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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the design and outcomes of the University of Houston School-University Research Collaborative, a partnership that uses collaborative research and evaluation as a vehicle for educational improvement. Two of the collaborative's three research agendas are described in detail: (1) the collaborative-level research project, involving all seven member school districts, which seeks to identify effective intervention programs in the districts for at-risk students; and (2) the Teacher As Researcher project, which aims to improve curriculum and instruction in individual classrooms through teachers' involvement in research investigating their own practices. The research being conducted by the collaborative-level project is composed of three phases--first to identify exemplary programs for at-risk students; second, to relate common program components to teacher and student outcomes; and third, to design, implement, and evaluate additional intervention programs. Overall, the collaborative reflects an effort to fuse research knowledge and local knowledge generated as a result of collaboration between field-based and university researchers. Four tables, one figure, a sample interview guide, and an intervention program profile are included. (LMI)

DRAFT

The University of Houston School-University Research Collaborative

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The University of Houston School-University Research Collaborative

The most recent waves of school renewal initiatives have also brought renewed interest in the notion of school-university collaboration for educational reform. Despite the apparent benefits of collaboration between universities and schools for educational improvement, few examples of successful, inter-institutional partnerships exist (Goodlad, 1993). Part of the difficulty in collaboration resides in the fact that schools and universities are very different entities. They differ in "purpose, function, structure, clientele, reward systems, rules and regulations, ambiance, ethos" (Goodlad, 1988, p. 14). In particular, the reflective orientation of university professors and the action orientation of school personnel, often characterized as a research-practice dichotomy, frequently conflict in collaborative endeavors (Cuban, 1992; Goodlad, 1988; Schlechty & Whitford, 1988). Perhaps the answer to the dilemma involves linking field-based and university educators in partnerships which focus explicitly on collaborative research for educational improvement. The stated emphasis on joint research agendas may ease school-university tensions created by the reflectivity-activity dilemma by bringing participants closer together along the continuum of research and action.

The University of Houston School/University Research Collaborative provides an example of a school-university partnership which uses collaborative research and evaluation as a vehicle for educational improvement. The Collaborative was created to study and resolve educational problems identified by practicing professional educators; to create a network of school and university partners; and to disseminate

research findings to practitioners, researchers, and policy makers in a way that exerts an impact on practice and policy. To accomplish these goals, the College of Education at the University of Houston, in collaboration with the Texas Center for School University Partnerships, joined with seven school districts across the state, the county Department of Education, and the regional educational service center to initiate and implement a joint research agenda that focuses on school-based innovation to address perceived concerns. The partnership was initiated by three districts, previously involved in a similar school-university partnership with another institution, interested in establishing a similar relationship with the University of Houston.

In the spring of 1991, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents from the three districts approached the Dean of the College of Education and the Director of the Texas Center for School University Partnerships about the possibility of forming a research collaborative. Large and small group meetings were held over the next 6 months to discuss general goals, resources, responsibilities of member institutions, membership, and governance structure. By the end of 1991, the Collaborative had attracted 10 members representing a variety of groups interested in schooling. In addition, the governance structure had been refined.

Collaborative Organizational Structure

Drawing on experiences with previous collaboration, the group decided on a Governance Board, made up of the CEOs of the member institutions and the Executive Director as an ex-officio member, to establish goals, approve policies regarding operational procedures and ethics, oversee fiscal affairs, and review annual accomplishments. The group is co-chaired by the Dean of the College of Education and a superintendent elected for a 2-year term by the Governance Board.

Reporting to the Governance Board is the Steering Committee which is comprised of up to three representatives from each member institution (appointed by their CEO) and the Co-Chairs of the working sub-committees (appointed by the Steering Committee). For voting purposes, each institution is limited to one vote. The Executive Director and a school district member selected by the districts serve as co-chairs of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee proposes annual goals and policy amendments to the Governance Board, establishes and oversees the operation of the working subcommittees, and makes recommendations to the Governance Board concerning membership.

The working subcommittees carry out the research agenda of the Collaborative. Three standing committees were created to implement the research thrusts of the partnership and ad hoc committees are created as needed. As with the other governance levels, a university collaborator and a school district collaborator serve as co-chairs of the working subcommittees. The structural organization emphasizes shared authority

to encourage reciprocity and parity between the university and school districts.

Research and Evaluation Agenda

The Research Collaborative has established three separate research agendas. The Collaborative-Level Project, involving all member districts, seeks to identify effective intervention programs currently operating in the districts for marginal or at-risk students and to investigate the components of these programs in different settings.

