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ABSTRACT

This manual is designed to help rural Chapter 1 program staff effectively run their programs. Upon reviewing the history of the Chapter 1 legislation and program, the document stresses program design, evaluation, and improvement as three easy ways to understanding the Chapter 1 program. Program design should determine the district eligibility for the program, based on the number of children in poverty and the numbers of neglected or delinquent children. A needs assessment must be conducted to the selected districts to select students and identify instructional areas, grade levels, and educational needs. Application for funds must detail the process of services and specify the desired outcomes. A 1985 survey of Chapter 1 programs provides data that characterize the effective organization and instruction of the program. To apply the model to rural Chapter 1 programs, communication among agencies and management of mobile students are crucial. Program evaluation involves appropriately administered tests for specific purposes, with particular attention to the grade level, testing cycle, and test selection and test bias. The annual review must address performance in basic and advanced skills, progress in desired outcomes, and parental involvement. Program improvement entails improvement planning at local and state levels. At local level, key teachers, administrators, parents, and consultants collaborate to: (1) identify current status of the program; (2) focus on areas that most need improvement; (3) review research of effective programs; (4) develop and implement a systematic plan; and (5) develop a monitoring and evaluation plan. This manual lists computer software for evaluation and reporting. (GGH)

THE Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

PROGRAM REPORT

Chapter 1 in Three Easy Steps:
A Manual for Rural Chapter 1 Teachers and Coordinators

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May 1991

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The Rural Technical Assistance Center at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory serves the states of Region 6: California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. We provide workshops, materials and computer software to assist those states and their rural districts in meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged children, free of charge.

The Rural Technical Assistance Center staff are mostly former teachers with advanced degrees in education. They specialize in many different areas of education such as evaluation or instruction and are on call to help rural Chapter 1 program staff.

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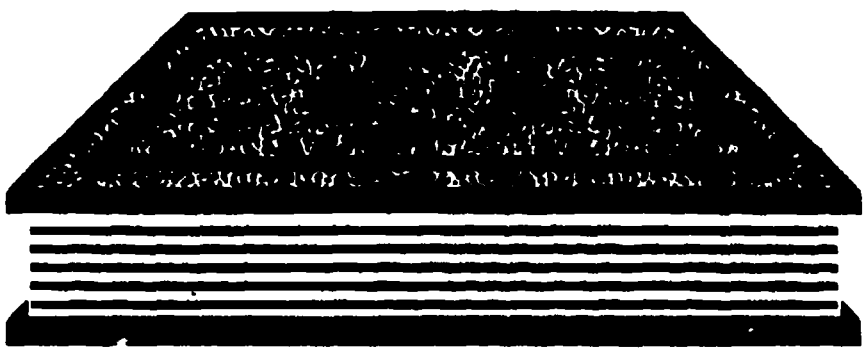
INTRODUCTION



The Purpose of this Manual

Rural Chapter 1 teachers and coordinators are often isolated and have a difficult time getting the information they need to run their Chapter 1 programs as efficiently and effectively as possible. That's why the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Rural Technical Assistance Center (R-TAC) has created this handy, easy-to-read manual. We want to make life easier and more rewarding for you and your students. We hope that this manual will do just that.

The manual should be useful to newcomers and old-timers alike. It will introduce the newcomer to Chapter 1 by providing a history of Chapter 1, an overview of Chapter 1 law, and an overview of rural Chapter 1 program issues. It will also assist anyone engaged in any of the three primary components of Chapter 1: program design, program evaluation, and program improvement.

This stand-alone manual does not replace the U.S. Department of Education's Chapter 1 *Policy Manual*. Rather, this manual is for busy people who may not have the time to read the *Policy Manual* cover to cover. The *Policy Manual* is more detailed and specific than the rural manual, and we will refer you to it when appropriate.

History of Chapter 1

Chapter 1 receives a larger share of federal funding for elementary and secondary students than any other program. The program is funded at $6.2 billion for 1991. Chapter 1 accounts for approximately 22 percent of the U.S. Department of Education budget and serves approximately five million children with special educational needs. The bulk of Chapter 1 money is used at the preschool and elementary levels, but there are secondary programs as well.

Chapter 1 started in 1965, when Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty." The ESEA contained Title 1, Chapter 1's predecessor. According to the Chapter 1 policy manual the purpose of Chapter 1 is to provide financial assistance "through state educational agencies (SEAs) to local education agencies (LEAs) to meet the special education needs of educationally deprived children in school attendance areas and schools with high concentrations of children from low-income families and the needs of children in local institutions for neglected or delinquent (N or D) children."

In 1978, Congress and the U.S. Office of Education took steps to increase state and local accountability of the program, culminating in the 1978 amendments to Title 1. However, in 1981, Chapter 1 was enacted to supersede Title 1, in order to eliminate paperwork and free schools from federal control, as part of the Elementary Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA). The same basic purpose and legal framework of Title 1 were retained, but certain administrative requirements of Title 1 were changed or eliminated. In 1983, Chapter 1 was amended.

Technical changes were made that clarified some of the ambiguities of the Elementary Consolidation and Improvement Act and reinstated certain provisions that had existed under Title 1. Throughout these changes, school districts were able to continue the compensatory education programs initiated under Title 1 with little change at the classroom level.

In 1988, the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary Improvement Amendments (Public Law 100-297) amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. These amendments reauthorized the Elementary Consolidation and Improvement Act with several changes. The most notable change was the requirement for program improvement efforts in programs that did not show signs of improving Chapter 1 students' rate of progress. Hence, program improvement is included as one of "three easy steps" in this manual.

Overview of Public Law 100-297

The most important areas Public Law 100-297 addresses, for the purposes of rural Chapter 1 teachers and coordinators, are *program design, including parent involvement guidelines, evaluation requirements, and program-improvement requirements.* These are all elaborated upon in later sections of this manual and in the *Chapter 1 policy manual.*

Program Design

Public Law 100-297 addresses three issues related to program design: student selection, assessment of student needs and parent involvement. School districts must conduct annual needs assessments to determine which children are educationally deprived (or whose educational attainment is below that appropriate for children their age). Objective criteria must be used for each grade level. In the *Policy Manual*, objective criteria are defined as standardized tests, teacher assessments, criterion-referenced tests, reading or math placement assessments, or other assessments related to educational performance. The information collected in the needs assessment must also be used to determine the content areas that will be taught in Chapter 1. Needs assessment is described later in this manual. A detailed outline of needs assessment is also included on pages 61 to 63 of the *Policy Manual.*

The law advocates parent involvement at all levels of Chapter 1. Parents are included in state "committees of practitioners" to help decide state rules and policies, and they are expected to be included in planning at the local level at well. Parent involvement is heavily emphasized because it has been shown to be a characteristic of successful Chapter 1 programs. Later in this manual, we will discuss some effective ways of involving parents in your Chapter 1 program.

Evaluation Requirements

Evaluation requirements exist at both the state and local levels. At the state level, the requirement is that each state educational agency must conduct an evaluation every two years and submit the results to the secretary of education in the U. S. Department of Education. The state education agency must inform the school districts of the data needed in advance. It must collect data on race, age, gender, and number of children with handicapping conditions served. At the local level, each school district must evaluate its programs at least once every three years. The district must conduct a sustained effects evaluation; measure students' performance in the regular program; measure basic and advanced skills in terms of objective measures; and aggregate the findings across individual students. The district must submit the evaluation results to the state education agency. The preschool, kindergarten, and first grades are exempt from the requirement to administer norm-referenced tests of basic and advanced skills.

Program Improvement

In addition to the evaluation that is required of school districts every three years, a local annual review is required in which schools must determine whether or not they have made progress in the norm-referenced measures and in achieving "desired outcomes," a term which we will define later. If they do not make progress in either of these areas, they must engage in program improvement, which will be elaborated upon briefly here and in more detail later in this manual. There are two forms of program improvement: school-level program improvement and student-level program improvement. In school-level program improvement, schools in which Chapter 1 students have failed to make satisfactory progress are identified by school districts and are required to write program improvement plans and to implement those plans. Schools that fail to meet achievement goals two years in a row are required to engage in joint planning with the state. This joint planning continues until the program improves. Student-level program improvement requires the school district to examine the effects of the Chapter 1 program on individual students who fail to make adequate progress and to revise services to meet their needs.

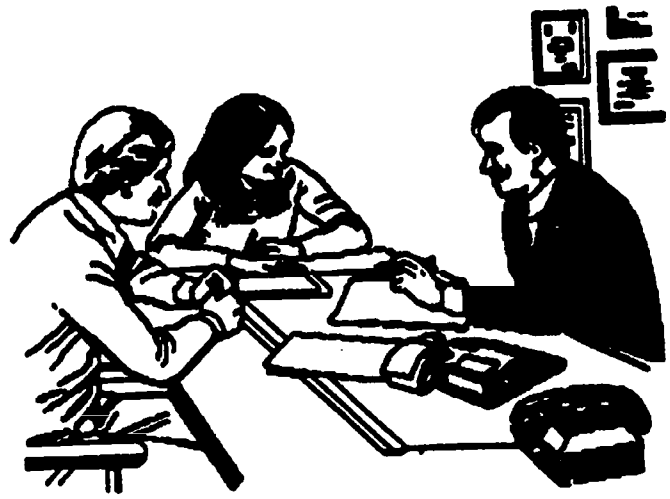
CHAPTER 1 IN THREE EASY STEPS

The easiest way to think about Chapter 1 programs is in terms of three steps: *program design, program evaluation, and program improvement.* For this reason, we have divided this manual into three parts, each corresponding to one of the three steps described below.

