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ABSTRACT

This report discusses increasing demands on teachers' time, particularly with more students with disabilities in regular education classes, and describes how teachers can use strategies, routines, and support systems to empower students to become more independent and more responsible for their own learning and study. The five underlying principles for the development of the program "More Time to Teach" are presented: routines create predictability so that students can learn to expect and follow consistent patterns; personal awareness is enhanced when students learn that instruction generally adheres to a few basic systems; descriptive rubrics (examples of good work and how they are evaluated) assist students in following exemplary models; learning strategies facilitate students working independently by providing clear, step-by-step procedures; and peer support provides additional guidance and explanations for students in need while training more capable students to be leaders. Specific strategies are presented in a four-step format that includes: (1) a description of a problem area in which students are not working independently or are not taking responsibility; (2) a description of systems that could be utilized to promote student independence and responsibility; (3) instructions that teachers need to follow to develop materials or routines, and (4) a demonstration of how to teach students to utilize, implement, and/or maintain the materials or routines. (CR)

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Running Head: MORE TIME

More Time to Teach

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In today's schools, teachers have less time to teach than ever before because of the demands placed upon them. One such demand is the diversity of the student population. The composition of the student body in schools in the United States has changed and will continue to change. Today's student body is more multiculturally diverse than ever before. Current population estimates are 28 million African Americans, 20 million Hispanic Americans, 7 million Asian Americans, and 1.5 Native Americans. These figures show dramatic shifts in demographics; since 1980, the Asian American population has doubled and the Hispanic population has increased by 50%. Students from diverse backgrounds require teachers to vary instructional approaches and accommodate various levels of language proficiency and different learning styles (Grant, 1995).

Students with disabilities require additional time and attention from the general education teacher. The majority of students with disabilities receive all or part of their instruction in the general education classroom (Hardman, Drew, & Egan, 1996). This creates a classroom with variation in learning styles, learning needs, and learning capacities. Students with disabilities require individualized instruction,

modificaitons, and accommodations. These students tend to depend on teachers and need training to become more responsible (Schwenn & Goor, 1992).

There appears to be less parental support for the teacher and education in general (Obiakor, 1995). Too many students come from homes where education is not valued or because of economic conditions, parents must work during after school and evening hours. Students are left on their own, and it is assumed they will take responsibility for studying and completing their own homework. The result is that teachers are expected to be all things for all students but must accomplish this with less support from the majority of parents.

Additional demands are placed on educators with more subjects to teach, increased paperwork, new time-intensive assessment techniques such as portfolio assessment and curriculum-based assessment. New more complex instructional paradigms require teachers to prepare for a variety of different instructional formats including cooperative learning and literature-based learning.

All of these demands require teachers to rethink how they teach and how to reorganize their classrooms. The basic premise of MORE TIME TO TEACH (MTTT) is that teachers can use strategies, routines, and support systems to facilitate learning and enable and empower

students to become more independent and more responsible for their learning and study.

The MTTT strategies, routines, and support systems can be implemented exactly as described, modified for a classroom, or individualized for a student. As teachers begin to implement MTTT ideas, they will realize that the basic principles will easily generalize to most instructional situations. As students apply the systems, they will become more aware of their learning styles, the advantages of being independent, and practices for becoming more self-reliant.

The five underlying principles for the development of MORE TIME TO TEACH are:

1. Routines create predictability so that students can learn to expect and follow consistent patterns;
2. Personal Awareness is enhanced when students learn to that instruction generally adheres to a few basic systems;
3. Descriptive Rubrics are part of examples of good work and how they are evaluated which assist students in following exemplary models;
4. Learning Strategies facilitate students working independently by providing clear, step-by-step procedures; and
5. Peer Support provides additional guidance and explanations for

students in need while training more capable students to be leaders.

All MTTT routines, strategies, and support systems are presented in a four step format. The first is **You notice that....** This is a quick description of a problem area in which students are not working independently or are not taking responsibility. The second is **Consider having....** This section briefly describes systems that could be utilized to promote student independence and responsibility. The third is **Prepare by....** Instructions teachers need to follow to develop the materials or routines are described. The fourth is **Apply by....** This final application section demonstrates how to teach students to utilize, implement, and/or maintain the materials or routines.