The second research agenda involves collaboration of individual districts with university researchers in research projects identified by field-based educators. For example, a study involving extensive observations and survey administration has recently been conducted with one district to investigate the variation in experiences and perceptions of the large group of students considered "average" by various standards. Another project conducted with a member district involves evaluation of different early childhood programs in the district. In addition, the Research Collaborative has recently received a $60,000 grant from IBM to implement and evaluate the use of computer workstations in classrooms in four member districts to enhance the higher-order thinking skills of students at high risk of academic failure.

The third partnership research agenda, Teacher As Researcher, intends to improve the field experiences of preservice teacher education students as well as facilitate teacher research. The Collaborative-Level

Research Project and the Teacher As Researcher Agenda will be described in more detail in the following sections.

Collaborative-Level Research Project

The collaborative-wide research project was initiated to provide descriptive and evaluative information on a selected number of interventions for marginal or at-risk students. The study was designed in the context of previous research conducted by the Texas A&M Research Collaborative on the identification and description of dropouts in member districts. The current project expands the previous data base by investigating the contexts, components, and outcomes of interventions contributing to the reduction of dropouts and the success of students considered to be at high risk of failure in school.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goals of the project focus on the production of a synthesized description of at-risk interventions existing within and across member districts and the identification and comparison of effective components of the interventions. More specifically, the objectives of the research include investigation of (a) features and delivery components of the interventions that are similar and unique; (b) requirements for establishing and maintaining essential components of each of the interventions; (c) the processes and outcomes of each intervention, including classroom processes, teacher attitudes and behaviors, and student attitudes, behaviors, and achievement; (d) the differential effects

of intervention components on a variety of populations; and (e) the extent to which the findings from a, b, c, and d are consistent with research on effective interventions for at-risk students.

With these objectives in mind, specific outcomes of the project include profiles of interventions and the populations served; common features of classroom and school learning environments in effective interventions; student and teacher outcomes associated with participation; and the development of methodologies and procedures for identifying, describing, designing, and implementing effective intervention programs for marginal students. The findings from the study are expected to contribute to an understanding of the basic components of effective interventions and therefore have direct implications for the capability of schools to create appropriate learning environments for marginal students and to provide opportunities for marginal students to experience success.

Research Design and Methods

The research includes three phases. The primary purpose of Phase I is the identification of exemplary programs for marginal students at the secondary level and the generation of descriptive profiles of current intervention programs in participating school districts. Phase II research treats the identification of common components of interventions and the relationship of these components to student and teacher characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes. Phase III will involve the design, implementation, and evaluation of additional intervention programs based on the components identified as effective. At this point, the initial profile

development phase has been completed and the data for Phase II have been collected in three of the seven sites.

Phase I: Identification and Selection of Interventions

District personnel were asked to identify interventions, programs, or approaches addressing the issue of student dropout directly or indirectly through district, school, classroom, or student-level interventions and to provide any written materials describing the program. After intervention descriptions were submitted, the Research Committee analyzed them to synthesize and compare features and components of programs; developed a structured interview to be used for collection of additional information about the interventions; and conducted on-site interviews with appropriate district staff. A content analysis of all program materials and interview protocols was then conducted to determine program features or characteristics (i.e., cost, training, duration of intervention, scope, organizational structure), goals and objectives, target group, activities, and components (i.e., mentoring, peer tutoring, etc.) (See Appendix A for a Profile Summary of one of the programs selected for analysis).

The selection of the programs to be included in the study was made by the Research Committee based on identification of common and unique components across sites. Seven exemplary programs were selected from the ten programs submitted to be included in the final study. Two programs were omitted since they involved implementation at the elementary level and the focus of the final analysis was limited to secondary programs. Programs share the general goal of keeping students in school and/or affecting the attitudes, behaviors, and achievement of

students considered at risk of failure and subsequent dropout. However, specific objectives, structure, and target group of the interventions vary. In cases where a program is implemented district-wide, district personnel were asked to identify a specific site that represents the best implementation of the program or to treat the implementations as separate programs. Table 1 outlines the components and characteristics of the selected programs.

Phase II: Case Studies and Components Analysis

The collaborative context of the project and the diversity of the interventions resulted in a multiple level design and a collaborative data collection procedure for Phase II of the research in progress. At one level, case studies, based on quantitative and qualitative data for each intervention, will describe the experiences, perceptions, and behaviors of teachers and students involved in the intervention. The impact of the intervention on student retention, attendance, and achievement will also be addressed. At another level, components of the intervention programs will be identified and compared across sites in relation to teacher and student outcomes. Table 2 summarizes the research questions and methods used in the study.