Program design is the first thing to do in order to deliver Chapter 1 services. Although you may be working in a program that is already in place, it may be useful for you to peruse this section of the handbook in order to better understand the workings of a Chapter 1 program. Once a program is in place, the law requires regular *program evaluation.* These evaluations are conducted by the school districts and submitted to state departments at least once every three years. Finally, *program improvement* is required for those schools whose evaluation data do not show improvement in student outcomes. However, program improvement is useful even for schools that are making good progress.

STEP I. DESIGNING YOUR PROGRAM

Many of you who are reading this manual are probably Chapter 1 personnel in programs which are already in place. However, you will have to apply for continuation funds periodically (see your state officials for details) and may need to revise your programs to meet changing student needs at any time. This section explains why your program looks the way it does. It may also help you to identify areas in which your program should be changed to better meet federal requirements, or ways in which you could change your program without violating requirements. For those of you who are initiating a program from the ground up, this section will serve as a guide.



Which Schools are Eligible?

The money provided by the federal government for Chapter 1 does not pass directly from the hands of the U.S. Department of Education into the hands of local school officials. The Department of Education allocates money to states using county census data. The determination of which counties are eligible is based upon two things: the number of children ages 5-17 in families with incomes below the poverty level and the number of neglected or delinquent children in a county. Allocations are given only to counties with at least 10 eligible children.

States then decide how to distribute the money to school districts, using county and district data. Finally, district officials rank schools on the basis of low-income data as well as needs assessment data (to be described in the next section).

Needs Assessment

Once a school district has been notified by state personnel that it may receive Chapter 1 funds, the school district must conduct a needs assessment. The district will receive notification from the state indicating which information must be submitted in this assessment. School districts (referred to as local education agencies or LEAs in the Department of Education's *Policy Manual*) must continue to conduct such needs assessments on a yearly basis for as long as they are eligible if they wish to receive Chapter 1 funds.

The required needs assessment has four parts: identification of eligible children, identification of instructional areas and grade levels, selection of students to be served, and identification of educational needs. First, the district must decide which children are educationally deprived and thus eligible for Chapter 1. The district is required to establish objective criteria to be used at all grade levels for this purpose. The following are examples of the type of information the school may have to use:

- Standardized tests;
- Regular classroom teachers' assessment of performance in potential Chapter 1 instructional areas;
- Criterion-referenced tests;
- Reading or mathematics placement assessment; and
- Other assessment instruments related to educational performance.

Written and oral testing instruments are both acceptable.

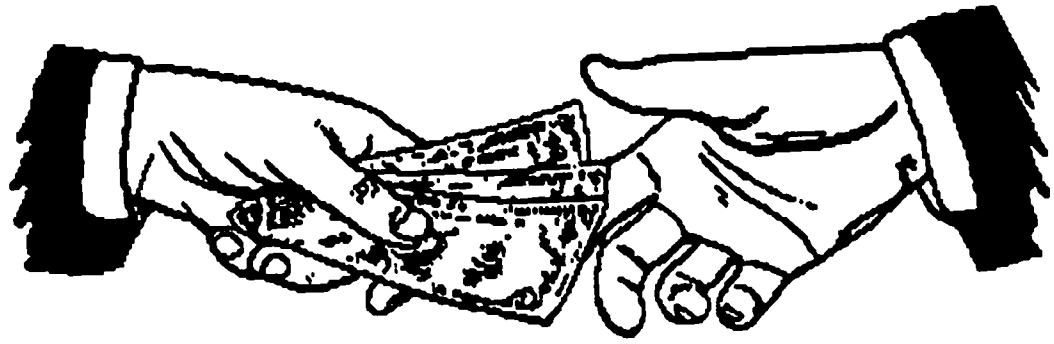
The following steps are usually a cooperative venture between district office and school personnel. After identifying eligible children, the instructional areas and grade levels to be served are selected, again using the data that was collected during the identification step. The instructional areas and grade levels may vary from school to school. Then the students within the targeted grade levels are selected, based on selection criteria which must be uniform throughout the district. Finally, the specific educational needs of the selected students must be determined.

Information about these decisions will be included in the application the district submits to the state for Chapter 1 funding. The next section of this manual discusses applications.

Applications for Funds

Applications for funds are submitted to states by district personnel. The state will request the necessary information from the district. A list of the information that will be requested from page 33 of the *Policy Manual* has been reproduced below.

- A description (meaning a concise explanation, not an extended narrative) of the procedures for conducting an annual needs assessment;
- A rank-ordered list of eligible school attendance areas that identifies project areas, the type of low-income data by which they were selected, the districtwide percentage or average number of children from low-income families, and explanatory information on schools or school attendance areas selected or not selected under special rules; and
- A description of the project that provides enough information about the proposed activities for the SEA to determine if the plan for the program is in compliance.



- A budget that separates proposed expenditures for services for public and private school children;
- A description of desired outcomes for children in the project, in terms of basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master, and how the LEA will measure substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes;
- A description of services to be provided to private school children;
- A description of services to be provided to local neglected or delinquent children;
- A description of innovation projects, if any are planned; and

- Maintenance of effort data (if not available to the SEA through another means).

Desired Outcomes

A description of desired outcomes in terms of basic and advanced skills must be included by districts in their application for Chapter 1 funds.

Desired outcomes are goals set by the local educational agency to help students:

- Succeed in the regular program;
- Attain grade level proficiency; and
- Improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills

These desired outcomes must be stated in terms of aggregate or average performance in the basic and more advanced skills that all the children in the school district are expected to master.

Rural school districts can tailor their Chapter 1 programs to local needs through the use of desired outcomes that reflect the unique goals of particular school districts. Within the limits set by the state education agency, the district can choose from a large number of measures as desired outcomes. Each however, must be stated in terms that can be *measured*. Here are a few examples:

- Improved performance in the regular program, demonstrated by an average improvement of one letter grade in the regular class;
- 15 percent reduction in retentions in grade;
- 5 percent average improvement on criterion-referenced test;
- 10 percent reduction in dropout rates; and
- Specific goals for parental involvement.

Through the choice of desired outcomes, rural school districts may set goals that go beyond improved achievement on norm-referenced tests. Criterion-referenced tests can be used to show student achievement in particular areas which the district considers to be important. Performance assessment measures, like writing assessment, may help round out the true picture of Chapter 1 student learning. Holistic scoring of writing samples may be used. The measures used to assess desired outcomes need not be equated with nationally normed tests, or

expressed in terms of the common reporting scale (normal curve equivalents). Locally developed tests can be used as well.

Since an evaluation of the Chapter 1 program must be conducted every three years (more on this later), it is helpful to define progress toward achieving desired outcomes in terms of measurable yearly goals. If the goal, for example, is to reduce retention in grade from 15 percent to 8 percent in three years, targets may be set of 12 percent in the first year, 10 percent in the second, and 8 percent in the third.

Program Delivery

There are many choices to be made about the nature of the Chapter 1 program in a given school. We have already described the choices regarding who will be served and which subject matter will be emphasized. But that is only the beginning. Once the students to be served and the subject matter have been decided upon, more specific decisions have to be made. These will be addressed below.

Chapter 1 regulations state that Chapter 1 programs must be "of sufficient size, scope and quality to give reasonable promise of substantial progress toward meeting the special educational needs of the children being served." Size and scope refer to the number of children in the program and the range of academic matter covered, respectively.

The size of a program will be determined largely by the funding available. School and district personnel will have to decide which students to serve and how much time to spend serving them during the course of each year.

Scope will depend upon children's needs. Often, reading is the only subject taught in Chapter 1 because personnel perceive that reading is the greatest need. However, the broader category of language arts may be taught, as may mathematics, science, history, or any other subject.

Quality is the program characteristic that is of most concern to us as we explain to you how to best design your program. Size and scope are issues that can only be determined by examining unique local needs, but quality can be discussed at a more generic level.

Characteristics of Effective Chapter 1 Programs

In 1985, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory conducted a study of effective Chapter 1 programs. One hundred and sixteen outstanding Chapter 1 projects selected by the U.S. Department of Education were studied. In addition, relevant research was reviewed. The results indicated effective programs had the following 13 characteristics:

Organizational Attributes:

- Positive school/classroom climate
- Clear goals and objectives
- Coordination with the regular school program/other special programs
- Parent/community involvement
- Professional development and training
- Evaluation results used for project improvement
- Strong leadership

Instructional Attributes:

- Appropriate instructional materials, methods, and approaches
- Maximum use of academic learning time
- High expectations for student learning and behavior
- Closely monitored student progress
- Regular feedback and reinforcement
- Excellence recognized and rewarded

We will say a little bit about each of these attributes shortly. If you wish to know more about any of them, consult the *Effective Compensatory Education Sourcebook*. Free copies may be attained through your state education agency or by phoning the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory at (800) 547-6339, extension 584. The attributes are currently under examination and may be recategorized in the near future. However, the content will remain essentially the same. In the following section, detailed excerpts describing all the attributes were taken from Volume 1 of the *Sourcebook*.

Organizational Attributes

Positive school and classroom climate. In a positive climate, high expectations are communicated for student achievement and behavior.

> Behavior is orderly; rules are established early in the year and are applied with fairness and consistency; and classrooms are orderly, structured, and purposeful. The physical environment is neat, facilities are in good working order, and the surroundings are reasonably attractive (*Sourcebook*, p. 27).

Some examples from successful projects are:

- Membership on a districtwide "climate committee" aimed at fostering positive climates in schools and programs;
- Use of a discipline policy featuring consistency, clarity, high expectations and respect for students;
- Projects aimed at giving the Chapter 1 program visibility and a positive image within the school;
- Project resource rooms that are well lighted, colorful, orderly and well organized (*Sourcebook*, p. 27).

Clear goals and objectives. Leaders should involve staff, parents, and community members in setting goals and objectives, and then make sure those goals and objectives are widely communicated to school and community members.

