

El Paso Independent School District
El Paso, Texas

**Strategies for Academic Success
(S.A.S.)**

End-of-Year Report

Presented by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Strategies for Academic Success
(S.A.S)

Purpose: At the request of the 2004-05 EPISD Board to provide them with evaluation reports before requesting approval or expansion of programs (*Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees, May 25, 2004*), the Staff Development Director contacted the Research and Evaluation Department to have the program evaluated.

What is the program: The Content Enhancement Series and the Learning Strategies Curriculum make up the *Strategic Instructional Model (SIM)*, known in the District as the *Strategies for Academic Success (SAS) Program*. The main goal of the SIM products is to improve the quality of education available to at-risk students. The Learning Strategies Curriculum is a group of student-focused interventions designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to learn content. The Learning Strategies cover a broad range of skills, including reading, writing, studying, and test-taking.

Purpose of the Study: The main goal of the study was to document and describe the beginnings of the implementation of the *Strategic Instructional Model* at five (5) middle schools in the EPISD. The report describes the selection process for training, type of training, the support or lack of support from the campus administrators and central office personnel, the role of the parents, and materials. The report also includes detailed TAKS data on those students that received strategic instruction. Perceptual data are a significant component of this report, including input from district coordinator, trainers, and teachers. Respondents' feedback, input, and recommendations are woven throughout this report trying to paint a picture of "*how the program looked like in operation*" (King, 1987).

Major Findings: Information gathered through interviews with appropriate program staff and teachers indicates that the training of teachers in SAS strategies and routines has been founded upon sound research, was well planned, and consistently delivered to participating teachers. Furthermore, most teachers who use these strategies and routines do report their effectiveness and impact on student achievement. However, the subsequent expected uniform and consistent implementation of these strategies and techniques has been, at best, haphazard. This has been the case particularly on campuses where the site administrator does not support the program philosophy, and where teachers do not receive the desired support to implement the learned strategies.

On the other hand, the *Strategic Instructional Model (SIM)* has been implemented in the District since 1993 without a program that includes specific goals, activities, and formative and summative evaluation efforts. The SIM curriculum started as a central office initiative to address the non-compliance issues with respect to the least restrictive environment (LRE). The SAS Program Assistant developed an implementation plan in 2003-04 to assist those school administrators who wished to implement SAS strategies, using the Strategic Instructional Mode (SIM).

It was recommended that the Staff Development Office, and Curriculum and Instruction (C & I) staffs, in close collaboration with the appropriate site administrators need to delineate a program plan that includes the school selection criteria, rationale for implementation, clear defined objectives, defined teaching practices and stated outcomes. Staff Development and C&I staffs need to work together to come up with measurable goals, long and short term objectives, as well as an evaluation plan.

It was also suggested to utilize TAKS data, and develop criteria to identify campuses' and ultimately students' needs in order to determine which strategies ought to be implemented. Because the learning strategies are student-focused, interventions designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to learn content, careful review of the campus' data and needs is important in determining which campuses will be implementing certain types of learning strategies and or routines. Educators can select strategies from the seven different types of strategies in the SIM Curriculum. Furthermore, the District has invested resources in training SAS trainers and teachers over the last 10 years. Four (4) high schools and seven (7) middle schools have trained the entire staff in some of the SAS learning strategies and routines. This means there are close to 500 teachers in the District who are knowledgeable about the SIM Curriculum. It was suggested that an inventory of training needs to be created to find out who has received training in order to plan future follow-up and/or refresher courses.

The District can also rely on the nine (9) teachers that have received certification as SAS trainers from the University of Kansas- Research Center to coach and train other teachers on their campus. SAS trainers would be able to work with their own campus improvement team and support the vertical team in their feeder pattern assuring that the SIM is part of the Districts' 5-Year Plan.

It is also important to point out that a great percentage of the students that received strategy instruction passed the reading and writing state tests. The reader may refer to the following table for additional information. It is unknown to which other programs or treatments these students were exposed, thus making it very difficult to determine causality. This outcome also supports the argument for continued study with more consistent and supported use of the Strategic Instructional Model.

