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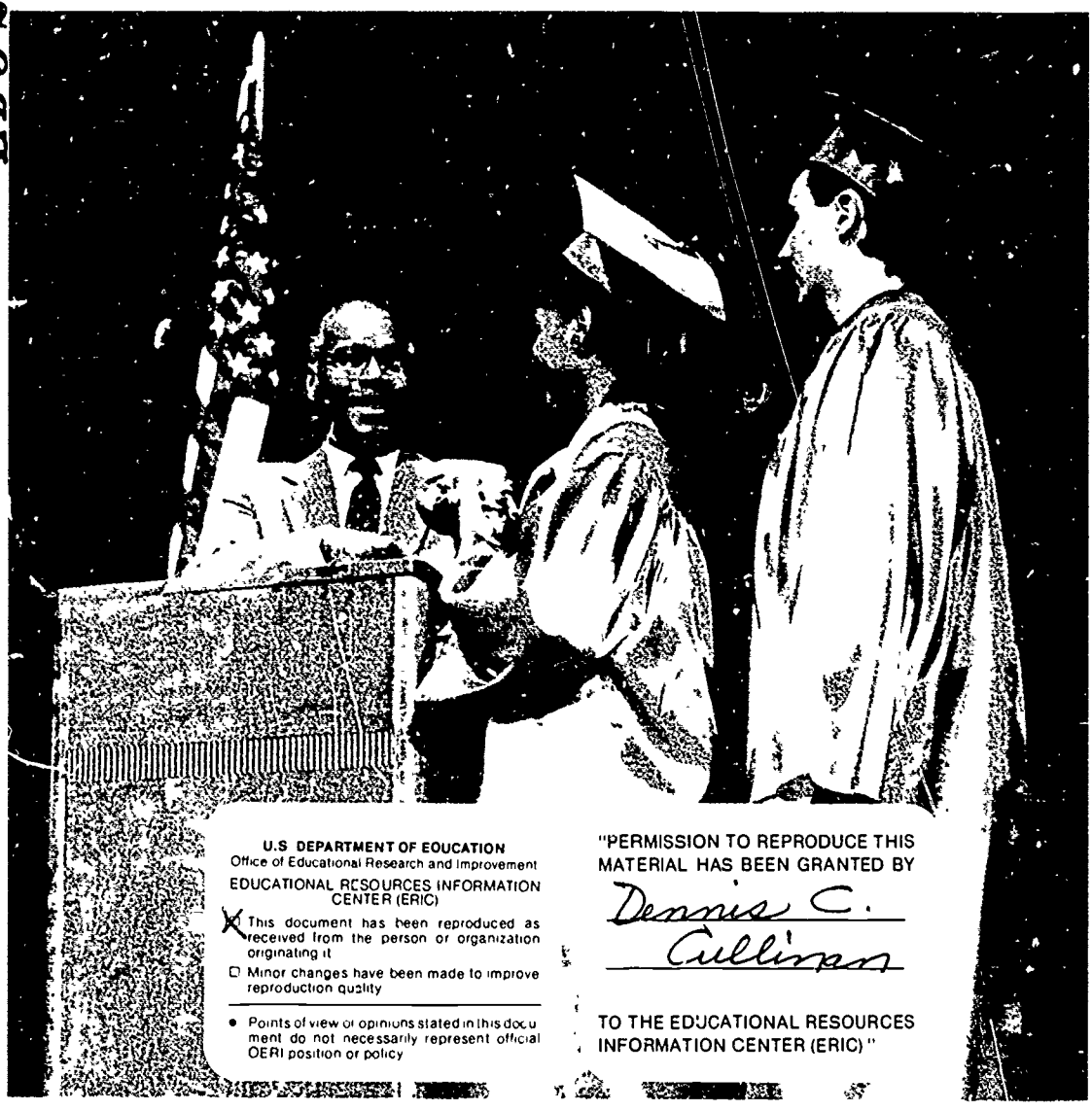
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this booklet is to relate significant research pertaining to student achievement. Each section defines one of eight research-based variables associated with greater academic achievement and includes some practical applications within school settings. According to the first two sections, high principal and teacher expectations are associated with increased student achievement. As section 3 shows, time on task is also important; the more time spent on instruction, the greater the achievement gain. According to section 4, higher achievement gains are more likely to occur in classrooms characterized by supportive teachers and a high degree of structure. The most important determinant of classroom atmosphere is the teachers's method of managing the classroom and keeping the class actively attentive and involved in productive learning activities. As section 5 shows, teachers' use of positive feedback/reinforcement also significantly aids student achievement. Section 6 explains the benefits of tutoring and offers tips for establishing a tutoring program. As section 7 shows, recitation promotes greater achievement gains, and using factual questioning in class is associated with greater basic skills acquisition. Finally, the last section discusses the importance of parental involvement as an influence on student achievement. Each section is accompanied by several bibliographical references. (MLH)

School Effectiveness
Eight Variables that Make a Difference



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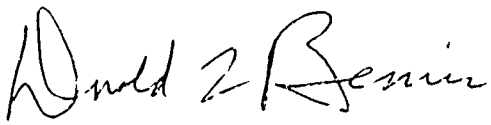
Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to relate significant research that pertains to student achievement. One of the major problems in the educational community continues to be the lack of communication and sometimes the lack of understanding between those people involved in educational research and the practitioners who depend upon the results of the research. The researchers believe the teachers resist change and, therefore, can't take advantage of valid ways to improve instruction. Teachers believe that researchers are working in controlled environments using esoteric language that doesn't transfer to the classroom.

As a way of bringing these important educational communities together, the Michigan Department of Education, with assistance from the Educational Testing Service, has translated valid studies into practice.

The results of the studies have been compiled in eight sections derived from three publications—*Factors Associated With Achievement: An Annotated Bibliography, Effective Schools Research Abstracts,* and *Variables That Make a Difference.* Each section defines one of the eight variables that research indicates make a difference in pupil achievement and includes some practical applications within school settings. A creative staff will incorporate them within the policies and practices of the classroom and school. The titles of the sections are as follows:

1. Principal Expectations
2. Teacher Expectations
3. Time on Task
4. Classroom Organization and Management
5. Reinforcement and Feedback
6. Tutoring
7. Recitation
8. Parental Involvement.



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Principal Expectations

Variable 1: High expectations on the part of the principal are associated with greater student achievement.