The data to generate the individual case studies and to be used in the overall component analysis and comparison are being collected during two day site visits in which university and district researchers are paired to collect data using a variety of methods (See Table 3). A Research Committee member and the Program Coordinator for the intervention to be studied serve as Site Coordinators (See Figure 1). The Site Team consists of

4-8 people working in university-school district pairs to conduct systematic observations in classrooms; interview students, teachers, parents, and administrators about the program; and administer teacher and student surveys. While similar data collection activities are conducted at each site, the design has been tailored to reflect the characteristics of specific sites. For example, one site operates a center staffed by four teachers who are available throughout the day to work with small groups of students who need additional tutoring. Observations for this site were conducted in the center focusing on multiple teacher-small group interactions, rather than in classrooms focusing on single teacher-whole class interactions.

Instrumentation

All instruments for data collection activities were adapted or developed by the Research Committee in consultation with the program coordinators, administrators, and/or teachers in each program. As with the procedures, instruments to be used across sites are similar but have been personalized to include specific references to the name of the program at that site. The following sections outline the instruments to be used to collect data on specific categories of variables identified for the study.

Teacher and Student Behaviors. Information on student and teacher behaviors and classroom interactions will be obtained through systematic observation using the Classroom Observation Schedule (COS) and the Teacher Roles Observation System (TROS) (Waxman, Wang, Lindvall, & Anderson, 1983). The COS documents target student behaviors in the

context of ongoing classroom processes. Four to six individual students who are classified as marginal will be observed in relation to (a) the type and purpose of interaction with peers and teachers; (b) the settings; (c) subject matter and activities; (d) types of materials used; and (e) types of activities in which they are engaged. Each student will be observed for two 55-minute consecutive class periods during the two day site visit to obtain a time sampling of classroom behaviors. A companion instrument, the Teacher Roles Observation Schedule, will be used to obtain information on teacher behaviors and interactions with target students during the same observation periods. The instruments have been modified to include documentation of program components identified in Phase I. Since the amount of time students and teachers are observed is relatively brief, results of the observations will serve primarily as a framework for discussion and description of teacher and student behaviors within program activities rather than as an in-depth view of classroom interactions. One or two students will be randomly selected from program participants to be shadowed each day to provide more qualitative information on the daily experiences of students.

Teacher and Student Characteristics and Outcomes. Demographic information for teachers and students will be obtained from district records and from sections on surveys administered to students and teachers. In addition, standardized test results, attendance, and conduct indicators will be recorded for students within the programs. (See Questions II A and B and IIIB in Table 2.)

Participant Perceptions and Attitudes. Several instruments will be used to obtain students' perceptions of their learning environment, motivation, and attitudes toward the processes and impact of the program. Information on student perceptions of their learning environment will be collected using the Learning Environment Inventory (LEI: Fraser, 1986). The LEI contains six scales which measure students' perceptions of aspects of instruction and the instructional environment in their mathematics and language arts classes including involvement, affiliation, teacher support, task orientation, order and organization, and rule clarity. Content and concurrent validity have been established through correlational studies and classroom observation. Adequate internal consistency reliability coefficients have been obtained in previous studies with junior and senior high students (Fraser, 1982; 1986).

The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Pintrich, McKeachie, & Smith, 1989) will be used to gather data pertaining to students' motivation. The motivation scales include three general components: values (how useful and/or interesting is the course material), expectancy (control beliefs, self-efficacy, and expectancy for success), and affect (test anxiety). The Study Strategies Scale will also be included since several intervention programs included in the study cite improvement of study skills as a primary goal. Based on research conducted previously, the reliability and validity of the instrument appear adequate (Pintrich et al, 1989). However, reliability and validity information will be obtained in this study for both the LEI and the MSLQ. In addition, scales will be added to the survey instrument to specifically assess perceptions of the intervention program under study.

An adaptation of the Phi Delta Kappa surveys (Phi Delta Kappa, 1988) used to study teacher and administrator perceptions of at-risk students nation-wide will be administered at each site. In addition, semi-structured group and individual interviews, adapted from Richardson et al. (1989), will be conducted with teachers, students, and administrators to examine perceptions of at-risk students and interventions in more depth. As in the surveys, questions related to the use of specific components within the program and perceptions of the processes and impact of the program will be asked during the interviews. Perceptions of program components from surveys and interviews will be combined with information gathered during observations to determine the degree of implementation of each component. (See Questions IVA and B in Table 2).

Teacher As Researcher Project

While the collaborative-level research agenda reflects a programmatic approach to the improvement of schools, the research thrust most closely related to the improvement of individual classrooms is represented by the teacher as researcher agenda. The primary goal of the Teacher As Researcher Project is the immediate improvement of curriculum and instruction in individual classrooms through involvement of teachers in research investigating their own practices. Closely linked goals include an increase in the motivation, knowledge, skills, and professionalism of classroom teachers. Previous research on teacher participation in action research and collaboration for school improvement reports both professional and personal growth for teachers and a decrease

in feelings of frustration and isolation (Goswami & Stillman, 1987; Maloy & Jones, 1987; Oja & Pine, 1987).