Capus Name and Enrollment as of May 30, 2005	Number of respondents to the questionnaire.	Number of respondents that provided course and teacher ID number.	Number and Percent of students impacted by the SIM Curriculum. ***	Met Reading Standards (6th-8th grade)	Met Writing Standards (7th grade only)
A (1,056)	14	4	258(24.4%)	146(56%)	No Data
B (1,786)	73	6	507(28.3%)	442(87%)	142(91.6%)
C (706)	19	8	318(45%)	212(66.6%)	146(75.6%)
D (837)	7	4	90(10.7%)	50(55.5%)	2(18.2%)
E (654)	13	2	48(7.3%)	28(58.3%)	36(80%)

** These are students that took the reading portion of the TAKS and were impacted by the SIM Curriculum

*** The percentage was derived from the total campus enrollment.

El Paso Independent School District

Strategies for Academic Success (SAS)

End-of-Year Report

September 30, 2005

I. BACKGROUND

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning was created in the mid- 1970s, when the approval of a federal law mandated that special education services be provided to all students who needed them from kindergarten through high school. This change prompted two university professors to do research on secondary learning disabilities as well as to prepare teachers for this special setting (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl/story/index.html>).

In 1978 the Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities, was one of five organizations to win a five-year, \$2 million grant to study learning disabilities. *“The University of Kansas Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities also supported a contract (#300-77-0494) with the Bureau of Education and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education through Title VI-G of Public Law 91-230”*(Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl.org/story/index.html>).

The vision of the internationally recognized Center for Research on Learning has been noted for *“creating solutions that dramatically improve quality of life, learning, and performance... especially for those who experience barriers to success”*(Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://kucrl.org/brochures/html/charter.html>).

The Centers’ Charter includes a vision, mission, values, goals and eight operating principles. Two of the eight operating principles relate to the commitment *“to creating mechanisms that will support effective collaboration of researchers on projects with the Center to promote synergetic outcomes, and to collaborate with those who represent other fields, organizations, perspectives, and resources to better leverage the effect of resources on their work”* (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://kucrl.org/brochures/html/principles.html>).

By 1989 eight states had adopted the Strategic Instructional Model (SIM) for statewide training: California, Iowa, Nebraska, Vermont, Florida, Arkansas, Arizona and North Carolina. By 1997, SIM was being utilized by 150,000 teachers and 3,500 school districts. Furthermore, 959 Professional Developers had completed the SIM certification throughout North America, the Caribbean, and Pacific Rim.

What is the Strategic Instructional Model (SIM)?

The Content Enhancement Series and the Learning Strategies Curriculum make up the Strategic Instructional Model. The main goal of the SIM products is to improve the quality of education available to at-risk students. The Research Centers' ultimate goal has been to develop and integrate a model to address the needs of the diverse learners. SIM promotes effective teaching and learning of critical content in schools. *"SIM strives to help teachers make decisions about what is of greatest importance, what we can teach students to help them to learn, and how to teach them well"* (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl.org/iei/sim/index.html/>). The Research Center advocates teaching less content, but teaching it better.

"The Content Enhancement Series are used by teachers teach curriculum content to academically diverse classes in ways that all students can understand and remember key information. Content Enhancement is an instructional method that relies on using powerful teaching devices to organize and present curriculum content in an understandable and easy-to-learn matter. Teachers identify content that they deem to be most critical and teach it using a powerfully designed teaching routine that actively engages students with the content. The Content Enhancement Routines promote direct, explicit instruction, which helps students who are struggling while facilitating problem-solving and critical thinking skills for students who are doing well in class." (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl.org/iei/sim/ceroutines.html/>) The Content Enhancement Series has teaching routines for the following topics: 1) Planning and Leading Learning, 2) Explaining text, topics, and details, 4) Teaching Concepts, and 5) Increasing Student Performance.