"In time, student behavior and achievement will conform more and more closely to the achievement and behavior originally expected of them." (Good and Brophy, 1977)

This suggestion of a self-fulfilling prophecy is confirmed in a number of other studies concerned with the climate necessary for school improvement. Brookover, et al. (1977) and Gigliotti (1975) indicate that principals who possess high expectations of their students and a firm belief that all their students can master basic academic objectives tend to be in schools that are successful or improving in terms of achievement.

Knowing what we do about the self-fulfilling prophecy and how our expectations of people may even cause us to treat them in particular ways, it becomes even more important to learn what research indicates about high expectations on the part of the principal.

Principals in effective schools place a strong emphasis on the accomplishments of objectives. They are assertive instructional leaders who convey expectations in such ways as:

- Establishing concrete norms and goals for teachers and students;
- Formulating procedures for evaluation of achievement of objectives;
- Making numerous classroom observations; and by
- Providing teacher inservice on instructional skills.

There are five areas in which the principal's role in creating high expectations is important.

Climate

The principal determines the tone, ambiance and style of the school. Those principals of effective schools strive to create an orderly environment which is conducive to the academic growth and development of staff and students alike. In addition to being the leader in the development of school climate, principals of effective schools are instructional leaders.

Self Expectations

To have clear expectations of others, one must first be able to define and communicate one's own expectations.

In addition to the efficient handling of paperwork and other routine tasks, principals of effective schools tend to maintain high visibility and accessibility to parents, students and teachers.

As instructional leader, the principal becomes assertive while emphasizing increased achievement through the use of instructional goals and a coordinated curriculum and programs.

According to the research of Bruce Howell (1981), when the principal serves as instructional leader, a partnership must be formed with staff and students to set instructional goals, coordinate the total program and finally, to evaluate the program.

Through this strong emphasis on objectives, the principal can become a more effective administrator by:

1. Regularly evaluating student achievement.
2. Conveying expectations to students and teachers, then regularly checking to see if they are being met.
3. Recognizing how well one's own students are doing relative to the achievement levels of other schools.

Teachers

As instructional leader, the principal must support the premise that all students can be taught and that none will fall below minimum levels of achievement. Although a variety of approaches may be used in the attainment of this goal, none is more important than cooperative efforts between principal and staff.

Conclusions regarding the nature of good classroom teaching are drawn from the findings of researchers. Evidence suggests that effective teachers are semi-autonomous professionals who:

- Have clear instructional goals regarding what it is that they will teach and accomplish.
- Are knowledgeable about the content that they teach. They also have pedagogical skills needed for teaching the specific curriculum.
- Inform their students of what they are expected to learn and provide them with a rationale as to the importance of this learning.
- Utilize existing instructional materials in a manner that is relevant to what is being taught, so that more time is invested in clarifying and enriching the content.
- Maintain a knowledge regarding their students. These teachers anticipate misconceptions affecting their students' understanding and are willing to adapt their instructional strategies accordingly.
- Not only teach metacognitional strategies to students but also provide students with time to master them.
- Teach both higher- and lower-level cognitive objectives.
- Frequently monitor students' understanding of what is being taught and provide students with specific feedback regarding their learning.
- See to it that concepts are not taught in isolation, but rather are integrated into other subjects.
- Accept responsibility for student outcomes.
- Are constantly analyzing and reflecting upon their pedagogical and content knowledge in an attempt to refine the delivery of instruction to students.

Principals must assist and support staff with what Peter Drucker terms planned abandonment. "Schools cannot be expected to continually take on more and more." Teachers must be encouraged to abandon ineffective practices and be supported while adopting practices that lead to more effective student learning.

Reaching agreement with teachers on student outcomes and standards is the first step toward the development of more effective schools. Thus, regularly

scheduled teacher evaluations (based on predetermined objectives), accessibility to the principal, positive reinforcement and feedback, suggestions for further personal development, mutual goal setting, and establishment of priorities are a few of the strategies which may be used to work together toward building more effective schools. Teachers need principals who will provide them with support and help them succeed!

In one school, the principal, in conjunction with the staff, sets a particular school-wide improvement goal for the year. Staff members set at least one additional goal. Throughout the school year, progress reports are made at staff meetings, and time is devoted to discussion of techniques and strategies staff members have used in working toward achievement and evaluation of the school-wide goal and of the individually-chosen goals.

Students

Not only must the expectations of principals and teachers be clearly conveyed to students, they must also be believed **and** accepted by the students. As an integral part of this process:

1. Expectations for students must be clear and understood.
2. Evaluations of student achievement and reiteration of expectations must occur on a regular basis.
3. Students must have accessibility to the principal.

A principal in one secondary school meets with classes of students at least twice during the school term to discuss "how it's going." The teacher of the class may sit in or leave the room during this discussion period. The decision is the teacher's.

Exhibiting Leadership

Leadership can take various forms and may, in part, depend upon individual style. However, here are six practical methods principals can use to exhibit leadership qualities. The principal can:

1. Make frequent observations and participate in staff development activities.
2. Clearly communicate to staff and students alike.
3. Make decisions about the instructional program-collective efforts particularly helpful.
4. Coordinate the instructional program.
5. Be actively involved in the planning and evaluation of the program.
6. Communicate high standards and expectations for the program.

School programs and policies can be developed to:

- Encourage increased principal observations in classrooms and feedback to teachers and students.
- Select building-wide or district-wide achievement goals.

- Provide incentives for additional professional training.
- Reduce administrative paperwork.
- Communicate school-wide expectations to the community.

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Teacher Expectations

Variable 2: High teacher expectations are associated with high achievement.

Can individual student behavior and achievement be significantly influenced by the expectancy of the teacher? Research studies have shown varied results when individual students are considered.

Research does show, however, that broad, global teacher expectations do seem to have a positive influence on students. This kind of expectation takes the form of a belief that all of a teacher's students are able to master basic classroom objectives and to succeed. This belief, in turn, seems to be accompanied by a feeling that the teacher can make a difference. These teachers, then, tend to place a strong commitment to their teaching and to place strong emphasis on the importance of achievement.

In coming to know students during the opening weeks of school, teachers gradually form expectations concerning their academic performance and their behavior.

Expectations about students can serve a number of important purposes. They can promote positive interaction between teacher and students. They can help with grouping students into areas where special help is needed. They can help to extract the best work possible from each individual student.

Expectations can be inhibiting, too. For example, a teacher expecting a student to perform poorly may treat the student differently from other children. A teacher expecting a particular behavior may ignore or misinterpret a contradictory behavior forcing the student to conform to the initial expectation.

Much of the current literature supports the idea that teacher expectations differ from high to low achieving student groups. In their 1968 study, Rosenthal and Jacobson some interesting discoveries about teacher expectations.