In addition to its focus on facilitating teacher research, the agenda also addresses improvement of the field experiences of preservice teacher education students. Preservice teacher education students serve as research assistants in the classrooms of teacher researchers to assist them in all phases of classroom-based research projects, including problem formulation, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. One of the difficulties teacher researchers typically experience is the increase in workload associated with the adoption of an additional role. In particular, the demands on teacher time limit their ability and opportunity to engage in data collection (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). Students receive training in data collection methods (i.e., interviewing and observation techniques) from university researchers prior to assignment to the field and then are matched to teacher researchers by interests, needs, level, and content area. Time spent as research assistants satisfies the 45 hours of classroom observation required by the state of Texas.

The involvement of preservice teacher education students serves several purposes and has potential benefits both for schools and teacher education. Teachers receive badly needed resources to aid them in conducting research in their own classrooms. They also achieve a certain status in the eyes of both universities and schools because they are serving as research models and mentors to preservice teachers. Students receive the benefit of working with university researchers who might otherwise restrict their involvement to the graduate level. Of particular importance is the opportunity to collaborate with committed and competent teachers

actively working to improve schooling. In general, teacher education has rarely taken advantage of those teachers who attempt to alter existing practice (Cochran-Smith, 1991). In addition, the required 45 hours of field experience have the potential of being considerably more focused and reflective than a series of unrelated, unfocused observations in classrooms. Experience is educational provided it is accompanied by reflection (Haberman, 1991) and the teacher research project provides the opportunity for focused reflection. Research and practice become fused through these early field experiences and subsequent university courses may seem more meaningful. Furthermore, the involvement of preservice students in research may also serve to inculcate a disposition toward inquiry into their own practices as they advance through student teaching and induction (Shulman, 1986). Involvement of students of teaching at this early stage may produce a future generation of teacher researchers.

To accomplish the joint goals of facilitating teacher research and improving preservice field experiences, the Coordinator of Teacher Education in the College of Education and a teacher researcher serve as co-chairs of the Teacher As Researcher Committee. The committee includes the Teacher Researcher Coordinator, in most cases a classroom teacher, from each member district. Responsibilities of teacher researcher coordinators include facilitation of teacher research within their districts, communication within and across districts, and liaison with the Research Collaborative. Teacher researchers in each district collaborate with university and school-based researchers in the development, implementation, and dissemination of teacher-identified research projects.

Teacher As Researcher Activities

Despite the rejuvenation of interest in teacher research, few structures actually exist in U.S. schools to support and reward the work of teacher researchers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). The activities and structure of the teacher as researcher component of the Research Collaborative attempt to provide that support through a network of university and school-based researchers serving as a self-sustaining support structure for participants.

Although specific activities and support vary from district to district, the Research Collaborative provides a core set of experiences for teacher researchers from all districts. First, university and district or school-based researchers meet with groups consisting of instructional supervisors, administrators, and/or teachers from each school in the district to explain the concept of teacher research and to describe the resources available through the Collaborative. The representatives who attend the meeting identify teachers on their campus who exhibit interest in the concept or are already engaging in various forms of inquiry about their own practice. Teacher Researcher Coordinators in the district then meet with interested teachers from all campuses to form a district-wide group of teacher-researchers. During a series of subsequent group meetings with university, district, and/or school-based researchers, teachers discuss classroom concerns and refine their research questions and procedures. Teacher researchers may also participate in additional activities which include workshops and seminars related to action research, a graduate course on teacher research offered by the University of Houston, and an annual teacher research conference sponsored by the Collaborative, where

the results of projects are presented and discussed and new topics are generated. Teacher Researcher Coordinators also meet quarterly with university researchers to discuss the facilitation and coordination of teacher research.

Outcomes of Teacher As Researcher Participation

As a result of the activities associated with the Teacher As Researcher component of the Research Collaborative, approximately 40 teachers initiated research studies, conducted independently or as a group, to investigate aspects of their schools or classrooms during the 1992-93 school year (See Table 4). Although the majority of projects are being conducted at the secondary level, almost a third of the projects have been initiated by elementary teachers working in pairs or teams to investigate a single topic. As has been found in other studies (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1992), teacher researchers in this project are particularly active in the area of language and literacy. Nevertheless, a number of studies have been initiated in other content areas, including math, science, and history.