> [Widespread knowledge of and participation in setting goals] increases commitment to the program and consistency in pursuing its goals. Successful schools and projects generally have objectives which are stated in precise, measurable terms. Their goals and objectives frequently have to do with student self-concepts and attitudes, as well as academic achievement. In one exemplary project, the goals and objectives [were] the product of an intense effort by the staff and community. The first step was the development of a survey instrument which was administered to diverse constituencies including the Chamber of Commerce, civic clubs, parent organizations and school staff. The second step was the review of student data to identify and incorporate student needs into the goals and objectives. The staff, after review of student data, determined specific objectives for Chapter 1 students. The objectives addressed specific increases in standardized achievement test scores for a given percentage of the students at the end of the year (*Sourcebook*, p. 28).

Coordination with the regular school program and other special programs. Because Chapter 1 supplements regular instruction, it is particularly important to avoid situations "where the left hand does not know what the right hand is

doing." Coordination of the Chapter 1 program with other school programs increases opportunity to learn by reinforcing basic skills in different instructional settings. Principals and other school leaders are key figures in fostering coordination through collaborative planning and resource sharing. Within and across the various programs operating in a school, instructional resources and tests need to focus on stated objectives so as to achieve alignment of the curriculum. In effective schools and programs, coordination efforts are ongoing, with adjustments made as needed. Principals support this ongoing coordination by encouraging planning groups to work together and by providing opportunities for them to do so (*Sourcebook*, p. 29).

Examples include:

- Regular meetings in which Chapter 1 and regular classroom teachers plan instructional activities;
- Staff work sessions in which the objectives and activities of regular and supplemental programs are examined and more closely matched as needed;
- Chapter 1 teacher evaluations which are based in part on how well instruction is coordinated with that of regular classroom teaching;
- Well-established, utilized processes for communication and referral among regular, Chapter 1, migrant, and special education programs; and
- Daily log sheets which detail Chapter 1 and regular teacher communications and which are reviewed by program coordinators and principals (*Sourcebook*, p. 30).

The Chapter 1 program may either reinforce regular classroom activities or prepare children for them through readiness activities. Both are useful.

Parent/community involvement. The purposes of parent and community involvement are to: (1) permit parents to participate in policy decisions or as members of advisory councils or groups; (2) encourage general support through fund-raising or parent-teacher organizations; and (3) engage parents directly in influencing their children's ability to achieve (*Sourcebook*, p. 31).

Direct parent participation in their children's instruction provides the greatest benefit to achievement and attitudes (italics added). Parental tutoring (particularly with advanced parent training) is related to positive student achievement and attitudes. The most effective type of involvement, as reported by Walberg and other investigators, is a collaborative home-school approach in which parents are trained to reinforce academic and social behaviors at home (*Sourcebook*, p. 31).

Each school district conducting a Chapter 1 program must take steps to involve the parents of the children participating in the program. These parents must have an opportunity to be involved in the planning, the design and the implementation of the Chapter 1 program.

There are many ways in which parents can have an impact on their child's learning and on the quality of the Chapter 1 program in their school. One way of understanding the ways parents can help is by considering four roles that parents can play: (1) parents as teachers, (2) parents as learners, (3) parents as supporters/advocates, and (4) parents as decision makers.

1. Parents as teachers

It is important for parents to set an example for their children by reading for their own enjoyment. This allows children to see reading as a valued pastime. Children of parents who model activities related to learning and achievement tend to do better in school.

Another way parents can support their children's success in school is by providing a wide range of stimulating experiences for them. Family visits to museums and zoos, access to libraries, and the presence of books in the home can all have a positive effect on school performance.

Chapter 1 teachers and administrators can help parents fulfill this role by providing them with materials for home learning activities. A few examples are:

- A calendar of activities that parents can do with their children which is related to the material being taught that week;
- Listing home learning activities for the parent to use during parent-teacher conferences;
- A recorded message which parents can call at their convenience that explains what is being studied in class; and
- A notebook carried by the student in which parent and teacher communicate on a daily, informal basis.

Parents may also work as aides in the classroom. This reduces the student/staff ratio, frees the teacher to work with smaller groups of students, and adds to the parents' understanding of both the curriculum and the school itself. Parents who work as aides are valuable for their role in passing along information about school to other parents.

2. Parents as learners

The ability of a child to do well in school is often related to the parents' educational achievement. A well-educated parent is more able to set an example of educational achievement for children to follow. A parent can also function more effectively in the role of parent-as-teacher if she or he is more comfortable working with the child's instructional material. The reading ability of children can be improved if parents read to them on a regular basis and model reading as a valued pastime. A parent who is unable to read cannot do either of these things.

This also applies to helping children with their homework. As a child moves from elementary school to high school, the instructional material becomes more and more complicated. Parents often find it difficult to help their children with homework because they don't understand the material themselves.

Parents should be encouraged to pursue lifelong learning activities. There are many literacy programs available to adults. Through this type of parent involvement, children receive a clear message that it is worthwhile to work hard and to do well in school.

3. Parents as supporters/advocates

Parents can provide a home environment that supports learning. Some of the ways parents can do this is by:

- Providing the child with a quiet, comfortable setting in which to study at home;
- Establishing a regular time each evening for homework;
- Establishing rules limiting television watching; and
- Reading to the child on a regular basis from an early age.

In their role as advocates, parents can provide legislative support for the Chapter 1 program and access to community resources for learning. Parent advocates have been instrumental in the process of improving schools and monitoring school programs. Parents have also served important functions in advocating for the special needs of student groups such as migrant students and handicapped students.

4. Parents as decision makers

In the role of decision makers, parents can have far-reaching effects on their school's Chapter 1 program. They can become involved in planning school programs, setting policies, and making key budget and personnel decisions. Mechanisms for this form of involvement include:

- District-wide planning and advisory task forces;
- Search and selection committees for principals and superintendents; and
- School boards.

Chapter 1 funds can be used for parent involvement activities. This includes, for example, payment for:

- Classroom aides;
- Activities in support of parent advisory councils;
- Refreshments for parent meetings and training sessions;
- Attendance of parents at local, state and national parent programs; and
- Insurance for vehicles used to transport school personnel for home visits, or to transport parents for school visits.

In addition, up to 5 percent of funds awarded through sections 200.22 through 200.26 can be used for innovation projects, including programs to encourage innovative approaches to parent involvement or the expansion of exemplary parent involvement programs.

Professional development and training. The essential characteristics of productive inservice training, as summarized from the research, are:

- Training agendas should be developed for the learners;
- Training should enable teachers to adapt what they learn;
- Inservice should be integrated into the regular school day;
- Support by the administrator is essential;
- Collegial exchange and discussion should follow formal training;
- Technical assistance should be provided (e.g.. coaching or modeling); and
- Evaluation needs to be an integral part of training (*Sourcebook*, p. 33)

An example of the inservice activities of a successful Chapter 1 project follows:

> The inservice sessions are divided into three parts. First, there is discussion of effective teaching practices as defined by research. Next, there is discussion of instructional strategies with a formal presentation by a teacher, the director, or a guest presenter. Last, there is discussion of administrative items related to the project.
>
> The Chapter 1 staff is involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the inservice program. At the end of each school year the staff is asked to evaluate the inservice sessions and to list the topics they would like covered at the inservice sessions for the next year. The teachers are asked to assist with an inservice session that is in their area of expertise.
>
> Every Chapter 1 staff member writes a job target (goal) to improve instruction. The job target is implemented and evaluated during the school year (*Sourcebook*, p. 34).

Evaluation results used for project improvement. There are two ways in which evaluation data can be used to improve a project. Needs assessment is one form of evaluation that is often useful. Through needs

assessment, schools and districts can determine which program changes are necessary. Second, different practices in use in schools can be evaluated to determine their effectiveness. In order for evaluation data to be useful, a system for gathering the information and providing it to staff is necessary, with inservice on how to use it.

Many unusually successful Chapter 1 projects use formal evaluation data for program improvement. Several examples follow:

- Staff-adopted, in-class instruction for primary-level children based on evaluation results showed greater achievement gains using this approach than pull-out instruction.

- Evaluation results made program and district staff aware of the special needs of the district's Native American students. Special services were implemented to provide support for these students.

- Another program used its evaluation findings to refute a proposal to cut an entire grade level from receiving Chapter 1 teaching.

- Evaluation results stimulated the development of a management system to improve Chapter 1/regular program coordination in a Midwestern district (*Sourcebook*, p. 36).

Strong leadership. Strong leaders may bring about effective schools, but effective schools and their teachers are just as likely to nurture the development of strong leaders.

> Effective principals (principals being the focus of most of the research on school leadership) are believed to contribute to student achievement by creating a positive climate in which students can learn and teachers can teach. This involves management functions in two overlapping categories: (1) attending to goals of the school; and (2) motivating and supporting staff to fully utilize their capabilities.

Examples are:

> The building principals support the Chapter 1 project through their democratic leadership. They work with the project director to develop the needs assessment and ensure that the Chapter 1 project is an integral part of the educational plan. They monitor the project activities and evaluate staff. Principals also communicate to the school and community how the Chapter 1 project assists the district in achieving academic excellence. They confer with the staff about instructional matters, agree upon goals, and help staff to create and maintain safe, orderly, and businesslike environments.

> The project director (according to respondents to a questionnaire) is highly knowledgeable about supplementary educational programs, techniques, methods, materials and instructional activities. She presents well-received workshops, along with follow-up meetings and classroom visitations. She is viewed by staff as being very accessible, task oriented, and sensitive to staff needs. In addition, she has high expectations of the students, staff, and administrators (*Sourcebook*, p. 38).

Instructional Attributes

Now that we have reviewed all the organizational attributes of effective compensatory education programs, let us turn to the instructional attributes. The first is "appropriate instructional materials, methods and approaches" and is the attribute that demands the greatest amount of elaboration.