In their study, teachers were told that a test had been given to their students which was designed to identify intellectual "late bloomers." They also

were told that the students who were identified as "late bloomers" could be expected to show large achievement gains during the school year.

Actually, the late blooming students had been selected randomly, by the researchers, not on the basis of any test. Thus there was no real reason to expect large achievement gains from any of them. When the students were tested at the end of the year, the "bloomers" did show significantly higher achievement gains. Because of these results, Rosenthal and Jacobson claimed that the expectations created by the teacher's knowledge of the phony test data encouraged the teachers to behave differently toward the "bloomers," causing them to make the high gains.

Teacher Behaviors Toward Low Achievers

In other related studies, researchers have observed and recorded teacher behavior toward differently-classified students. There is agreement among them that there exists definite differentiation in teacher behavior toward "low" and "high" students. In general, teachers encourage responsiveness and participation from their high achievers, offer them more challenges and more difficult goals to achieve. From high achievers, teachers expect more, motivate more, and usually receive more.

With slow learners, teacher behaviors are quite different. Teachers seem to unconsciously discourage participation and responsiveness. Behaviors which discourage participation and responsiveness are:

1. Seating slow students farther away from the teacher. This makes it more difficult to monitor these students and to treat them as individuals.
2. Paying less attention to slow students. Teachers smile and make eye contact less often.
3. Calling on slow students less frequently to answer questions.
4. Waiting less time for slow students to answer questions.
5. Failing to provide clues or ask follow-up questions in problem situations with slower students.
6. Criticizing slower students more frequently for incorrect answers.
7. Praising slower students less often for correct answers.
8. Giving slower students less feedback and less detailed feedback.
9. Demanding less effort and less work from slower students.
10. Interrupting the performance of slower students more frequently.

As a result of these behaviors, students tend to become less willing to take risks in the classroom by volunteering answers or seeking the teacher's help. If teacher behavior is consistent and students do not resist or change it in some way, the student will respond to the teacher. In time, students' behavior and achievement will conform

more and more closely to the achievement and behavior originally expected of them (Good and Brophy, 1974).

As reported in the Effective Schools Research Abstracts (1988–89), a synthesis of research states the following points:

- Classrooms that facilitated self concept development also enhanced student achievement.
- Students learn more when they see themselves as able, valuable and responsible. Brain research supports the conclusion that people tend to behave as they are treated.
- Expectations and climate support students wanting to be successful learners.
- People are the most important component of schools. More energy and resources must be dedicated to creating and maintaining positive emotional environments in schools.

Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

Another problem which low achieving students face in terms of teacher behavior is inconsistency. Teachers tend either:

1) to be annoyed with low achievers and, therefore, criticize or ignore them more frequently, or

2) to be overly protective of low achievers praising them for incorrect or marginal responses.

When experiencing this type of inconsistency, a student can easily conclude that effort has little to do with reward. Without appropriate feedback, students have difficulty evaluating their progress.

This encouraging or discouraging behavior toward students may, in many cases, cause what Brophy and Good term "self-fulfilling prophecy". Self-fulfilling prophecy exists when teachers behave in ways which tend to make their expectations come true.

Teachers using mastery-learning strategies found that the majority of students became very successful. One teacher said, "My classroom suddenly became overpopulated with good students."

Using Expectations to Improve Achievement

It is important that teachers develop and communicate appropriate behaviors; but without appropriate teaching skills, communicating behaviors will do little to enhance and promote student learning.

Teachers can avoid many of the problems cited here by focusing on instruction as their main task. The teacher's main responsibility is to teach. A teacher's job involves many roles besides that of instructing students; however, they are subordinate to and in

support of the major role of teaching. Important as they are, they must not be allowed to overshadow the teacher's basic instructional role.

Teacher expectations can be used as tools to extract the essence of achievement from each and every student. Following are some broad guidelines to use in developing appropriate expectations for students:

1. Concentrate on the business of teaching —instruction comes first.
2. Set positive, specific, well-defined goals for students.
3. Expect all students to achieve those goals.
4. Approach instruction in terms of individuals, not groups.
5. Clearly inform students of the criteria against which their performance will be evaluated.
6. Learn to recognize inappropriate behaviors toward low achievers and correct them.
7. Learn to recognize positive, appropriate behaviors and use them in the best possible way.
8. Avoid self-fulfilling, self-sustaining expectations.
9. Be responsive to individual student needs.

Students are not all alike physically and mentally, but they are all alike in having the right to an equal opportunity to learn.

Programs or policies a school might consider include:

- Emphasis on mastery learning.
- Teaching, learning and grading policies that stress high success experiences.
- Tutoring programs for students who need extra help.
- Rewards for student achievement. These might take various forms from school board certificates to tickets to entertainment or cultural events.
- Administrative emphasis on high expectations.

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Time on Task

Variable 3. The more time spent on instruction, the greater the achievement gain.

Background

Historically, educators have been interested in making more efficient use of school time to foster learning. They have carried out studies to determine how school time was allocated to different subjects and how time allocations differed from school to school since as early as 1915.

Research has shown consistent positive relationships between time on task and achievement. It seems logical to assume that merely allocating a certain amount of time to a subject is not enough. We should be able to produce greater gains in student achievement by using allocated time more effectively.

The literature discusses allocated time, time on task, or engaged time and academic learning time.

Research studies refer basically to three "kinds" of time:

- Allocated time —time variables within a school, such as length of school year, length of school day, length of classroom periods, attendance rates, and so on.
- Time on task —the time a student is actively engaged in learning. This is sometimes referred to as "engaged time."
- Academic learning time —the time a student is engaged in learning in which he/she is successful.

Research studies have found consistent positive relationships between engaged time (time on task) and student achievement. The Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES), conducted from 1974–78, focused on reading and mathematics and developed a measure of student learning called Academic Learning Time. The findings of BTES showed that allocated time in mathematics varied from 25 minutes per day to 60 minutes per day. Allocated time in reading varied from about 60 minutes per day to about 140 minutes per day. Average rates of engagement also varied dramatically! There were some classes where engagement averaged 50%; in other classes average engagement rates approached 90%.

BTES also found high correlation between achievement and academic learning time. Achievement was higher in classrooms where students were actively involved in learning tasks and activities where they achieved medium to high success.

Allocated Time

Allocated time could be increased through the development of school programs or policies that would:

- Lower teacher and student absentee rates;
- Minimize interruptions from outside the classroom (loudspeaker announcements, message delivery, student tardiness, etc.);
- Increase the length of the school day or the amount of time for a particular subject or the length of class periods;
- Cut down on travel time within the building;
- Decrease time between classes; and
- Streamline procedural tasks for labs, the arts, etc.