Other researchers have found that teachers tend to address questions which arise from discrepancies in what was intended by programs or behaviors and what actually occurred in the classroom (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). While similar tendencies emerge in this project, topics also reflect a concern for results of externally mandated programs as well as questions which result from implementation of teacher selected programs such as whole language or thematic units. For example, the Texas Education Agency recently required schools to abolish their classes for students not performing on grade level in language arts and mathematics

and integrate these students into on-level classes. As a result, several teacher-initiated studies reflect a concern for the performance of below-level students in on-level classes.

Although the projects, for the most part, have not been completed, teachers have begun to disseminate preliminary findings from the studies and to seek external funding to continue or expand their research. Two teachers recently received grants from state agencies to support their work. Six teachers have been invited to present work in progress at the annual meeting of a regional research conference which is primarily a forum for more traditional forms of educational research. Teacher Researcher Coordinators have expanded their roles to include presentations to teachers and administrators in other districts who are interested in teacher research.

Benefits of Collaborative Research

Educational researchers have been accused of addressing problems they can answer, rather than investigating the more complex issues associated with schooling that practitioners must face (Cuban, 1992). Traditionally, educational research used to address theoretical as opposed to concrete problems has not resulted in direct impact on practice (see e.g., Finn, 1988). On the other hand, local knowledge of the type often generated by practitioners is frequently incomplete and insular (Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991). The work of the University of Houston School/University Research Collaborative reflects an effort to mediate the two emphases. Perhaps the fusion of research knowledge and local

knowledge generated as a result of the collaboration of field-based and university researchers may provide research results which are directly and immediately applicable to practice. Furthermore, the close association of university and teacher researchers should result in university research more closely related to concerns of field-based educators as well as an increased understanding and utilization of traditional research by classroom teachers.

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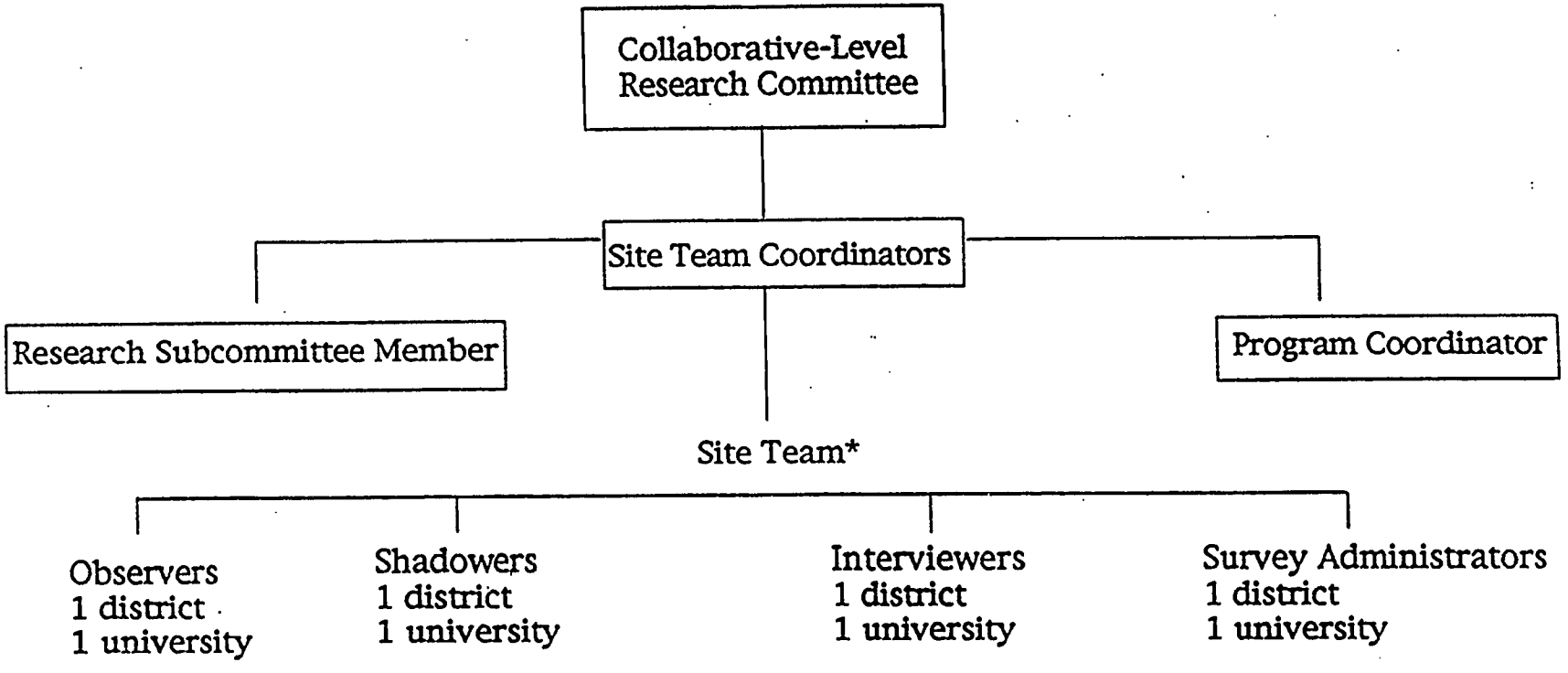
University of Houston
School/University Research Collaborative
Site Team Specifications



*Made up of university faculty and graduate students and administrators and faculty from other districts.