Several strategies have been shown to be effective with elementary students: *interactive teaching*, *individualized instruction* (especially computer-aided instruction), *cross-age tutoring*, and *cooperative learning*.

Interactive teaching involves the following steps:

1. The previous day's work is reviewed.
2. Teachers present concepts and explain the meaning of those concepts.
3. Relevant practice activities are provided.
4. Teachers attempt to find out how well their presentation is understood before seatwork is assigned.
5. Reteaching commences, if necessary.

Individualized instruction involves deciding upon specific learning objectives for individual students, pacing instruction in small groups or individually, and flexibility to use different sequences of materials to achieve objectives.

Cross-age tutoring has been shown to be effective for lower-ability students in the primary grades with slightly older tutors. It improves achievement because it allows student achievement. A related method, which has demonstrated positive achievement results at all levels, is *cooperative learning*.

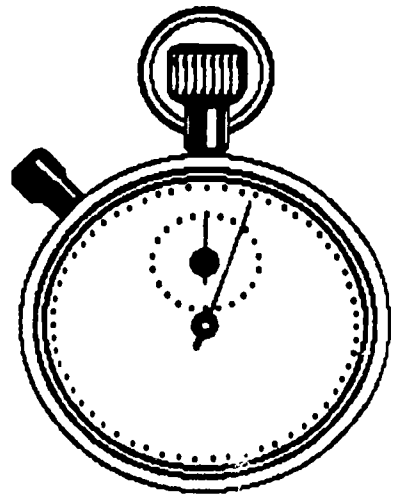
Cooperative learning improves self-esteem and ethnic, racial and gender relations as well. It is important for teachers to receive adequate training in cooperative learning to make sure they implement all its components.

If training is not possible, a careful reading of relevant materials may suffice. It is critical that teachers ensure individual accountability, interdependence, and heterogeneity in cooperative-learning groups. Definitions of these concepts may be found in the writings of Robert Slavin and David and Roger Johnson.

Some examples of different strategies from successful projects are:

- The provision of individualized study skills activities based on the material introduced and explained in the regular and Chapter 1 classrooms;
- Cross-age tutoring, with intermediate-level tutors receiving training and ongoing supervision as they work with primary-level children in reading;
- A combination of pull-out and in-class instruction for different kinds of Chapter 1 program activities caused by frequent classroom changes;
- Direct instruction techniques which emphasize providing clear instructions, reteaching as needed, providing for independent practice, and maximizing teacher-student interactions as new material is presented and discussed;
- Computer assisted instruction to reinforce skills, allow for individual pacing, and enhance student motivation (*Sourcebook*, p. 47).

Maximum use of academic learning time. Academic learning time or "time-on-task" refers to the amount of time a student is actively involved in learning a specific skill or subject. How much time is available is not as important as how time is used. Teachers who make the most of academic learning time have well-managed classrooms that are focused on academics and have a minimum of disruption. There are rules and routines the students have had explained to them and they have had the opportunity to practice.



Some examples follow:

- In an elementary reading project, students are trained in the efficient use of resource room time; observers have noted a 75 percent time-on-task rate in project classrooms.

- Intermediate-level reading instruction is scheduled in one Midwestern project so that students do not miss the introduction of material in their regular classroom.

- Careful teacher planning and classroom organization are credited with the smooth and efficient operation and extensive content coverage noted in one Eastern Seaboard math project.

- In another math project, monitoring student success rates helps ensure that time spent on task is challenging to students and not mere "busy work."

- A reading project serving grades 1-6 is characterized by several features which promote efficient time use: collaborative scheduling, consistent application of classroom discipline policies, smooth transitions between activities, and parent-monitored homework (*Sourcebook*, p. 49).

High expectations. Teachers must have confidence in their students' ability to learn and in their own ability to teach. Frustration for both student and teacher is likely, if expectations are unrealistically high. Expectations should be appropriate to the student's ability level, and teaching should convey confidence, provide for success, and lead to continued improvement.

Specific classroom examples of high expectations as well as the next three attributes will follow the discussion of the last attribute.

Closely monitored student progress. It is important for teachers to pay careful attention to the levels of skill and knowledge students are acquiring as they proceed along their courses of study.

Regular feedback and reinforcement. The feedback and reinforcement commonly used by successful teachers is both corrective and motivational. Corrective feedback is given to ensure that errors are detected and clues to accurate answers are provided. Praise and rewards (both symbolic and concrete) constitute motivational feedback and are used to encourage students.

It is especially important to express praise with warmth and encouragement for low-ability children in the lower grades.

Excellence recognized and rewarded. Recognition of excellence and rewards may take the form of teacher praise and symbolic or concrete rewards. Stars sent home to parents have been shown to be effective in the lower grades. Praise is most effective when it is infrequent, believable, specific, and obviously related to students' efforts rather than ritualistic.

- We practice giving specific appropriate feedback ranging from "You're really getting good at sounding out long vowels!" to "I like the way you're trying--you're on the right track!"

- Because the self-concept of many of our students is low, we really strive to produce a climate where tender loving care abounds and there is no embarrassment if an answer is incorrect.

- Encouragement is given for effort and attitude, as well as achievement.

- Teachers see to it that each child experiences some specific success each day, such as winning at a game, mastering a time table, or learning new words on a teaching machine.

- Teachers have carefully diagnosed the needs of the child by using criterion-referenced tests and they make sure they always give the child work he or she can do.

- Teachers scrupulously avoid reprimands and statements like "You're wrong"; they correct a child positively by pointing out, for example, how many he got right on the page instead of how many wrong.

- Many techniques are used to recognize student progress in the Chapter 1 projects. These include: awards and certificates, letters and phone calls to parents, awards given to students during special schoolwide assemblies, displaying of student work during open house observances and school visitations, "graduation" ceremonies for students testing out of the program, and special awards from the principals (*Sourcebook*, p. 53).

In addition to striving for the 13 characteristics of effective compensatory education programs just described, teachers, parents, and others associated with Chapter 1 programs should aim to help their students by attempting to use some of the following strategies as alternatives to

traditional approaches. These were adapted from *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty*, by Knapp and Turnbull (also available free of charge by calling Northwest Regional Educational Library). Take a moment to reflect upon how you might do each of these things.

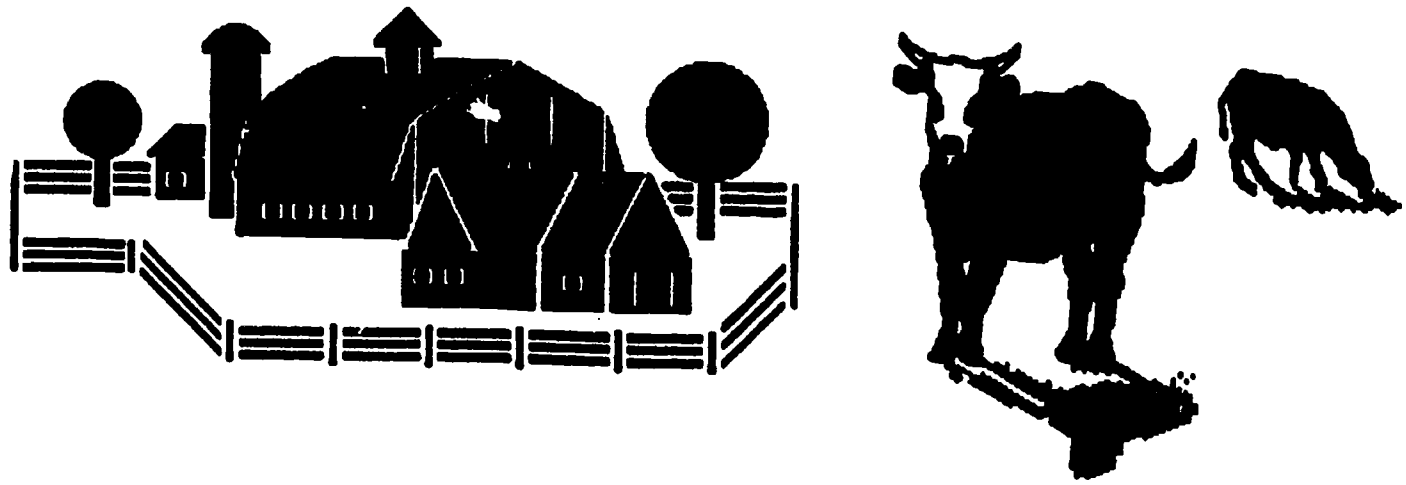
When planning and teaching lessons, focus upon the knowledge students already have and build upon it, rather than thinking strictly about how to remediate learners' deficits. Try to provide opportunities for students to learn and apply skills in meaningful contexts rather than breaking the curriculum down into discrete skills. (For example, let them learn the importance of spelling by seeing their classmates try to decode what they have written rather than teaching spelling words in isolation.) Teach higher-order tasks like composition rather than teaching only discrete skills like decoding blends. Use both teacher-directed and learner-directed instruction. Vary classroom management approaches depending on the work being done. For example, explain that a higher noise level is acceptable during cooperative work. Use some grouping arrangements that mix ability levels. Finally, for students whose home cultures may be quite different from the culture of the school, explicit instruction in the school's culture can be helpful if done respectfully. For example, rather than singling out a child to "correct" his or her level of eye contact with the teacher, the whole class can discuss what is considered acceptable in the classroom.

Chapter 1 Models

Last but not at all least, to design a program, teachers and others associated with Chapter 1 must decide if an in-class or pull-out model should be used. Pull-outs have traditionally been used because there has been fear about "supplanting" the regular classroom instruction in an in-class model. Chapter 1 regulations do indeed require that Chapter 1 programs "supplement, not supplant" regular programs. This stems from a wish on the part of the government that Chapter 1 funds not be used for non-Chapter 1 children. However, if in-class models are used that are explicitly chosen to improve the leaning of Chapter 1 children, and all Chapter 1 resources are used to that end, there need be no fear of violating the "supplement not supplant" requirement. For example, the Chapter 1 teacher can rove around the regular classroom making sure Chapter 1 students are participating in cooperative-learning groups. In a more traditional classroom, the Chapter 1 teacher could also teach a homogeneous, Chapter 1 reading group while the regular teacher works with other homogeneous groups.