Schools have increased allocated time in these ways:

- The "calling" of students to the office over the public address system took place only during the time classes were passing.
- Custodians, resource personnel, secretaries, or the principal entered rooms only at normal transition times unless there was an emergency.
- Exit and re-entry times for students leaving class occurred at normal transition times.
- Time between classes was reduced from seven to three minutes.
- Routines were taught to students for those procedural tasks that take time away from instruction.

Time on Task

Research has consistently shown correlations between time on task and student achievement. In attempting to increase time on task, schools could consider policies to.

- Increase the amount of teacher time that is spent in direct instructional contact with students.
- Provide teachers with time-management workshops.
- Develop and maintain an academic, "down to business" atmosphere.
- Monitor seat work.
- Eliminate distractions from outside the classroom.
- Encourage teachers to plan effective, relevant lessons and to reward time on task.

On-task behavior can be rewarded in a number of ways. One such way is a sustained silent reading program. One school has this activity every day from 12:40-1:00 p.m. Everyone in the school (students, teachers, aides, secretaries, custodians, and parents) reads something

of their choice in the classroom. The phone is off the hook, the office is locked, and a sign informs visitors that they will be helped at 1:00, but in the meantime, they are invited to take a book from the stack outside the office door and read! At the middle school and high school levels schools have rotated this reading time throughout the school day.

Student engagement rates are higher when students are involved in more academic interaction with the teacher, when they are working in a group setting, and when teachers more consistently monitor and provide assistance.

Some changes schools have made include:

- Classroom aides corrected papers, worked with small groups, or did recordkeeping —thus freeing the teacher to work more directly with students.
- Multiple-response techniques were utilized regularly when working with groups, especially for recall or short-answer responses.
- Independent learning centers were monitored by tutors or parent volunteers unless the station had an audio-visual focus of interest such as a tape, filmstrip or video that the student could operate on his/her own.
- Individualized self-paced instruction was done only with small, monitored groups. Self-directed kits and programs were never used with the whole class since monitoring and

immediate feedback were extremely difficult when the teacher/student ratio dropped below 1:10.

Academic Learning Time

Increasing academic learning time is the real goal of schools —providing students with highly successful, on-task experiences. In addition to the suggestions and examples under the time-on-task section, teachers, in planning for increased academic learning time, should:

- Use materials that are at the appropriate level of difficulty for students.
- Increase guided practice when students are learning new content or skills.
- Teach skills in a sequential order (where appropriate).
- Allow flexible grouping and regrouping of students.

The literature and research continues to look at time on task as one of the important variables in academic achievement. It's difficult to pick up an educational paper or journal and not find some mention of time on task.

Programs and/or policies a district might consider implementing include:

- Incentives to teachers to improve attendance.
- Stipend payments to teachers in buildings where student outcomes exceed those mathematically predicted.
- Rewards to students for attendance that meet or exceed a certain standard. Such rewards might take the form of tickets to amusement parks or particular sports or cultural events.
- Public analyses of attendance and achievement data.
- Parent programs to highlight the importance of attendance, homework, etc.

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Classroom Management

Variable 4: Higher achievement gains are more likely to occur in classrooms characterized by a high degree of structure, with teachers who are supportive.

Although classroom management is often discussed in terms of dealing with misbehavior, research on classroom discipline (Kounin, 1970) and on behavior modification generally suggests that this approach puts the cart before the horse.

Classroom management, as defined by the school effectiveness research, includes those teacher functions variously known as "discipline, control, keeping order, motivation, and establishing a positive attitude toward learning among others." (Short and Short 1987)

Generally the most important determinant of classroom atmosphere is the teacher's method of classroom management, especially his or her techniques for keeping the class actively attentive to lessons and involved in productive independent activities (Good and Brophy; 1984).

A teacher may be well-trained and extremely knowledgeable in a wide variety of subjects, but if that teacher is not also an effective classroom manager, all students will not learn.

Numerous studies tell us that sharp managerial skills increase student time on task, create a productive learning environment, and consequently, promote achievement gains. But what does an effective classroom manager do more specifically? How does an effective manager prevent disruptions? How can teachers provide structure for students while ensuring that they mature into individuals who can complete work independently?

In translating research theory into practice, classroom management strategies will be considered in terms of structure, student accountability, momentum and independence.

Providing Structure

Goals and Objectives: To a large extent, the research defines structure as goal direction. Having goals and specific objectives for lessons and making them clear to students is one way to provide structure. Learning theorists have found that both advance and post organizers are helpful in promoting learning. Teachers can provide opportunities for review while the class is assembling. When class begins the teacher's objectives for the lesson should be clearly understood by the students and time should be allotted at the end of the lesson for summarization. Structure does not mean rigidity. Teachers must also be mindful

of the fact that a positive climate or positive feeling tone is important. This would include verbal and nonverbal support for student work and behavior.

Rules: Teachers who are effective managers tend to begin teaching rules the first day they meet students. In developing rules, there are some things to keep in mind:

- State them in positive terms.
- Keep them brief and easy to understand.
- Keep them few in number.
- Teach them as any "content" is taught.
- Explain them in detail as part of the instruction and reinforce them consistently from the very beginning.
- Include students in the development and modification of rules.

Transitions: Most teachers agree that transition times provide prime opportunities for student disruptions. The purpose of a transition is to halt activity and attention in one area and direct it toward another. When students are naturally left in those few moments with no specific focus, disorder and disruption can sometimes occur.

Transitions may be structured as follows:

- Provide advance preparation. Studies show that advance organizers encourage students to remain on task, with attention focused on the teacher. Organizers consist of reminders that a new activity will be coming up very soon;
- Allow some time between activities. Keep this time brief so that momentum isn't lost along with class attention.

Supervision: This is, in part, the old eyes in the back of the head trick. Effective managers have that automatic scanner going—their eyes are constantly moving around the room. Kounin calls this "withitness". These teachers regularly scan their classes to keep an eye on what's happening in the classroom.

Well disciplined schools are characterized as having:

- Student involvement in, and ownership of problems.
- Rules and procedures that encourage shared responsibility and de-emphasize teacher control.

Keeping Students Accountable

Teachers who require their students to be accountable produce classrooms characterized by productivity, responsibility, and high time on task. Maintenance of student accountability is particularly important for low-achieving students. Low achievers are much more likely to remain attuned to instruction when they know they'll have to

demonstrate or use that knowledge at a time close at hand.

