST CLASS