There is no one right answer regarding the question of pull-out or in-class models. The regular and Chapter 1 teacher, in conjunction with parents and administrators, should decide what is best in every unique

situation. If pull-out is chosen, efforts should be made to prevent stigmas being attached to pull-out children. Careful coordination with the regular teacher should be in place so these children do not miss academically important regular classroom events. It is also important that Chapter 1 students feel included in highly valued, fun, regular classroom events, since missing these events could lead to resentment of Chapter 1 placement.



Rural Chapter 1 Program Issues

Rural Chapter 1 program personnel face a number of unique challenges which we hope to address in this manual.

According to an October 1990 article appearing in *Education Week*, "one out of every four children in the rural United States lives below the poverty line," as opposed to one in five in metropolitan areas. Rural children experience more substance abuse, sexual activity, teen pregnancy, crime and child abuse. Rural elementary school children are more likely to suffer from depression and low self-esteem than urban children are.

Other challenges abound as well. Rural Chapter 1 teachers/ coordinators may be isolated and thus have difficulty exchanging ideas and materials with other teachers/coordinators. Rural school districts may lack competitive pay scales. They may offer scant social opportunities. These and related problems can create high teacher and administrator turnover.

The pay scale may be impossible to improve, but social opportunities can be increased through efforts to bring the school staff together. A partial solution to turnover might be parental and community involvement in the Chapter 1 program. Such involvement has been shown to improve all types of Chapter 1 programs but is especially helpful in schools where continuity of staff from year to year is low.

Isolation may be combatted in several ways:

- Contacting the state education agency, regional Technical Assistance Center, or university for assistance may be helpful.

- Information may be acquired through literature searches conducted by any of those entities.

- A rural network may be established via the technical assistance center. (The Northwest Regional Technical Assistance Center may be reached at 1-800-547-6339, extension 584.)

- Conferences and workshops can be arranged by the Technical Assistance Center especially for rural clients.

- Another source of input is the *Directory of Organizations and Programs in Rural Education.* (For more information about this directory, call ERIC at 1-800-624-9120 or write P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, West Virginia 25325).

Another difficulty faced by rural schools with migrant or highly mobile student populations is that they must overcome problems associated with shifting enrollment. Program quality suffers when student attendance fluctuates unpredictably. Schools that face these challenges can apply for additional funding to the Migrant Education Office of the U.S. Department of Education. Applications are made through the state's migrant education director and may result in funding to address language problems or other curricular challenges. New staff and additional facilities may be acquired. Schools can also become part of a network called the Migrant Student Record Transfer System, in which migrant students' language proficiency and academic achievement test results are profiled. This data is made readily available to each new school a migrant student attends.

Achievement scores collected to evaluate program effectiveness in schools with highly mobile populations may not portray programs accurately, since they will be based on the small percentage of students who remain enrolled for longer periods. This may also be a problem for programs which do not face high mobility but simply have small enrollments. One solution to the problem is to use other types of assessment in addition to achievement scores, such as portfolio assessment.

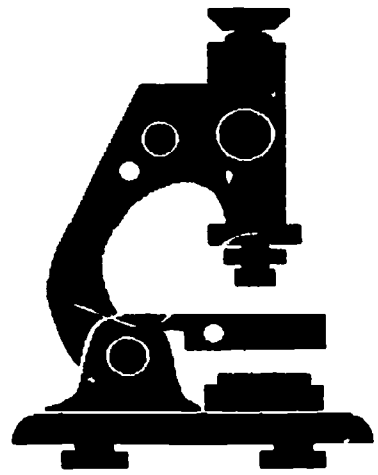
Keeping staff well prepared to cope with small Chapter 1 programs is a challenge as well. Strong leadership is necessary for Chapter 1 to be successful in any school. Thus principals and central-office staff must be well informed and involved. Paraprofessionals should receive training and monitoring to ensure that quality education is provided. Personnel need to understand the importance of program assessment and coordination with the regular program. This manual provides some guidance in these areas. Workshops and consultations from Technical Assistance Centers can provide more.

A final issue pertinent to rural Chapter 1 programs is a seemingly "random" assignment of teachers to Chapter 1. Often a teacher with no

knowledge of Chapter 1 suddenly finds herself or himself in charge of teaching and/or running such a program. What can you do if you find yourself in such a situation? Read this manual. Read the Education Department's *Policy Manual.* Familiarize yourself with the law. Go to a state orientation session. Talk to other teachers. Call the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Rural Technical Assistance Center.

There are no universal answers to the problems rural schools face. Each school or district will have to collect data from its students, parents, teachers, and administrator(s) to decide how to best run the program based on that data. Staff from the Technical Assistance Centers are available to help with this process. The section of this manual called "Step 3: Improving Your Program" may prove helpful as well. Although the program improvement information is addressed primarily at programs that have been identified by their states as needing improvement, any program should be able to benefit by following the suggestions offered.

STEP II. EVALUATING YOUR PROGRAM



Testing

Chapter 1 programs are intended to improve student performance. Performance is measured by student scores on norm-referenced tests. With norm-referenced tests, the student's performance is compared to the performance of a group of students selected to serve as a representative sample of students at that grade level. To evaluate the success of your Chapter 1 program, you must look at student scores for all grade levels and subject areas for which there is a Chapter 1 program. These scores are combined, or aggregated, across grade levels and subject areas.

Consider a class of Chapter 1 students who test at the 20th percentile at the beginning of the year. Testing at the 20th percentile means that, as a group, the class performed better than 20 percent of the students in the norming sample, a representative sample of students selected by the test publisher to represent all students at that grade level.

If the Chapter 1 program was successful, we would expect the aggregate score for the class to be higher than the 20th percentile one year later. If the class still scored at the 20th percentile, this would not mean that the students hadn't learned anything, only that they weren't learning any faster than we would expect without extra help.

Percentile scores can't be added together and compared easily, so another type of score is used for national reporting purposes: normal curve equivalents. Normal curve equivalents are similar to percentiles, but are on an equal interval scale. This means that a difference of a

given number of points is equally significant, regardless of where it falls on the scale. Normal curve equivalents are used to report aggregate performance scores for Chapter 1.

Testing Basic and Advanced Skills

The performance of Chapter 1 students in both basic and more advanced skills must be tested. In order to assess performance in more advanced skills, subtests may be used. For example, the comprehension subtest of a reading test may be used to measure more advanced skills in reading. Similarly, an applications subtest of a mathematics test can be used to measure more advanced skills in mathematics.

What Grades Must Be Tested?

All Chapter 1 students, except prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade students, must be tested with a norm-referenced test.

Testing Cycle

Students must be tested on an annual cycle: in the fall of one year and again in the fall of the next, or from spring to spring. The test used as the post-test one year serves as the pre-test for the next year. The test used to evaluate student performance must be *different* from the test used to select students for the Chapter 1 program, in order to correct for *regression to the mean*. When students are selected from the low end of the distribution of test scores, as they were when selected for Chapter 1 services, there will be an improvement in their average scores when tested again if the same test is used. This apparent improvement in

performance is called "regression of the mean." For this reason, the test used to evaluate student performance must be different from the test used to select students for the Chapter 1 program. However, the test used to select students for the program may be a subtest of the test used for evaluation.

Selecting a Norm-Referenced Test

There are a number of issues to consider when selecting a norm-referenced test:

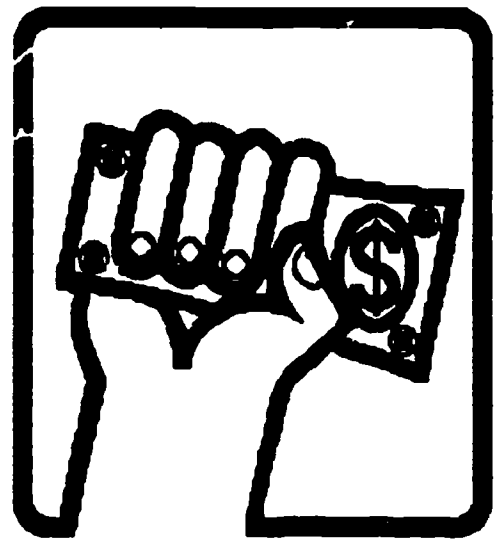
- Test/curriculum match
- Validity and reliability
- Cost of the test
- Test bias
- How the test will be used
- Functional level testing
- When to give the test

Test/curriculum match. The test that you use should be matched to the objectives emphasized by your curriculum. If the test focuses on objectives which are not emphasized in your curriculum, the test will not be a good measurement of your students' progress.

One way of determining how well your curriculum matches the test you are using is to analyze the curriculum by objectives. The test can then be analyzed by counting the number of test questions that are related to each objective. Comparing a number of tests in this way can suggest which test is best matched to your school's curriculum.

Validity and reliability. The validity of a test is the degree to which it measures what it is supposed to measure: in this case, student achievement in a particular subject area. The content validity of a test can be judged by the degree to which it matches the curriculum you are using for instruction (see the "test/curriculum match" section above).

The test's reliability is the degree to which it will give the same results for students with the same achievement level at different administrations. You can think of it as a measure of the test's stability. Reliability is rated by a measure of stability reported by the test publisher for each test. The higher this measure is, the more reliable the test is. A test with a reliability of .85 or higher can be considered acceptable.



Cost of the test. Standardized tests vary in cost. Besides the test itself, test publishers offer other services related to scoring and analysis of test results. The cost of these services should be examined in relation to your school's needs.