Some examples teachers have used to maintain accountability are:

- Ask a question, allow time for thinking, then call on someone. If a teacher always begins by focusing on a single student, others will figure they're "off the hook".
- Ask more than one question of a given student.
- Question a student again after a response to an earlier question.
- Ask questions in a varied and unpredictable manner.
- Ask students to repeat, agree or disagree with, or elaborate on a previously given response.
- Ask all students to listen to the answer being given so they can add to the given response.
- Monitor the classroom to include students who may be off task. This monitoring may take the form of questions, comments, or just walking around!
- Provide shy students with opportunities to respond.

Developing and Maintaining Momentum

Begin lessons by getting good attention. A standard signal is one way to do this. Teachers use many different kinds of signals. Whatever one chooses, it should be taught to students and used consistently.

Be aware of how long an activity takes. Researchers have found that 15 minutes is about as long as individuals can pay attention without some type of change in variety, technique, etc.

Don't rehash material that students already know. Good and Brophy point out that review lessons are abused by some teachers. When students clearly know the material, the review should be cut short. There is no need to ask the next 35 questions simply because they are in the teacher's manual. If certain students in the group do need further review, it would be better to work with them individually or to form them into a special group for additional help.

Stimulate attention periodically. Some advice that teachers give repeatedly to their students is "Speak with EXPRESSION! A dull monotone can extinguish interest in the most lively subject." Teachers don't have to be Katherine Hepburn or Laurence Olivier, but remember that varying of voice tone and style of delivery as it suits the topic can help gain attention. Enthusiasm about the lesson and the subject itself is contagious.

One way to stimulate this is to incorporate into teaching, examples that are of genuine interest and can be found in the real world.

An additional way to stimulate interest is to use a variety of teaching techniques. Active participation on the part of students, group responses, individual responses, demonstrations, readings, and factual questions that fit the topic are just some variations teachers use.

Bail out when necessary. Sometimes lessons are just too long. If the teacher's time is spent mainly in repeated attempts to gain attention, it may be best to terminate the lesson. Many times, reteaching is necessary anyway.

A variety of teaching techniques are needed to stimulate interest. John Goodlad's *A Study of Schooling* (1980) found that students are exposed to approximately two hours of "teacher talk" during a five-period day. There must be more variety in teaching. Students need to have opportunities for demonstrations, discussions, simulation and role playing, use of audio-visual equipment, physical performance and opportunities to produce something other than written work.

Teaching for Independence

The strategies discussed thus far suggest a classroom characterized by a high degree of teacher control and direction. Planning independent student activities, however, is also an important component of long-term effective management. Students need to practice self control and self-discipline in small doses in order to eventually become productive both in and out of school.

Assign specific skills. Work on skills should not be "busywork". It is an opportunity to extend practice and to develop specific skills. The great violinist Itzhak Perlman said, "The *quality* of practice is basically what counts...you have to know why you practice —what is the ultimate goal in a particular piece, in a particular section... For example, if you are practicing a 20 minute piece over and over again, that's not going to be helpful. But if you have a little spot of thirty-second notes that is bad, then you should focus on practicing that." The same applies to specific skill development in the school setting.

Teach students what to do when they're stuck. How do students get help if needed? One teacher teaches students the "Three before me" rule. When students are stuck, they follow this sequence:

1. Try to figure it out by going back over the work.
2. Quietly ask a fellow student for help.
3. Skip it and go on to the next problem, question, or activity.

Encourage effort. Communicate positive expectations to students. Provide suggestions or cues to increase a student's motivation to continue. With

students who may be struggling, check their progress more frequently.

Classroom management doesn't just happen! It develops as a result of a teacher who realizes that good management is a backbone of good teaching and who makes a commitment to managing the curriculum, to managing the environment, and to teaching students how to live within the environment and learn the curriculum. The preceding sections have focused on what teachers can do in classrooms. But what about administrative support? What about school-wide policy?

Research indicates that some schools are distinctly better at maintaining good student behavior, at promoting achievement, and at providing support for classroom teachers.

Advanced planning, cooperative curriculum development, agreement on and enforcement of school-wide rules, policies on homework, and ways to cut down on interruptions to classrooms are just some of the effective things administrators can do to help create a school-wide atmosphere that is conducive to a positive climate and one that encourages high achievement.

A 1979 secondary school study (Rutter et al.) concluded that "the impact of school will be greatly influenced by the degree to which it functions as a coherent whole, with agreed ways to doing things which are consistent throughout the school."

The previous section on "Principal Expectations" is another source of ideas. In addition, the reader might wish to review the bibliography for other readings.

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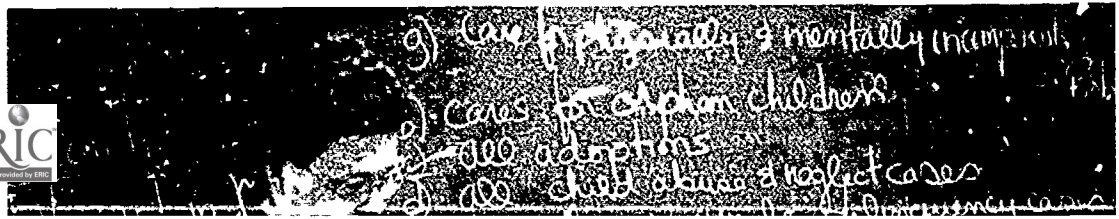
Reinforcement and Feedback

Variable 5: When teachers use positive feedback/reinforcement, student gains in achievement are greater.

Reinforcement and positive feedback are frequently used by teachers who are successful in raising the achievement levels of students. Once the teacher identifies those desired learning behaviors, effective use of reinforcement theory will lead the student toward higher achievement levels. To apply reinforcement theory in the classroom setting the teacher must first understand positive reinforcers, consequences and extinction. Teachers must also be aware of effective uses of praise and feedback.

Positive reinforcers are those things which the learner wants or needs. By supplying a positive reinforcer



immediately after the desired learning or behavior occurs, the likelihood of that behavior occurring again is increased. Stated another way, if the desired behavior is to persist, the payoff must be effective.

Consequences

Consequences refer to something that is not wanted or needed by the learner. By providing consequences for behaviors which are considered undesirable you decrease chances of that behavior occurring again. An example of such a consequence might be having a student remain after school.

Extinction

Extinction is what results when behavior is not reinforced. An important note here is that to be extinguished the behavior must not receive any reinforcement. In a classroom setting that can be sometimes very difficult. An example of this is the constant foot tapping of a student. If completely ignored (not reinforced at all!) this behavior will eventually become extinguished. Extinction does take time. Sometimes teachers can't wait long enough. However, ignoring the undesired behavior is crucial.