The Learning Strategies Curriculum is a group of student-focused interventions designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to learn content. Learning Strategies cover a broad range of skills, including reading, writing, studying, and test-taking. *"Students who do not know or use good learning strategies often learn passively and ultimately fail in school. The Learning strategy instruction focuses on making the students more active learners by teaching them how to learn and how to use what they have learned to solve problems and be successful"* (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl.org/iei/sim/lscurriculum.html/>). The following strategies and "strands" are part of the curriculum: 1) Strategies for Reading, 2) Strategies for Studying and Remembering Information, 3) Strategies for Writing, 4) Strategies for Improving Assignment and Test Performance, 5) Strategies for Effectively Interacting with Others, 6) Strategies for Motivation, and 7) Strategies for Math. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

How long has the SAS program been in EPISD?

In an effort to accurately document the beginnings of the SAS Strategies/Program in the EPISD, evaluators designed a plan to collect information from different sources. Questionnaires were distributed to the District SAS facilitator, SAS trainers, and middle school teachers that utilized the SAS strategies in their classroom. The following section includes the responses from the District Facilitator and SAS trainers.

Information provided by the District SAS Program Assistant. Reports (*SAS REPA Reports, SAS Program Three Year Summary, Strategies for Academic Success (SAS) – Implementation Plan El Paso Independent School System 2004-05, April 2004*), and information submitted to this office by the District SAS Facilitator is here abbreviated.

For the 1993-94 school year, every ninth grader at El Paso High School was required to take a semester of SAS with a trained teacher. In the fall of 1997, the SAS teacher became a SAS teacher for special education students only. And in the fall of 2000, due to a reorganization of the district and funding issues, this class was eliminated and the SAS teacher became a content mastery teacher.

In the spring of 2001, the SAS teacher was asked by the District's central office staff to assist them in designing an initiative to lower the *least restrictive environment* (LRE) ratios. At that time, the district had been cited for 5 consecutive years for non-compliance with respect to LRE ratios. On April 2001, the SAS Program was approved by the school board for implementation the following year. The SAS program was to assist the District in lowering the LRE ratios.

In preparation for the implementation of the new program two teachers were sent to the University of Kansas in the summer of 2001. The program as such, began at EPISD as a district initiative approved by the school board in the fall of 2001.

SAS training sessions in high schools. During the 2001-02 school year, the following campuses received training for the entire faculty with the Overview and/or some strategies: Burges, Andress, Irvin, and El Paso High Schools. There were also other training sessions at various campuses that targeted specific areas; such as special or general education. For a detail list of training sessions refer to the *SAS Program Three Year Summary* Report housed in the Staff Development Office.

In addition, *“seven potential trainers were identified and trained in the Content Enhancement routines,”* and *“target middle and high schools were identified through a self- selection process primarily based on the number of teachers trained and a campus implementation plan”* (Schwartz, 2004).

SAS training sessions in middle schools. During the 2002-03 school year, additional training sessions were offered for different audiences, such as; new teachers, middle school principals, BIC teachers, and middle school literacy leaders. The following middle schools had the entire faculty trained on certain SAS strategies; Charles, Henderson, and Guillen Middle Schools. For a detail list of training sessions refer to the *SAS Program Three Year Summary Report*.

The nine teachers previously identified as potential trainers were accepted to participate in a Trainer Workshop with Dr. Conn Thomas a professor from the West Texas A&M University.

During the school year 2003-04 middle schools continued to request training sessions. The following campuses had the entire faculty trained in some of the SAS strategies; LaFarelle, Terrace Hills, Wiggs, Canyon Hills, Delta Academy, Charles Middle Schools. SAS trainers have also presented to parents, held make-up sessions, and produced, with the assistance of the EPISD TV production staff, a 3-part TV series on Strategic Tutoring.

Information provided by four SAS Teacher Trainers. Additionally, in an effort to collect the most accurate information about the beginnings of SAS in the El Paso Independent School District, the initiative manager and evaluators, with the approval of the staff development director and executive director for curriculum and instruction, prepared a questionnaire to elicit specific implementation information from the five campuses (*Charles, Henderson, Terrace Hills, Wiggs and Hornedo Middle Schools*) selected to participate in this study.