Test bias. If there is something about a test which either impairs or improves student performance and is not related to the student's knowledge or skills, that test is considered biased. There are many potential sources of bias in tests:

1. For English as a Second Language students, the ability to read English might interfere with their performance on, say, the math subtest.

2. Some cultural groups are less willing to guess. That is, one does not offer a response unless one is very sure it is right.

3. The concept of time is different in some cultural groups. Thus, the way tests are timed might be a problem.

4. Some English as a Second Language students translate the questions into their primary language and then translate the answers back into English. This slows them down, and they can't finish.

5. Sometimes classroom teachers simplify the language they use for English as a Second Language or low-achieving students. This means the language they encounter on the test may be harder than what they usually encounter in class.

6. There are some features of tests that could produce bias. One example is items students answer incorrectly because of their different experience base. For example, there is an

item on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test that asks about the color of bananas. Students in American Samoa answer "green" because they eat green bananas. This is an incorrect answer using the scoring criteria of the test.

7. Different cultural groups may respond differently to demonstrating their knowledge in the format used by standardized tests. As examples, they might be unmotivated by material they consider boring, choosing an answer rather than physical demonstration of knowledge might be foreign; etc.

(From *Potential Sources of Bias on Standardized Tests*, Judy Arter, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1990.)

How the test will be used. Some tests are designed to measure student achievement, while others are designed to diagnose specific learning problems. It is important to use the appropriate test for your assessment need. Test publishers include the purpose for which the test was designed in their test descriptions. In the case of Chapter 1 reporting, the focus of assessment is on student achievement.

Functional-level testing. Functional-level testing is the use of a test that matches the grade level at which the student is achieving. This includes out-of-level testing, using a test designed for students at a different grade level, and in-level testing, use of a test designed for students at the same grade level. If a test is too difficult, the student taking the test may become frustrated. If it is too easy, the student may become bored. In both cases, the results won't accurately reflect the student's true achievement in that subject area.

In order to use functional-level testing, the test chosen must provide expanded scale scores (also referred to as scale scores and extended scale scores), and norms must exist for the actual grade level of the students being tested. For instance, if you wanted to test a fifth grade student in reading comprehension and felt the reading comprehension subtest at fifth grade would be too difficult, you could use a fourth grade test, providing the test battery you were using had expanded scale scores and the fourth grade test had both fifth grade norms and a reading comprehension subtest.

When to give the test. The norm-referenced test scores used for Chapter 1 evaluation are expressed as a comparison to tests scores of a norming sample. Your student's scores on the test are compared to the scores of students in the norming sample who are in the same grade. Since students learn more and more as the year goes on, the time of year that they are tested is important. In order to compare your students meaningfully to the students in the norming sample, they must be tested

at close to the same time of the year that the norming sample was tested. Test publishers provide these dates with the tests.

The date students in the norming sample are tested is cal. d the empirical test date, or the empirical norming date. Testing of your Chapter 1 students should occur within two weeks of that date.

What is Required for the Local Annual Review?

Every school with a Chapter 1 program must conduct a review of the program every year. This review must address the following three issues:

- Aggregate performance in basic and advanced skills
- Progress in desired outcomes
- Assessment of the parental involvement program

Aggregate Performance in Basic and Advanced Skills

Aggregate performance refers to the Chapter 1 students' scores on norm-referenced tests. These scores must be aggregated across grade levels for each school with a Chapter 1 program by taking the arithmetic mean, or average of the students' score. Aggregate scores are required in every subject area for which Chapter 1 instruction is provided.

Progress in Desired Outcomes

An evaluation of the program's progress in achieving desired outcomes must be included in both the local annual review and the evaluation which is reported to the state every three years.

Rural schools can tailor their Chapter 1 programs to local needs by specifying desired outcomes that reflect the unique goals of that particular school. Within the limits set by the state education agency, the local district agency can choose from a large number of measures as desired outcomes.

Here are a few examples:

- Improved performance in the regular program
- Fewer retentions in grade
- Improved student performance on criterion-referenced tests

- Lower dropout rates
- Goals for parental involvement

As was noted in the previous section of this handbook, a desired outcome statement must be included in the application for Chapter 1 funds. This statement should define a measurable objective for Chapter 1 students that relates to the school district's goal to help these students succeed in the regular educational program, attain grade-level proficiency, and improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills. The statement should be written in such a way that it will be clear whether the goal has been reached. For evaluation purposes, four elements should be included in the desired outcome statement:

- A **goal:** what change you want to see in the students
- An **outcome indicator:** the method you will use to measure success
- The **standard** or **performance level:** the level of achievement that will demonstrate progress
- A **time frame:** a statement about when the goal will be reached

Desired outcomes must be evaluated with methods that are appropriate to the outcome. For example, if the school has a goal of improving the rate at which students graduate, trends in attendance and dropout rates can be used as measures of progress toward this desired outcome.

It is important that the desired outcomes of the Chapter 1 program are known to the regular classroom teachers as well as Chapter 1 staff. These goals should be addressed in both the instructional programs. Outcome indicators of progress toward attaining desired outcomes can often be measured with the use of existing measures of student achievement. It is usually not necessary to develop additional tests for this purpose, and information about desired outcomes can often be gathered without creating an unreasonable data collection burden.

In the case of Chapter 1 projects which serve preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students, and projects for students with limited English proficiency (LEP), desired outcomes are the *only* basis for annual review and evaluation.

If a Chapter 1 program does not make substantial progress toward meeting its desired outcomes (as well as improved aggregate performance in basic and advanced skills) a plan to improve the program must be developed.

Assessment of the Parent Involvement Program

As part of the local annual review, the district and school must assess the extent of parent participation in its program, and the extent to which the parent involvement program has achieved its goals. These goals should be part of the school district's policy.

Each school district conducting a Chapter 1 program must have a written policy describing how it will consult with parents to plan for their involvement in an ongoing, systematic way. This policy must include:

- Specific goals for the parent involvement program
- Procedures for assessing the parent involvement program
- Activities for involving parents in aspects other than planning, design and implementation, such as involving parents directly in their children's education

The school district should document its compliance with the requirements for parent involvement, including, for example, financial records which show expenditures for parent involvement activities, minutes from meetings with parents, a schedule of parent involvement training sessions, and a description of methods used to consult with parents in the development and approval of the Chapter 1 project.

When thinking about ways of involving parents, administrators and teachers should remember that the parent's most important role is that of parent. While the teacher's contact with the child is relatively impersonal, short-term, and couched in the context of education, the parent's contact is very personal, long-term, and it happens in the context of everyday life. In our contacts with parents we should remember to convey a feeling of respect for the contributions they make to students, providing the necessities of life, giving emotional support, teaching basic values, and providing valuable experiences to their children, even when those experiences are not linked to education in an obvious way.

Parents now have a number of demands on their time which make traditional forms of parent involvement difficult. While it is good to have a large number of parents attend parent meetings, it is a mistake to focus all parent involvement efforts on meetings alone. Be sure to consider alternate methods of getting information to parents and involving them in their children's education. Telephone calls, home visits, meetings at a site away from the school building, newsletters in the parent's language, and recorded telephone messages that parents can listen to at a time that is convenient for them are a few methods that have been very effective. Remember these forms of parent involvement when you report on your school's activities as well.

What is Required for the Three-Year Review Cycle?

In addition to conducting annual reviews of Chapter 1 programs, a more extensive review is required every three years. The school district must review the Chapter 1 program's progress toward attaining the desired outcomes that were stated in its application for funding.

At least once during the three-year evaluation cycle, the school district must conduct a study to determine whether the gains made by Chapter 1 students are sustained for more than 12 months. To do this, the school district must collect information on the performance of the same Chapter 1 students still enrolled in that district at the beginning and end of at least two consecutive 12-month periods, even if they have changed schools within the district.

In addition to the local annual review issues discussed on page 34, two other aspects of the program must be reviewed every three years: sustained effects and the performance of Chapter 1 students in the regular school program.

Sustained Effects

The positive effects of the Chapter 1 program are considered to have been sustained when they are maintained over the course of three data points, each separated by one year: a pretest, post-test and a third data point. In other words, *sustained effect* means that the level of performance that was attained at the time of the post-testing has not declined when measured at the third data point. Whether a decline has occurred is determined by comparing the level of performance of the students on the post-test with the level of their performance at the third data point (*Chapter 1 Policy Manual*, p. 129).

There are four basic requirements for the sustained effects study. It must:

- Determine whether the effect of the Chapter 1 program was sustained for more than one program year
- Assess the performance of the same students over two consecutive 12-month periods
- Use a spring-to-spring-to-spring or a fall-to-fall-to-fall testing interval
- Be used by the school district in planning for improvements to the Chapter 1 program

In order to meet these requirements, school districts are required to make reasonable efforts to include students who are no longer in Chapter 1. When including these students in a sustained effects study, Chapter 1 funds may be used to test children who have left the program.

School districts are not required to include every grade and subject area for which they are conducting a Chapter 1 program in the sustained effects study. They may use a sampling procedure which selects representative grades, students, or subject areas for the study.

Performance in the Regular Program

One of the goals of Chapter 1 is to help students succeed in the regular program. Each school must review the performance of Chapter 1 students in the regular classroom at least once every three years, determine whether success is being achieved, and report this information to the state education agency.

The state education agency and the school district may determine whether a sampling procedure can be used to assess the performance of Chapter 1 students in the regular school program.

The regular program is defined by the goals and objectives to be attained by students by a given grade level in each subject area. This program may be defined by the school, the school district or the state.

School districts should use measures that are typical benchmarks of academic progress. These can take the form of grades, portfolios, achievement tests, or other measures determined by the state and the school district. The use of more than one measure is recommended, as this will give a more comprehensive picture of the students, the Chapter 1 program, and the regular instructional program.