Positive Feedback

Positive feedback may also serve as a reinforcer but it is essential to know what kinds of feedback the learner views as being positive. Not all students place the same value on the same types and amounts of feedback.

For example, praise doesn't always work as a reinforcer. Research, in fact, indicates that extensive use of praise correlates negatively with learning gains in high-ability classes or high socio-economic status (SES) classes (Anderson, Evertson and Brophy, 1979; Brophy and Evertson, 1976).

Teachers can, however, use praise as a reinforcer when it is closely followed in time with special activities or privileges. Effective praise can provide encouragement and support when made contingent on effort, can be informative as well as reinforcing when it directs students' attention to genuine progress or accomplishment, and can help teachers establish friendly personal relationships with students.

For praise to be an effective reinforcer, it must be timely, accurate and specific. The following steps may serve as a helpful guide when using feedback:

- Select the acts, behaviors, or standards of performance that you want your students to display.
- Clearly and concisely communicate these standards to your students.
- Provide feedback as soon as possible. (This feedback must be specific, accurate and understood by your students.)

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As part of the feedback process, teachers should begin by using positive reinforcement. This may be done with verbal recognition, appreciation and praise when the standards are met. Encouragement and gentle reminders are also helpful when standards are not met.

Evertson and Brophy suggest the following points in the use of praise:

1. Be specific;
2. Focus on the material being covered;
3. Be consistent;
4. Do not praise heavily, inaccurately or habitually; and
5. Be sincere.

"From a social learning/ reinforcement point of view, praise can be an effective technique for teachers who 'pick their spots' by praising sparingly, concentrating on those students who respond well to it (it reinforces their desirable behavior) and making sure to meet the criteria of contingency, specificity, sincerity, variety and credibility."

Three Types of Reinforcers

In the book, *Teaching Makes a Difference*, Cummings, Nelson, and Shaw emphasize three positive reinforcers: social, activities and tangibles.

Social reinforcers are the approvals from those persons whom the individual considers to be important. Sometimes this might be the teacher, but in many cases positive social reinforcement from peers is even more effective. Methods for giving social reinforcement include compliments, praise, acceptance, encouragement and smiling.

Activity reinforcers provide opportunities for students to become involved in events which they prefer. Thus, students are rewarded with the activity of their choosing once they have met the standard set by the teacher.

Teachers can find out what is reinforcing for students by watching what they choose to do.

Tangible reinforcers include a danger that students can become hooked on gaining the reward without giving much attention to the task in which they are involved. To get off this system so teachers won't always need it, tangible reinforcers should be paired with praise and affection so these social reinforcers will gain reinforcing power.

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Tutoring

Variable 6: The use of tutoring is related to increased academic achievement.

Studies (Crofton and Goldman, 1980, among others) have shown that tutoring is effective in improving achievement. The tutor is often an aide or another student, and is not intended to take the place of the teacher, but rather to supplement the teacher-directed classroom activities.

A high intensity tutoring program was operated in Highland Park, Michigan, middle schools from 1970 to 1982. All students were tested at the beginning of the year; those who were at least a year below grade level in reading or math were eligible to be tutored. Older students who needed work to upgrade their basic skills were chosen by the teachers to serve as tutors (most tutors were former tutees). Four days per week the tutees left an academic class for half the hour period and were tutored by students from other classes.

The pairs worked together in rooms set aside for tutoring; one room for math, another for reading. A ten minute drill in basic facts was followed by questions and answers from workbooks suitable for programmed instruction. Tutees earned points for correct answers which were tallied and periodically cashed in for rewards.

In another community, a high school program in which high school students received academic credit for tutoring elementary school children benefited all involved. The elementary school coordinator and high school counselor worked closely to monitor the program. Weekly progress reports or weekly time sheets were completed by the tutors.

Benefits to Tutor

In most tutoring programs the emphasis has been on improving the learning of the recipient. Lately, more attention has been given to the benefits to the student acting as tutor. These benefits are both emotional and cognitive.

Middle school and high school students who have not learned basic skills, tutoring is a means of off-setting the stigma of relearning basic skills. It is also good for their ego to be able to help teach younger students. In order that they not fall behind in their own studies, tutors should not be pulled out of academic classes for tutoring sessions.

Tips for Establishing a Tutoring Program

The initial considerations in establishing a tutoring program include administration; goals for the program; selecting students to be tutored; selecting

tutors; training tutors; pairing tutor and tutee; logistics (scheduling, space and materials); monitoring and assessment.

Administration: It is important at the beginning of a tutoring program to solicit active support from all levels, although one person needs to have central responsibility for the program.

Goals for the program: Behavioral and instructional goals should be determined before tutoring begins. The teacher must create goals for the students, specify objectives that reflect the goals, determine methods to attain the objectives, and establish procedures to assess attainment of the objectives.

Selecting students to be tutored: Often the goals for the program determine the criteria by which students to be tutored are selected. Two factors to be considered in selecting students are:

1. The potential of the student to exhibit change in academic performance; and
2. The student's attitudes toward learning.

Selecting tutors: In peer or cross-age tutoring programs, students of varying intellectual levels can tutor successfully. For students of average or above average ability who are achieving below grade level, serving as a tutor can be an effective means of motivation.

Basically, attention should be given to selecting tutors who will benefit the most from the tutoring experience. Students chosen as tutors should be able to handle the responsibilities involved, such as, knowing the lesson, becoming involved in the development of the materials, listening, prompting, modeling reinforcement, etc.

Training Tutors: Before tutoring begins, tutors should be trained. Two types of training are necessary: training in the area in which the tutor is helping, and training in human relations. Continued staff development should be provided after the program begins. Time should be allocated for tutors to meet regularly with the tutee's teacher to exchange ideas, discuss results, and plan new strategies.

Pairing tutor and tutee: The pairs should be monitored closely and reassignments made when learning or affective goals are not being met.

Logistics: Tutoring programs vary widely in the length and number of sessions. An important consideration is the time of day to conduct the sessions. The pairs should meet during the same time period each day they are tutoring. Ideally, there should be a quiet, private location for the sessions. In many programs, preparation of materials to be used in the sessions is done by the tutors. A program which explicitly defines the content, sequence and procedure of each lesson is more likely to be successful than a loosely structured program.

Monitoring: The tutoring pairs should be routinely monitored. The monitoring process can be simplified by using a checklist developed from the

objectives. A nonprofessional can be used for monitoring.