During the first week of March, 2005 the SAS Program Assistant arranged for a paid 2-hour session for the SAS trainers to work on the questionnaire; they worked as much as they could and later submitted the questionnaire to the Evaluation Unit. The questionnaire consisted of 11 open-ended questions, but trainers were encouraged to include any other piece of information that would shed some light into the why, the when and the how the SAS Program started in this district. The following section summarizes the information provided by the SAS trainers, but does not identify schools by name. Campuses were labeled "A", "B", "C", and "D"; the Evaluation Unit did not receive the survey from one of the campuses participating in the study.

Item 1

Provide background information as to how the SAS program was introduced to your campus. Include the role of interest groups or key district administrators, the role of your campus' administrators, and how funding was initially secured. If applicable, please describe any problems encountered in the implementation of the program. If possible, please provide dates.

At three of the campuses, special education teachers (inclusion or content mastery teachers) were the first educators to receive SAS training. Some of these educators self-selected to participate in this kind of training; others were targeted by campus staff developers.

Campus "B". At campus "B", such training later expanded to other content areas teachers, although some felt over-whelmed and forced to use the program.

Campus "C". Campus C had been selected to pilot the SAS program in 2003, and it *"was rolled out by a campus cohort headed by the content mastery teacher,"* a trainer reported. It became a skills class offered to students that were recommended by their teacher. The SAS teacher taught three classes that had fifteen to twenty students, and the following strategies were covered: SLANT, LINC'S, PENS, and PIRATES. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

In 2004-05 the Campus Improvement Team wrote SAS into the campus plan making it a campus initiative, at the same time as the SAS campus committee was established to plan the implementation of the SAS program for 2004-2005. The committee chose to implement two strategies a year rolled out by different departments. (Ex. English-TOWER; Math-LINC'S...). Funding for campus SAS program came from district and campus funds. The SAS program was a success at Campus "C" with minor concerns.

Campus "D". The SAS trainer at Campus "D" has been providing training for the last two years to primarily general education teachers. It was reported that the current and previous principal encouraged and provided funding and CIT support, but teachers still *"self-select which trainings they want to attend at the district level,"* a trainer reported.

Campus "A". This is the only campus in the study that started the implementation of the program as a school-wide initiative, and not through special education teachers. During school year 2002-03, the entire campus was trained with the strategy TOWER. Its use was mandatory the first and second year, and the administrators checked for compliance. Subsequently, the school provided funds to buy manuals and bring an out-of-town consultant to train teachers on the strategy for paragraph writing. Teachers also attended district sponsored trainings, where teacher materials were paid with IDEA funds.

This campus experienced problems with implementation because teachers resent it when programs are mandated for use. On the other hand, there were teachers that required support from an experienced trainer to implement complex modules such as *Sentence Writing (PENS)*, *paragraph writing (SCRIBE)*, and *Theme Writing*. The SAS trainer was also a full time educator that taught seven classes a day with one preparatory period. It was impossible for her to coach the teachers who were struggling to implement the new program; it made impossible for her to support the

implementation effort. Furthermore, there were teachers that wait too long to apply the strategies, and then need a refresher course.

Item 2

How is the SAS program structured in your school?

- a. How often (i.e. how many times or how many hours a week) do strategies/routines are utilized?***
- b. Describe what goes on during the implementation of one of the SAS strategies?***
- c. How involved do the students seem to be (i.e. do all students participate, are some distracted? Who are the students who are distracted?)***

Although Campus A and C are the ones that have a school-wide implementation, only campus C has some kind of a structure that supports teachers. Campus "C" has a SAS planning committee responsible for the following activities: campus training, ordering of material, obtaining necessary trainers, rolling out of the program by the different departments, following up training sessions, creating surveys and obtaining feedback from teachers. However, program implementation during class is at the discretion of each teacher in the campus.

The implementation of SAS strategies at campus B and D is also left for teachers to decide.