Interpreting Evaluation Results with Small Numbers of Students

Chapter 1 programs in rural schools often serve small numbers of students. Working with small numbers of students in a Chapter 1 program has special implications for both evaluation and program improvement.

One important part of the evaluation of your Chapter 1 program considers the aggregate gain in achievement made by the students on a standardized test. The tests are administered on an annual cycle: once in the fall and again in the following fall, or from spring to spring. The score of each student on the first test (pretest) is subtracted from their

score on the second (post-test). The difference is that student's "gain score." Gain scores for all Chapter 1 students in all grades for each subject area are looked at collectively, or aggregated. The school district must decide before collecting the scores whether to use the **mean** or the **median** score to represent the average achievement gain.

The **median** is the middle score of a distribution, or collection of scores. It is the middle-ranking score, the point in the distribution at which 50 percent of the scores fall above and 50 percent fall below.

The **mean** is commonly called the average. It is determined by adding all of the scores and dividing that sum by the number of scores.

What factors should a school district consider in deciding whether to use the mean or the median?

The mean and the median are used in two different ways in Chapter 1:

1. For reporting aggregate gains

2. For deciding whether a program should be identified for program improvement

A discussion of the selection of the mean or the median for program improvement purposes is included in the "Program improvement requirements" section on page 40.

Rural schools with a small number of Chapter 1 students may want to look at the median score when making decisions about program improvement. The reason for this is that when a small number of scores are aggregated, extremely high or extremely low scores for one student will have an exaggerated effect on the mean. The median is more resistant to the effects of extreme scores.

Another factor in the choice between the mean and the median is the type of student population being served. Programs which serve special populations, such as bilingual, educationally handicapped, and special education students may be more likely to have individuals with widely fluctuating gain scores. Extreme scores generally inflate or deflate the mean more than the median.

In addition to these very high or very low scores which may not accurately reflect the effectiveness of your Chapter 1 program, there is a certain amount of error that occurs in any testing process. Some students may do poorly on a test because of conditions in the room; others may do even better than expected due to their familiarity with the format of the test. With large numbers of students, these sources of error tend to cancel each other out, some generating higher scores and some generating lower scores. With smaller numbers of students, there is less chance for this cancelling out to take place.

For example, let's look at the case of a rural Chapter 1 program with only five students.

STUDENT	TEST SCORE
1	23
2	36
3	15
4	26
5	25
MEAN=25	MEDIAN=25

Table 1. Effect of extreme scores on the mean and the median

In this case the mean score of the group is 25, and the median score is also 25.

But what if one of the students had very poor performance on the test; for example, if Student 1 was sick on the day of the test?

STUDENT	TEST SCORE
1	8
2	36
3	15
4	26
5	25
MEAN=22	MEDIAN=25

Table 2. Effect of extreme scores on the mean and the median

As you can see, the poor performance of this one student has had a much more dramatic effect on the mean of the group than on the median.

While school districts must use the mean score for evaluation reporting, they may choose either the mean or the median for program improvement purposes. School districts with small Chapter 1 programs may choose to use the median to reduce the influence of extremely low or extremely high scores.

Schools that serve 10 or fewer students during a program year are exempt from the requirement to develop a program improvement plan. (See Section III, "Improving Your Program," page 47.)

STEP III. IMPROVING YOUR PROGRAM

Rationale

Students in a regular classroom are normally expected to achieve one year's growth for each year in school. Even at this rate, students who are achieving below grade-level will never attain grade level proficiency unless they can somehow begin to achieve *more* than one year's growth each year.

Chapter 1 was designed to be a supplement to the regular program so disadvantaged youngsters who were behind in achievement could begin to gain more than one year's growth each year and thus "catch up" with their more advantaged peers. It is therefore the expectation of Congress that students in Chapter 1 programs will achieve *more* than would normally be expected if the district did not have Chapter 1 funds.

Local Annual Review

In order to determine if this progress has been made, Public Law 100-297 requires the local school district to conduct a local annual review of the Chapter 1 program in each project school. If inadequate progress is noted in any of the project schools, the district must develop a program improvement plan. Inadequate progress occurs when:

1. The school does not show substantial progress toward meeting the desired outcomes in the project application

2. The aggregate Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) performance for the school (for students in grade two and above) indicates a zero (0) or negative score

Program Improvement Requirements

The program improvement plan is to be developed at the local level in coordination with parents and school staff the first year. If gains are not made after one full year of operation, a program improvement plan must be developed jointly with the state education agency. The plan then

must be reviewed and revised until student gains are sustained over a period of more than 12 months.

Through a self-assessment process, the district must identify areas needing improvement that have an impact on student achievement. According to the law, the plan must describe educational strategies designed to achieve the stated program outcomes or otherwise to improve the performance or meet the needs of eligible children. The plan should also describe resources needed and how those resources will be used to carry out the improvement strategies selected. Resources can include such things as personnel, curriculum materials, equipment, and physical facilities.

Program improvement strategies that might be in the local improvement plan include technical assistance, improving coordination between Chapter 1 and the regular program, evaluation of parent involvement, inservice training for Chapter 1 staff, and alternative instructional strategies that have proven to be successful with Chapter 1 students.

State Program Improvement Plans

Each state education agency has developed a state program improvement plan. This plan must be followed to ensure that special state forms and procedures are used. Your state Chapter 1 coordinator can provide you with information specific to your state. The following is a discussion of the regulations and some strategies you might use in developing your Chapter 1 program improvement plan.

Student Level Program Improvement

In addition to the requirement for developing a Chapter 1 program improvement plan when the aggregate performance of students does not meet specified levels, the school is also responsible for monitoring the achievement of each individual student. The regulations specify that each district is required to:

1. Identify students who have been served for *one* program year and have shown no improvement or a decline in achievement

2. Consider modification in the program offered to better serve the needs of students so identified

3. Identify students who have been served for *two* program years and have shown no improvement or a decline in achievement

4. Conduct a thorough assessment of the identified students' needs and make necessary modifications to the Chapter 1 project

Exceptions To The Program Improvement Rules

The school district is not required to:

1. Develop a program improvement plan for a school that served 10 or fewer Chapter 1 students during the year

2. Complete and implement a school improvement plan if information becomes available during plan development or prior to plan implementation that demonstrates that there has been a gain in aggregate performance and that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the desired outcomes

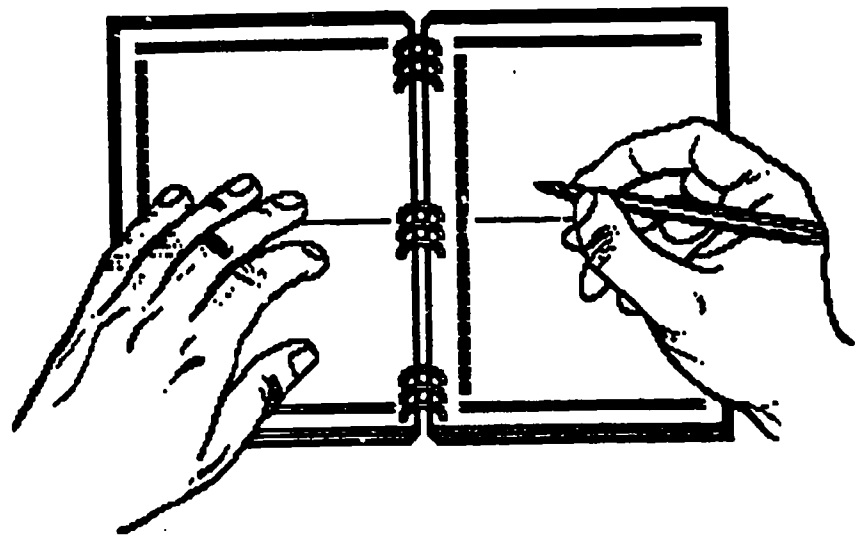
Developing Your Improvement Plan

When a rural district has been identified as needing a program improvement plan, it is important that a plan be developed that offers the greatest possible chance of making substantial progress toward meeting desired outcomes and reaching achievement goals. Listed below are some steps and procedures that might be taken in developing an improvement plan.

Identify Key Individuals to Develop and Coordinate the Plan

As you review the steps outlined below, consider the key teachers, administrators, staff members, parents, and outside consultants who could help you develop and implement your school's improvement plan. Those individuals should possess the information and skills needed to help ensure the plan you develop will meet the goals you set out to reach for your students. Your committee should be representative of all interests in your school. It should be large enough to accomplish all of the required tasks, but not so large that you can not work effectively as a committee. As the committee reviews the steps to be taken in developing and implementing your plan during the initial meetings, develop tasks

and time lines for each committee member. This will ensure that all tasks will be accomplished when they need to be accomplished.



Accurately Determine Current Program Status, Including Both Strengths and Weaknesses

The first task in this step is to analyze as thoroughly as possible why students failed to meet desired outcomes or make achievement gains.

One way to do this is to look closely at the achievement information on your students while asking yourself questions. Do the tests match my program goals? Am I providing learning experiences for students that will allow them to master the skills measured by these tests? Are the goals challenging but realistic for my students? What particular areas gave students the most difficulty? If these are important areas, how could I strengthen my instructional program?

In order to answer these questions you will want to focus on the test information which indicates that your students are not making satisfactory progress. Look at the information by subject, subtest, and objective for each grade level to determine where students were having the most difficulty. Also examine individual test scores to determine if certain students or the whole class had difficulties with certain objectives.

Finally, look at your district's desired outcomes and try to determine why they were not met by students. Were the desired outcomes we set realistic for our students? Did they focus on educationally related goals? If the desired outcomes we set were important and realistic, why did they fail to meet them?

This questioning process will help you check the alignment of your goals, curriculum, and test instruments. The curriculum you develop for your students should be designed to help students meet the goals you have set for them. The tests should be an accurate reflection of your students' accomplishment toward those goals.