Assessment: Selection or the development of instruments to assess the progress toward instructional goals is necessary. Assessment should be conducted regularly to provide reinforcement to the tutor and tutee and to show when modifications may be necessary.

Programs and Policies

A district might develop a plan for using community members as tutors through a volunteer program. These people might be parents, senior citizens, or citizens who may not have children in school but may wish to assist. The plan must, of course, include provisions for training of volunteers in tutoring. Student-team learning strategies have been found to be successful in increasing peer-tutoring.

Through a program of cooperation with business/industry, a district may find opportunities for developing tutors.

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Recitation

Variable 7: Recitation promotes greater achievement gains, and the use of "factual" questions in class is associated with greater achievement of basic skills.

Background

Studies have found that recitation, defined generally as a response by a student, can be an effective means of promoting both the acquisition and retention of knowledge. Thayer observed that the recitation method, at its inception, was a progressive reform, making it possible for teachers to deal with much larger groups of students than they could by the earlier method which called for each student to recite the entire lesson at the teacher's desk. In 1912, classroom observers reported that eighty percent of the classroom talk was devoted to asking, answering or reacting to questions.

More recent research has focused on types of questions and effects of questioning practices on student achievement. Although learning theorists use a variety of terms —response, participation, recitation— they are all meant to convey that some active involvement of the learner is a necessary requirement for learning.

Why is Recitation So Important?

Recitation is one form of evaluation that:

- Tests what the teacher has actually taught.
- Allows for the provision of immediate feedback to the students.
- Provides sufficiently detailed results about individual students for the teacher's use in planning the next instruction.

At the same time, recitation is not time-consuming, not tedious, and does not require test-construction skills. Recitation also serves to let students know that they are accountable for their work. One way of looking at recitation is as a sampling procedure, whereby a teacher can estimate the learning of each student from the student's responses to a certain number of questions.

In one review of research about instruction practices and effects on student achievement, Rosenshine (1976) suggested that there might be an optimal instructional pattern which he labeled as *directed instruction*. "The results of some studies also suggest that in direct instruction, the teacher is the dominant leader who decides which activities will take place. The learning is approached in a direct business-like manner and is

organized around questions posed by the teacher of the materials."

Bellack and others (1966) very carefully described the verbal behavior of teachers and pupils in fifteen classrooms.

Descriptive and correlational studies laid the groundwork for more rigorous, controlled studies about question-and-answer recitation.

They found that teachers talked between two-thirds and three-quarters of the time. Teachers were responsible for structuring the lesson and soliciting responses. The student's primary task was to respond to the teacher's solicitations...students should get more opportunities to talk and respond.

Examples from Research

The significant finding in two experiments was that recitation teaching was more effective in promoting student learning than a non-recitation instructional experience lasting for the same period of time. The Texas teacher effectiveness study contrasts response opportunities in the effective high and

low SES (socio-economic status) classrooms and found "a teacher working in an effective high SES school ordinarily would have little difficulty in getting the answer sought" and would, in fact, have "to work to keep order and maintain control over the flow of responses to see that everyone respected everyone else's turn and that lessons did not become overly competitive." In contrast, teachers in effective low SES schools often had to work to get any kind of response at all. They had to make it clear to the students that they expected and intended to wait for a response every time they asked a question.

What Types of Questions?

Research about effective instructional practices shows that there is no "ideal" type of question that is successful with all students. Some research has indicated that the difficulty level of questions (factual vs. higher level questions) may depend on several factors, including the aptitude and the motivation of the learner.

If you decide that your learners need practice with higher level questions, consider reviewing M. Hunter's *Rx for Improved Instruction* which contains information and suggestions for higher-level questions.

Norris Sanders in *Classroom Questions-What Kinds?* offers the following suggestions for composing questions:

1. When planning a lesson, look for the kinds of ideas that are important and susceptible to use in thinking.
2. Textbooks help a teacher present an orderly sequence of subject matter but are written in a manner that encourages only the use of memory. Higher level questions often require the withholding of conclusions drawn in the text until the students have had an opportunity to do some thinking. Questions in the higher categories frequently require sources of information in addition to the text.
3. There are several ways to teach almost any skill or idea that focus on different kinds of thinking. Be aware of all the possibilities in choosing the most appropriate for the objective to be taught.
4. Higher level questions can be missed by students on lower intellectual levels. An application-level question, for example, can be missed because of the inability to remember or to interpret the information.
5. In evaluating student progress, use questions requiring the same kinds of thinking that were used in the instruction.

Sanders offers numerous examples and other ideas for constructing questions. He includes a final section that offers a good conclusion for this section --one we need to consider carefully!

"As with any idea in education, a special concern for questions poses certain dangers. Teachers who strive for higher-level questions may lose interest in the bread-and-butter memory questions. They become so intrigued with

sending students through intellectual labyrinths that they neglect fundamental knowledge. They may tend to cater to the capabilities of superior students.

Simple questions designed for slow students are just as necessary as complex ones in all categories. Subjective questions are important and have a challenge of their own but should be mixed with a liberal number of objective ones. There is a satisfaction in giving the one right answer to an objective question and being told the response is correct."

To Increase Recitation/Response/Participation

School programs and practices can be developed or modified to:

1. Ensure that every student is called upon as often as possible;
2. Include questions as an integral part of every lesson plan;
3. Maximize opportunities for students to respond to questions;
4. Provide aides, tutors or others with appropriate questions for them to use with individuals or groups of students;
5. Use non-verbal (as well as verbal) responses to increase participation;
6. Increase student opportunities to respond in writing when oral questioning is not possible.

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Parental Involvement

Variable 8: The greater the amount of parental involvement, the greater the achievement.

Research indicates that parents can influence their children's achievement in numerous ways. These include such items as parental aspirations, expectations, parent-school contacts, and supplemental at-home instruction.

A review of Gallup surveys over a ten-year period (1978) indicates: "A joint and coordinated effort by parents and teachers is essential to dealing more successfully with problems of discipline, motivation, and the development of good work habits at home and in school." A synthesis of several studies indicates the following:

1. Parent involvement in almost any form improves student achievement.
2. Parents are a tremendous, yet largely untapped, resource for public education.
3. Children whose parents engage them in educational activities tend to do better in school, regardless of economic background (Benson, 1980).
4. The degree of parental and community interest in quality education is a critical factor in explaining the impact of the high school environment on the achievement and educational aspirations of students.