"Implementation involves a teacher deciding to use any strategy, planning the schedule, making copies, making transparencies, and student workbooks/folders," stated one trainer. Other trainers stated that program implementation begins *"when a teacher presents a strategy to the students when learning an objective and then continue with the strategy on a regular basis, which then becomes a routine."*

SAS trainers reported that all students participate in class when strategies are introduced, modeled, and practiced extensively. *"In SPED classes the students stay pretty much on task during instruction and practice because the Module is structured."*

Item 3

How are teachers selected for the SAS program? How are students selected?

Even though Campus A and C have a school-wide implementation, only campus C had the SAS Implementation Committee that selects the department, the strategy and the period that the SAS strategy will be implemented. On the other hand, at Campus A, *“teachers usually self-select for district SAS trainings,” but were selected to participate in certain school-based training as follows; all Language Arts teachers were selected to attend the writing strand session, all Science and Social Studies teachers were selected to attend the FRAME training, and all content area teachers attended the training on Unit Organizer, stated a trainer.*

“During the school year, if a teacher uses the strategies and if the student is assigned to the teacher, they get the strategy (a little hit or miss). In Special Education, resource language arts, the students use the strategies more extensively. Follow up trainings only occur if the teachers sign up for training. Many do,” a trainer added.

At Campus B only *“special education and resource teachers were the ones being trained in SAS strategies.” Now with the inclusion program being mainstreamed into the regular education classroom, regular education teachers are being trained. Students were selected if they were Sp. Ed and Inclusion,” a trainer reported.*

Campus D had teachers self-select their training up until this year (2004-05). During this year, the site specialist and the SAS trainer have primarily selected the language arts department to attend training for writing strategies. However the SAS trainer has been asked to conduct two trainings for the entire faculty. *“For the most part, teachers use all their classes for the strategies, unless they teach vastly different groups.”*

Item 4

What kind of training did teachers receive? Is there any follow up training?

Teachers at Campus ‘A’ have the opportunity to participate in district and in-campus trainings, while Campus ‘B’ is only allowing special education and inclusion teachers to receive SAS training, and Campus ‘C’ provides training to all teachers during their preparatory time (90 min.)

Campus ‘D’ has *“teachers in every SAS strategy receive an overview of the SIM training model which stresses modeling, thinking aloud, direct, explicit instruction and scaffolding approaches. They leave the session with a handbook for the teacher and one for the students (if it is a student-centered strategy). If they have the ambition and some clerical help, they can begin the next day. Otherwise, they pick a time to start that fits their lesson plans. For example, a teacher can use an organizing technique immediately. If, however, it is a paragraph writing strategy, they may want to use after a sentence writing strategy,” explained a trainer.*

No one school in the study has a structured follow-up program for teachers to attend. *“If teachers want follow-up training, they usually go to a refresher course (repeat it), or they can ask a trainer to help,” indicated one SAS trainer.* Another campus reported having follow-up trainings at individual classrooms, by request only.

Item 5

What kind of support do you receive from the campus administration?

- ***What kind of support do you receive from other faculty members?***

All of the campuses in the study reported “receiving good support from their administration, site specialist and central office.” Central office supports SAS campuses with “a program specialist who trains, buys materials: such as books, CDs, overheads, Xerox copies, and -- most important -- information and emotional support. The district has also provided money for substitutes. In addition, the district has paid for a University of Kansas trainer of trainers to come from Amarillo to host a one-week summer institute for staff developers and also supervise their presentations until they are certified. Each staff developer has attended a yearly conference in Lawrence, KS, to become certified. SAS is a two-pronged method (one for teachers, one for students), so some current staff developers are certified in both prongs,” a trainer stated.

Some trainers reported that school administration supports trainers with “time, equipment (LCD projector, laptops), and funding when possible ... release time to train with material paid for.”

Campus C is the only school site that provides support to the teachers through the different departments and the SAS Committee. Three of the four SAS trainers feel they have the support of some professionals, but one stated that due to the lack of time, they can not meet to collaborate.