The following five MORE TIME TO TEACH ideas illustrate each of the underlying principles.

Routines

You notice that... Some students don't seem to know how to get started. What is routine for other children, may have to be taught directly to these students.

Consider having... a list of routine behaviors that will give students specific steps to follow so they can begin the day or a particular assignment with everyone else.

Prepare by... Writing this list of steps on a laminated card (easily carried from class to class), a chart (obvious place in the classroom so all students can refer to it), or the board (easy for students to locate but may pose problems for long term use).

Apply by... Teach students to follow the list of routine behaviors and provide practice. For example,

Enter the room quietly

look to see what everyone is doing

decide if you should sit in your seat or walk to the activity area

think about what your next task is, determine if you have the materials necessary

Assign a reminder signal to use when a student needs to consult the list.

Bonus: Have a question or activity referring to the daily work on

the board so the students will always have something to work on as soon as they enter the room. This question or activity can be discussed later.

I Ask Myself: Strategy to Improve Small Group Performance

(Bring Awareness to)

You notice that... Some students don't understand what to do when working in small groups.

Consider having... Strategy cards for students to use during small group activities.

Prepare by... Typing the following five steps, copying onto cardstock, and reviewing the card with an individual or small group.

When I am in a group activity, I work with group members to discuss information, solve problems, or work on a project.

Before beginning, I ask myself: Do I understand the directions or goal of the activity?

If I do not understand the directions or goals, I ask the group members. If they do not know, I ask the teacher to explain the directions or goal again.

Every few minutes, I ask myself: Am I listening to group members.

Am I helping in some way to complete the group activity?

At the end of the activity, I complete this sentence: I learned that

.....

Apply by... Then have students practice reciting the steps, discussing each step and how each would look during a small group. During at least one practice group, remind students to do each step.

Sample Report

(Rubric)

You notice that... Students are unsure of how a good assignment looks in terms of format, basic components, and qualities of excellence.

Consider having... Examples of good work with rubrics used to judge the quality of the work.

Prepare by... Either collecting examples of good work from students or completing the work. On the back or attached, list the criteria used to evaluate the work. Set up a file or box with the samples organized by subject, date due, or name of assignment.

Apply by... Modeling for the students how you consult the sample file after receiving an assignment. Describe aloud how you look at the appearance of the sample and then think about the criteria for good work. Continue modeling how you complete the assignment

and consult the rubric again to determine if the the qualities of good work are evident in your work.

Direction Buddy

(Peer Support)

You notice that... Students don t begin working when others do, probably because they are unsure of the directions.

Consider having... A peer who accepts the role of ensuring a partner student understands the directions for all assignments.

Prepare by... Asking for volunteers to help peers understand directions for assignments. Train these volunteers how to encourage independence by asking their peers what directions they heard and understand and how to follow up with filling in missing details or correcting misinformation. Direction Buddies can also encourage peers to write down directions and ask for help on their own for ensuring the directions are accurate.

Apply by... Explaining to students who need help that a peer will ask them what they understand about the directions for all assignments. It is important to emphasize that Direction Buddies will first ask peers what they know and then add or correct information. Initially, the pairs should practice and get feedback

concerning how well the direction buddy encourages independence.

W?s

(Learning Strategies)

You notice that... Students have difficulty locating the answers to who, what, when, where and why questions when doing reading assignments. They need a way to learn how to locate this information easily.

Consider having... Who, What, When, Where and Why printed on Sticky Tabs that can be placed on the pages of stories.

Prepare by... Developing symbols for each concept. It may be possible to find some appropriate stickers for these symbols to make the job easier. Put several of each symbol on small, individual sticky tabs.

Apply by... Marking the places in the story where students can find the answer to each question. With practice, students can learn to place their own markers on information in the story that answers who, what, where, when, and why questions so they can locate the information when needed.

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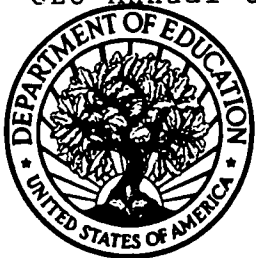
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