According to Lawrence W. Lezotte, Director of the National Center for Effective Schools, "When students reach the middle grades and, for sure, 'senior high school, the nature and forms of the parent participation must change' because parents do not believe they are 'fully functioning citizens' in most secondary school learning communities. To become more active, visible, and symbolically present in high schools, parents need to organize themselves as a visible presence, without this creating excessive demands on one, two, or a few parents. Data suggests that general monitoring and oversight by parents, for example, through an organized communication network, can produce a 'value added' component."

Parental Aspirations and Expectations

Parental aspirations consistently relate to success in school. This attitudinal variable usually takes the form of a "press for achievement."

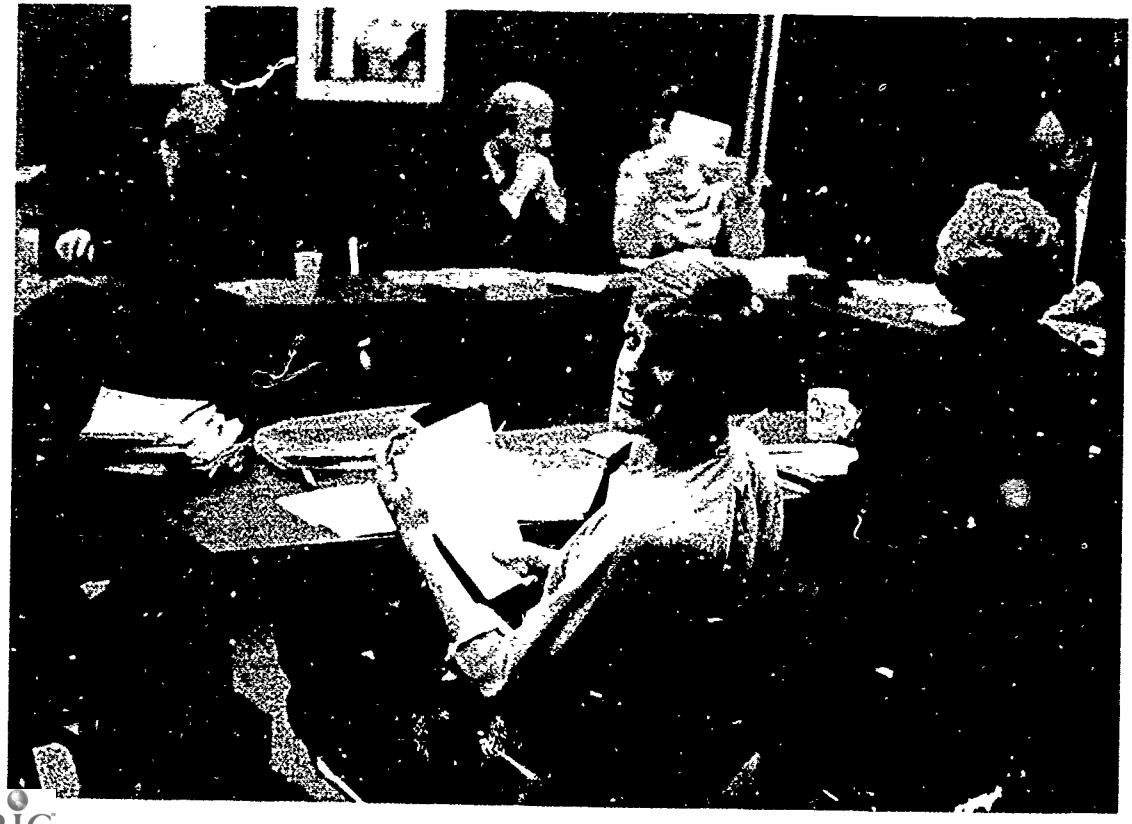
Students gain in academic development when parental expectations are high. Families, by placing a strong positive emphasis on schooling from early childhood throughout the school years, have the most lasting impact on student achievement.

The communication of expectations from parent to student is hard to get a handle on. It appears that this happens in a variety of ways. Active involvement in school projects and activities is just one of those ways. Other kinds of involvement will be found throughout the following sections.

Parent-School Contacts

There are many types of parent-school contacts. These contacts may take the form of conferences, notes, visits to the home, and/or workshops for parents and teachers.

Volunteer programs are another way that parents can be involved in schools. Research has indicated that parents volunteering to work in schools as tutors or para-professionals is associated with higher achievement gains. Volunteering is an effective way to increase parent-school contact and to give parents a feel for and understanding of what happens in classrooms.



Supplemental At-Home Instruction

There is evidence that more active involvement by parents in the home is effective. Achievement has been affected by parents who learned methods for promoting intellectual development or used effective teaching behaviors in working with their children on learning tasks or on behavior.

Since the amount of time spent on a task is so important for learning, parents can contribute to increasing time on task by providing supplemental classroom instruction at home.

Individual teachers have developed a wide range of practices for parents. Epstein (1982) identified techniques in five areas:

- Activities that emphasize reading. These would include parents reading to their child or listening to the child read.
- Learning through discussion. One example might be watching a particular television show or movie followed by a discussion.
- Informal learning activities at home including home ideas for family games or activities related to school learning.
- Contacts between teachers and parents that provided agreement to supervise and/or assist in homework activities.
- Developing teaching and evaluation skills in parents. These included techniques for teaching and creating learning materials.

Parental involvement is an important educational resource. It remains largely untapped! Planning and creativity are the only barriers to this limitless resource. There are no fail-proof methods of home/school cooperation and collaboration that will work in every setting. However, there are a variety of programs and activities to consider.

Policies and practices a school might wish to consider include:

- Special training workshops that will help parents develop skills needed to assist their child;
- A program to recruit and train volunteers to work with students and with teachers; or
- A Parent Plus program, such as Chicago's, to bring poorly-educated, low-income parents into the school one day each week to learn how they can help at home with school work and to expand their homemaking and community-related skills.

One inner-city school produced significant gains in reading and mathematics scores after initiating a parent-involvement program which included:

Success Reports: At the beginning of the school year, both parents and students

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were informed of what students were expected to learn by the end of the school year. Student progress was reported to parents via telephone calls, notes, and home visits.

Discussion Groups: Informal parent/teacher discussions were held bi-monthly. Parents were encouraged to discuss any problems their child was having in school. Ideas for solutions were solicited from both parents and teachers. Sessions were held at both community centers and homes.

Parent Network: Parents who were involved in schools were assigned to keep five parents (who had not been involved) informed about school activities and events.

Monthly Calendars: A calendar listing books, films, television programs and cultural events as well as planned school events and activities, was sent to parents monthly.

Mini-Workshops: Parents/teachers who indicated a willingness to instruct or share information on hobbies or topics of special interest were identified.

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