Item 6

How have the parents received the SAS program? What has been some feedback from the parents?

Three of the campuses shared that “parents have not been explicitly included in the program.” Campus B reports “very positive” feedback from parents. Parents have attended SAS training to help their children tutor at home. Parents also sign up to attend the SAS Tutoring workshop during the morning or evening for three hours. The parents have provided SAS testimonial before the media, and the District school board,” a trainer explained.

Item 7

What administrative arrangements do the program include (i.e. what lines of authority are used for making important decisions)?

SAS trainers stated that site specialist, Campus Improvement Committee members and campus administration make the decisions on most important issues. For example, administration at Campuses A and D, decided to utilize SAS strategies in the summer strengthening program.

Item 8

What materials are utilized in the implementation of the SAS program? Are materials available to all teachers?

One of the trainers explained that, *“The SAS materials are copyrighted by University of Kansas; they are available to teachers who attend trainings. They always include a teacher manual, and if it is a student-centered strategy, there is a student manual with practices and scoring sheets. University of Kansas is very concerned with fidelity to the teaching process, so they do not provide materials to anyone who wants them.”* At campus C *“all SAS materials necessary for the implementation of any strategy or routine are paid for by campus funds with full support of the campus improvement team and administration.”*

Item 9

What are the strengths of the SAS program? What are the weaknesses of the SAS program?

Strengths : The SAS Program utilizes *“a student-centered approach that is applicable to all levels of students. It also gives a much-needed success to low-performing students of any kind (at-risk, ELL, Sp Ed) by providing them with functional and efficient strategies to be successful in the classroom. The program has an abundance of practices for students, who need repetition, and it also helps them to create their own motivation and focus; in other words, it helps students learn how to learn. For example, the SAS strategies help low-literacy students understand content in social studies and science classes because the organization of information becomes clearer and more explicit.*

The program has been *“researched by professors, education graduate students, and teachers in both inner school and suburban school settings. It is easy to use for veteran and beginning teachers; there is a section that is scripted for beginners and a reference of main points for veterans. Lastly, the scaffolded approach allows for teachers to begin at the level needed for each student. The SAS Strategies and Routines incorporate best practices of teaching,”* a trainer concluded.

Weaknesses: However, the main drawback SAS trainers perceive in the program participation is the *“inability to ensure implementation”* at any school or classroom; *“as presently structured, teachers are not required to implement the program,”* some do it, some don't, some might do it for a couple of weeks, and some never open the books received at the training session.

The second major weakness is the lack of support from district staff to include but not limited to the Language Arts Facilitator for Middle Schools. Thirdly, campus administration has not scheduled time for SAS trainers to coach teachers that are trying to implement the program, especially when teachers need support and a mentor by their side when they might have to *“change their teaching style”* as they implement the SAS strategies and routines. The program is very demanding, it *“requires outside material to break the routine and it takes a lot of time to implement and prepare the materials.”*

One SAS trainers pointed out that teachers who have not achieved mastery are already implementing strategies, and a different respondent stated SAS strategies works best for the at-risk population.

Item 10

Why do you think the SAS strategies work for students?

SAS trainers believe strategies work for students because they “develop automatization”, and “make them feel successful, but they truly become successful.” SAS strategies and routines help students because they are “scaffolded, explicit, are modeled, are really researched based, have plenty of opportunities for practice and clear rationales.”

Item 11

What changes would you make to improve the program next year?

The SAS Program Assistant and trainers have the following recommendations to improve the program:

- Include the SAS Initiative in the District’s 5-Year Plan
- Adopt the SAS Initiative in all middle and high schools to comply with the least restrictive environment requirement.
- Dialogue with central office general education and special populations’ staff to assure continuity and consistency throughout the district.
- Provide modified teaching assignments for SAS campus trainers in order to allow them to coach and train on their campus and vertical teams.
- Dialogue and collaborate with central office consultants and specialists who are directly involved with low performing students and schools in order to avoid duplication and ensure consistency and high quality programs across the district.
- Increase funding at district level
- Concentrate on support for teachers who have been trained already, follow-up is very crucial
- Plan vertical teaming to allow students to acquire multiple strategies earlier
- Team up with the Bilingual Department
- More district training for new and old teachers

II. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The following questions were developed upon consultation with Curriculum and Instruction Executive Director, Staff Development Director and SAS District Program Assistant. Upon additional discussion with the 12 SAS trainers it was decided that data will be collected only from those schools that had school-wide implementation of the SAS strategies for at least two years. Those middle schools are: Charles, Henderson, Terrace Hills, Wiggs, and Hornedo. These questions will guide the evaluation process.