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TABLE 1: INTERVENTION PROFILE COMPONENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS

I. COMPONENTS

A. ORGANIZATION FOR INSTRUCTION
- CLASS SIZE
- TEAM TEACHING
- IN-SCHOOL VS. AFTER SCHOOL
- INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING
- COOPERATIVE LEARNING
- BLOCK SCHEDULE
- INDIVIDUALIZED
- PULL-OUT VS. REACH-IN
- SCHOOL-WITHIN-A-SCHOOL
- PEER VS. TEACHER TUTORING

B. CURRICULUM
- INTEGRATED CURRICULUM
- WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
- TAAS REMEDIATION
- STUDY SKILLS

C. COUNSELING
- INDIVIDUAL VS. GROUP

D. MENTORING
- PEER VS. TEACHER VS. NON-TEACHER

E. PARENT INVOLVEMENT
- COMMITMENT/COHESION
- TRAINING

F. AFFECT
- SELF-ESTEEM
- LEARNING STYLES
- TRANSITION ACTIVITIES
- SOCIAL EMPHASIS

II. CHARACTERISTICS

A. CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

B. NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

C. DURATION

D. TEACHER TRAINING

E. FUNDING

F. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

G. PHYSICAL LOCATION

Table 2: Phase II Research Questions

Identification of Effective Intervention Components

Research Questions	Variables	Instruments	Data Sources	Suggested Analysis
IIA Which intervention components significantly affect student outcomes?	Motivation, study habits, perserverance, aspirations, attitudes, perceptions of learning environment, achievement, attendance, discipline, classroom behavior and interactions. Intervention Components.	a) S.T.E.P. Student Interview b) S.T.E.P. Student Survey c) Standardized Achievement Tests d) Student Records e) Classroom Observation Scale	Students participating in selected interventions.	Canonical Correlation Analysis (CANCORR)
IIB For whom and under what conditions are the components effective?	Ind. Var. of site, gender, grade, and ethnicity with outcome variables in IIA.	a) Same as IIA b) Shadowing protocol	Same as IIA	Multivatiate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) Qualitative Analysis
IIIA Which intervention components significantly affect teacher outcomes?	Attitudes toward program, perceptions of school climate, expectations for students, classroom behaviors and interactions.	a) S.T.E.P. Teacher Survey b) S.T.E.P. Teacher Interview c) Teacher Roles Observation Schedule (TROS).	Teachers participating in selected interventions.	CANCORR Qualitative Analysis
IIIB How are teacher characteristics related to intervention components?	Experience, training, time in program, education, subject area.	District Records	Same as IIA	Multiple Regression Analysis
IIIC Is there a significant difference in teacher outcomes within and across interventions?	Ind. Var. of site with teacher outcome variables.	Same as IIIA	Same as IIIA	MANOVA Qualitative Analysis
IVA What is the degree of implementation of components of the intervention?	Individual program components	Program Implementation Scale derived from Observations and Surveys	Teachers and students participating in intervention	Descriptive analyses
IVB What is the relationship between degree of implementation and component effectiveness?	Degree of implementation score with student outcomes	Same as IIA and IVA	Same as IVA	Multiple regression analysis

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Table 3: Data Collection Methods

Type	Purpose	Duration	Scope	Required Resources	Advantages	Disadvantage
1. Observations a. Low inference High inference	overview of class-room processes, teacher & student interactions, group processes, etc.	55-min. class period	all or rep-resentative sample	•observers •training •observation forms	•obtain data about implementation •eliminates "black box"	•Cost if paid observers used •intrusive
b. Shadowing	provide detail about above	1 day	1 student 1 teacher 1 administrator	•observers •training	•provides information on typical experiences	•time consuming •intrusive
c. "Walk-about"	information on setting/context	1 day	time sample	•observers •checklist	•obtain data not usually obtained	
2. Surveys a. teacher b. student	information on attitudes toward program, perceptions of environment, efficicacy, and motivation	30 min.	all classes or groups OR representative sample	•scantron sheets •$ for processing surveys •survey admin-istrators	•relatively cheap in time and cost	•limited depth •takes time from class
3. Interviews a. administrators b. teachers c. students d. parents	attitudes/perceptions of program processes and outcomes	30 min.	representative sample	•scheduling by school admin-istrator •room •semi-structured interview protocol	•can probe for in-depth information	•time consuming to conduct, transcribe, and code interviews
4. Archival/Data Base Information a. program materials	augment info. on curriculum practice	[pick up 1st day of STEP]				
b. existing evaluations c. data tape with info. on program students	to get outcome data (achievement, ability, attendance, etc.)	due after spring data available	all program students	programmer or equivalent	•easy to analyze	•time consuming to pull