In conducting your test analysis, you will also want to look at the strengths of your program. You might find that your students did exceptionally well in math computation but scored poorly in math concepts. Perhaps you will need to balance your curriculum so as to de-emphasize computation and stress more math problem solving and concepts. In many cases, the strengths you find in some areas can be used to build upon the weaknesses discovered in others.

Another way to analyze your program is to compare the attributes of your Chapter 1 program to the attributes found in effective Chapter 1 programs. Those attributes are discussed in the first section of this manual. If you find that several of these important attributes of quality are missing from your program, it may give you some information on areas you want to address in developing your improvement plan. While it must be remembered that merely having these attributes does not necessarily ensure that you will have an effective program, it does give you a means of looking critically at your program against a set of quality standards.

Many states have incorporated an assessment of these attributes or a similar type of assessment into their state plans to help you obtain information on overall program quality. You can also contact your R-TAC to get sample instruments that can be used to perform this analysis.

If you discover, for instance, that two of the quality attributes missing from your program are clear goals and objectives and coordination with the regular program, you will want to resolve these problems. If your goals are not clear, you may want to work with your committee to decide on instructional priorities for Chapter 1 students. When you do this, make sure your Chapter 1 goals complement those in the district. This will ensure that instruction provided in Chapter 1 will help students learn materials taught in the regular classroom. You may also find there is little or no coordination between your program and the regular program. You may want to have the committee look at ways to allow the regular teachers and Chapter 1 staff to do joint planning for Chapter 1 students.

Don't overlook the strengths of your program, because they can be used to help you overcome weaknesses. If you also find that instructional leadership is a strong component of your school's program, this leadership ability could be used to facilitate staff working together to develop a clear set of agreed-upon goals for your Chapter 1 program.

Strong leadership ability could also be used to help everyone work together to develop the coordination with the regular program needed to ensure that your students will succeed.

Focus on Significant Program Areas Which Need Improvement

As you conduct your analysis, you may find several areas that need improvement. Try to focus on the most significant and critical needs first, especially those that can make a difference for your students. If you try to solve all of your problems at once, you may not solve any.

You may find in the course of your analysis that there are areas that are not working well but would be difficult to change at least in the near future. If these factors seem to limit your program success, you need to find ways in which they can be used to facilitate your program. If, for instance, your district has hired instructional aides to provide supplemental tutoring or instruction, you may not be able to implement a different model because most of your Chapter 1 funds are being used to pay for instructional aides. It is then incumbent upon you to find out why this model is not working in your district. One way would be to examine how other districts have used this model successfully. You may find that key features of this model call for systematic and ongoing staff development of aides and scheduling of planning time for both teachers and aides so they can coordinate instructional activities for Chapter 1 students.

Examine Information or Research on Effective Practices Which Will Favorably Impact the Identified Problem Area

There are several sources of information about effective practices including professional journals, your state education agency, staff development programs, and your R-TACs. For instance, the Region 6 R-TAC has available through the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory a publication entitled *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis*. This publication has statements of school practices related to the effective schooling research. These statements can be used by your school to develop effective strategies for meeting your goals.

You may also want to examine current trends and programs that seem to help ensure success for Chapter 1 students such as cooperative learning, continuous progress, or individualized instruction. In teaching higher-order skills, you also might want to look at the merits of new programs such as process writing, whole language, or problem-solving math.

Another source of information can come from neighboring districts that may have successfully solved some of the problems you are facing. Send a team to visit the school and find out what it had to do to implement its program.

Develop and Implement a Systematic Plan, Including Research-Based Strategies for Eliminating Deficiencies and Reinforcing Strengths

Once you have identified the priority needs to be addressed in your program improvement plan and the strategies to be employed in meeting those needs, you need to develop and implement your plan. At this stage, you are ready to identify needed curriculum materials, equipment, facilities, staff development activities, and financial resources necessary to implement and carry out your plan. Identify the person or persons responsible for each component of your plan and develop a time line for each task.

It is important to note that many plans for introducing research-based strategies fail because critical implementation factors are overlooked or undervalued. If you are developing a plan that requires a change in teaching strategies, be sure you allow for sufficient staff development for teachers to obtain these new skills. Also allow for sufficient materials and equipment that will be needed to provide the desired instructional experiences for students.

Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Which Will Validate the Improvement Effort and Ensure That the Desired Change Has Taken Place

In conjunction with the development and implementation of your plan, you will need a means of determining whether your improvement strategy is effective in meeting the goals for your Chapter 1 students. One of the obvious standards you will have to meet is an aggregate NCE gain of greater than zero (0) on your norm-referenced test. One technique you can employ is to identify test items on your norm-referenced test which measure your identified goals. By performing an item analysis of your results, you can then determine the success of your instructional efforts by analyzing how well students did on the items that match your goals. If students are falling short on any of your important goals, you can adjust your program to compensate. It has been demonstrated in many rural districts that when these key areas are identified and targeted, improvement in student performance usually occurs. This procedure is not as complicated as it sounds. If you need assistance with this alignment procedure, assistance is available from Chapter 1 coordinators at the state education agency, Rural Technical Assistance Centers, and Technical Assistance Centers in the form of information, workshops, and onsite consultation.

You should also have an ongoing system to monitor the progress and skill mastery of students. These results can be used for diagnosis of additional student learning needs. Students should be given regular feedback on their work to reinforce academic achievement and to allow them to understand and correct errors.

One of your most important measures is success in the regular curriculum. If your district has certain standards that must be met at each grade level, the percent of Chapter 1 students meeting these standards could be an indication of the success of your program.

The other measures of success should come from the desired outcomes you have developed for your students. If your desired outcomes have come from carefully defined needs, you already know where your students are and where you want them to be. It is then a relatively straightforward matter to develop a means of determining whether they have reached the outcomes you have set for them.

Other information you can use to monitor student progress and evaluate program effectiveness can include:

- Scores on local or criterion-referenced tests
- Student attendance
- Dropout rates
- Credits earned toward graduation
- Grades in school
- Success in the regular program

Afterword

After you have worked hard to develop a quality program for Chapter 1 students, it can be disheartening to find that your program has been identified for improvement. After you have reviewed these steps, we hope you will view it as a challenge to provide more appropriate instruction for your Chapter 1 students. Even after you have satisfied the program improvement requirements, you should constantly strive to improve your program. Continual improvement should be a goal of all Chapter 1 programs. Remember, all Chapter 1 programs can be improved. Even coordinators of innovative programs are constantly looking for ways to improve their effectiveness for students.

APPENDIX

Computer Software For Chapter 1 Reporting And Evaluation

There are several computer programs available which Chapter 1 administrators can use to report information about their program and to evaluate the program's results. These can be obtained at no cost from the Rural Technical Assistance Center.

1. Chapter 1 Information Management Program (C.H.I.M.P.)

   - Applications: Maintain data and produce reports used in evaluation. For Local Annual Review, produces reports such as aggregate performance of students by school, lists students not showing progress for two years, and school improvement status.

   - Hardware requirements: IBM/MS-DOS 100 percent compatible computer with DOS 2.0 or higher, one disk drive capable of reading 360K or 720K diskette, 20 megabyte hard drive, at least 640K base memory and printer

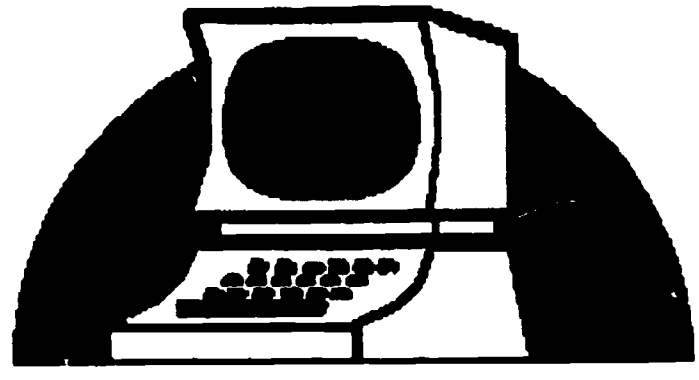
   - Software requirements: This is a stand-alone program. No additional software is required.

2. Chapter 1 Student Data Manager (C.S.D.M.)

   - Applications: Longitudinal recordkeeping for evaluation of Chapter 1 programs. Student achievement test scores are analyzed and presented in reports required for Local Annual Review, such as aggregate performance and individual student NCE gain.

   - Hardware requirements: IBM compatible computer with at least 640K base memory, DOS 3.1 or higher, hard disk drive. Printer desirable, but not required.

   - Software requirements: DataEase



3. Appleworks Chapter 1 Evaluation Template

   - Applications: Recording test scores, computing student pre-test to post-test gains and sustained gains.
   - Hardware requirements: Apple computer with 128K memory
   - Software requirements: Appleworks

4. Lotus Template for Chapter 1 Annual and Sustained Gains Calculations

   - Applications: Calculation of achievement gains and sustained gains for Chapter 1 students.
   - Hardware requirements: IBM/MS-DOS compatible computer with two disk drives or a hard disk (the hard disk is required for some parts of the program), at least 320K base memory (512K required for some parts of the program), DOS version 2.0 or higher.
   - Software requirements: Lotus 1-2-3

5. Chapter 1 Evaluation Reporting Program

   - Applications: Reports from school districts to state office of education via disk. Maintains data on student achievement by building as required by Local Annual Review.
   - Hardware requirements: Apple II, Apple II Plus, Apple IIe, Apple IIc or Apple IIgs with DOS 3.3 and 64K memory and two Apple 5.25" floppy disk drives
   - Software requirements: This is a stand-alone program; no additional software is required.

The use of these programs in conjunction with IBM, DataEase, Appleworks and Lotus is not meant as an endorsement or a recommendation of these products.