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Table 4: Summary of Selected Teacher Research Topics

Topic	Level	Content Area
Effects of thematic unit teaching	Grade 2	All subjects
Developing social/emotional skills using drama in PE	Kindergarten	Physical education
Effects of whole language on writing	Elementary	Language Arts
Effects of daily writing on learning	Grade 3	Language Arts
Involving parents in communicating expectations to students	Elementary	All subjects
Transfer of conflict resolution lessons	Elementary	All subjects
Effects of board games on problem solving	Elementary	All subjects
Impact of Special Education program on reading performance of mainstreamed students	Elementary	Special Education
Effects of hands-on activities on geometric reasoning	Secondary	Geometry
Computer applications in English	Secondary	Language Arts
Embedded grammar in writing	Grade 12	English
Performance task portfolio assessment	Grades 9 and 10	Biology
Application of humor in the classroom	Grade 12	English
Effects of an integrated curriculum	Grade 9	American History/English
Brainstorming to enhance creativity in writing	Grade 11	Language Arts
Structure of the teacher researcher program	District	
Effects of ability tracking	Secondary	Chemistry
Student success in the integrated English curriculum	Secondary	English
Preparation of below-level students for integrated high school English	Middle School	English

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INTERVENTION PROGRAM PROFILE
Example ISD - Successfully Coordinated Opportunities for Teachers and Students (SCOTS)

School District : Example ISD

Title of Program: Successfully Coordinated Opportunities for Teachers and Students

Location of Program: Anonymous High School

Contact Person: John Doe

Phone: 298-3176

Purpose of Program:

To assist "at risk" students in their academic classes. Students are sent for extra help during class to the S.C.O.T.S. center. To help with TAAS remediation.

Initial Program Implementation (semester/year):

Fall 1990

Target Population:

"At-risk" students

Grade Level:

9-12

Selection Characteristics:

Teacher, principal, or counselor referral; parent request; history of failure.

Duration of service to students:

As long as students need help.

Components of the program:

4 teachers - Math, English, Science and Social Studies
One on one or small group assistance
TAAS remediation
During class and/or during advisory period

Summary

S.C.O.T.S. is a program designed to target at-risk students, to help them become more successful in school. The program is operated by four classroom teachers and one counselor. The four teachers are from the four basic disciplines; Math, English, Science, and Social Studies. The S.C.O.T.S. classroom is available all day for students to come in for help, as well as an enrichment class three times per week. Due to this arrangement, students are able to get one-on-one assistance, help as needed with modified coursework, and/or any extra needed instruction. Our plan is to offer assistance to students during the school day, eliminating the necessity of staying after school.

Training

Teachers previously teaching "M" level classes or principal selection of teachers. No special training.

Criteria for Selection

1. Previous "M" level students now enrolled in on-level classes.
2. Students with multiple failures
3. Students identified as "at-risk"
4. Students referred by teachers, administrators, or counselors.

Expected Outcomes

1. The "M" level students, now mainstreamed, will achieve academic success.
2. Self esteem will be positive.
3. Students' expectations for themselves will be high.
4. Students will be more aware of respect, responsibility and resourcefulness.
5. Students' grades will improve thus reducing class failure(s).
6. The students will enjoy school.
7. The students' attendance will improve.

DRAFT

Intervention Profile Interview - Example ISD SCOTS

Date October 23, 1992
Interviewer Jane Smith
Person(s) Interviewed John Doe
School/District Anonymous High School
ID Number 01

General/Overview Questions

Tell me a little about the history of the program.
Who conceived it?
Joe Smith, principal of Anonymous High

Why?
So that students can be tutored during school hours in Math, English, Science, and Social Studies upon referral of their teacher.

What need did it serve?
Need to integrate students out of below level classes and into regular classes. Need to reinforce these students academically. Program set up to serve "at-risk" students.

How was program developed and implemented?
Mr. Smith desired for the school to be superior academically. Westmoreland took two teachers who had previously taught below level classes (one English and one Math) and set them up in a center for tutoring and reinforcement of the students who had previously been in below level classes. Began in fall of 1990 without any extra money or any extra teachers. The first year, there were about 20-30 "regular" students per year. The second year, the program was expanded to include Social Studies and Science. This year, the two Special Ed people added.

What is your involvement/connection with the program?
Director

Are there any (additional) materials/documentation/write-ups that would give me more information on program?
No

Scope and Duration of Program

How many participants are there in the program each year?
 # teachers: 4; 3 coaches and 1 English teachers

#students: approximately 200-300; averaged about 100 per week in first 6 weeks of 92-93 school year. "Regulars" are those students who come at least once per week.

#others: 2 Special Ed. teachers, 1 in Math, 1 in English (for two periods a day); 1 counselor, half time

How long do participants remain in program?
students: intermittently through high school, grades 9-12

teachers: throughout the school year, some continue for more than one year

others: counselor for duration of program

Selection Criteria

What are the criteria for inclusion in program? (i.e., If high risk students are chosen, how did you determine they were high risk?)
Referral by teacher

How were teachers/staff selected for the program? (i.e., volunteers, special characteristics, etc.)
Principal selection of teachers and counselor; recommendation by other SCOTS teachers

Program Characteristics/Components/Activities

Describe each of the components and activities associated with components in detail (i.e., What goes on? How often? Where does it take place? When? Who participates?)
During school program. Teacher refers student to SCOTS, but not unless it's absolutely necessary, for reinforcement and/or tutoring. Students should not miss lecture time, but go to the SCOTS center during the desk-work portion of the class or during a review for a test. If a student has been absent, and gets behind, can go to SCOTS in order to catch up with his/her class. SCOTS center open every day,

in every period. Students can also take tests in SCOTS center to get modifications, if either required by Special Ed IEP or if deemed necessary or helpful by classroom teacher.

More about the program:
Not all students classified as at-risk are seen. The teachers in SCOTS are people-oriented teachers and self-starters. The teachers are inspired and inspiring to one another. One of the goals of the program is to help the students' self-esteem. Not only do the teachers try to help students with subject matter, but also with their feelings that they are important, cared-for, and successful.

Where would we go to see the program?
Anonymous High School, SCOTS room. Advisement period, where each teacher and administrator has a group of students who stays with them throughout all of high school. Can observe the SCOTS teachers in their advisement period. Advisements meet on Tuesday and Thursday. After football season is over, there will be a 30 minute enrichment period three days per week in which SCOTS will be used as a TAAS remediation center, targeting juniors and seniors.

When?
During school, every class period

What kind of approach does the program use - pull-out, reach-in, in-class, after school, etc.?
Pull-out, during class

Training

What kind of training do teachers/staff need to participate?
No special training. Have worked with "at-risk" students. Experienced teachers. SCOTS try to go to extra workshops on things like self-esteem, discipline management, and creativity. Teachers choose workshops they want to attend.

How, when, and where do they get the training?

Who conducts the training?

Program Evaluation

What evidence do you have that the program is or is not working? (formal evaluation? - if so, describe; informal, anecdotal?)
Student participation (attendance) is steadily, tremendously increasing. Teacher referrals increasing. Even honors students being referred this year. "Regulars" are being tracked. It appears that their grades are going up. The students who were helped two years ago in such subjects as Pre-Algebra and Biology are coming back this year for Algebra II, Geometry, and Biology II. Lots of anecdotal data collected on "regulars" and others. The students seem to have improved attitude, work ethic, and improved class assignments. Analyses that have been done on the "at-risk" participants from 90-91 and 91-92, Green does not feel are really reliable. All of the students who participated regularly were successful - not one failure among that group.

What (other) evidence would you look at, if possible, to determine effectiveness of program?
Tracking of the "regulars". Students are required to register on a sign-in sheet. Would like to use this data to track student progress.

In your opinion, what are the best features of the program?
Students see SCOTS teachers as allies. Students are not threatened by SCOTS teachers because there are no grades given. Because students attribute their improved grades and class performance to SCOTS, their self-esteem improves and their relationships with SCOTS teachers are positive.

What are the existing or potential problems/pitfalls?
Some teachers do not refer students because they want students to suffer consequences for behavior or absences through their grades. It has happened that students have been absent for a number of days and subsequently perform very well on tests after going to SCOTS for tutoring. Some teachers are suspicious that the SCOTS teachers are cheating - telling students answers, when in fact this is not true - true modifications are being implemented. Sometimes teachers use the SCOTS center as a discipline "purgatory" - a step between staying in class and going to the office, even sending attendance card with a "problem" student. SCOTS teachers try to monitor this and confront classroom teachers when necessary.