1. What is the academic progress of SAS students in the areas covered by SAS strategies, as measured by the Reading TAKS scale?
2. What are the writing scores of the 7th grade SAS students as measured by TAKS in 2004-05?
3. What is the academic progress of SAS students as measured by the SIM Pre-test and Post-test instruments?
4. What is the frequency of the use of SAS strategies by teachers?
 - What are the SAS strategies used the most by teachers who have received training? Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

III. METHODOLOGY

Study Population

The study population will consist of middle school students participating in the SAS program for whom stated test data are available. TAKS score will be reported as described in the previous page. SAS Program Assistant, SAS Trainers and teachers utilizing the SAS program will also be part of the study.

Instrumentation

The test data collected and analyzed was derived from the EPISD 2005 TAKS and Secondary Schedule and Grade Reporting System (SKED) data files housed in the *Department of Research, Evaluation, Planning, & Accountability*. Data from the SIM Pre-test and Post- test instruments will also be collected and reported. Data to be collected will also be derived from questionnaires designed to elicit information from the SAS Program Assistant, SAS Trainers, and teachers utilizing SAS strategies. These instruments were developed by the evaluation managers with collaboration from the SAS Program Assistant, SAS Trainers. Copies of these instruments are included in the Appendix section. SAS trainers will administer the survey to teachers utilizing SAS strategies in the campus where they work.

IV. FINDINGS

TEACHERS' SURVEY

A ten-item questionnaire was created by the evaluators in collaboration with the SAS Program Assistant and SAS trainers. Questionnaires were mailed to the SAS trainers to be distributed to teachers who had utilized the SIM program during the school year. One hundred and twenty six questionnaires were returned to the Evaluation Unit through the school mail from the five campuses selected to participate in this study. It is unknown how many surveys were distributed, since SAS trainers were asked to determine who was going to complete a survey at their campus. SAS trainers' criteria to select teachers to participate in the survey were as follows: teachers that had implemented at least one strategy or routine, those that had implemented some of the strategies and routines, and those that had received some SAS training. More than half (58%) of the questionnaires came from Campus 'B', followed by Campus 'C' with 15% (see chart below for a break down by school.)

Number of Questionnaires Returned

Campus Name	Frequency
Campus A	14
Campus B	73
Campus C	19
Campus D	7
Campus E	13
Total	126

A summary of the responses to the ten-item questionnaire will be presented by school in the following section. In order to maintain school and teacher anonymity campus names, course names and sections have been concealed. TAKS data presented in the following section were extracted from the following files housed in the Research and Evaluation Office; "EPISD 2005 TAKS" and "Secondary Schedule and Grade Reporting System" (SKED) data files.

CAMPUS “A”

Item 1

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning strategies in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Strategies

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	7	50.0
Often	5	35.7
Always	2	14.3
Total	14	100.0

At Campus “A”, the SAS learning strategies were “sometimes” implemented at least 50% of the time by seven teachers. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

Item 2

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning routines in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Routines

	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	14.3
Sometimes	5	35.7
Often	5	35.7
Always	1	7.1
Total	13	92.9

More than 70% of the respondents reported utilizing the SAS learning routines in their classrooms “sometimes” or “often”, only two respondents have never used the SAS routines.

Item 3

If respondents answered “Sometimes”, “Often” or “Always”, to items 2 and/or 3, they were asked when they started implementing the strategies or the routines.

Seven of the eleven respondents to this item indicated they started using the strategies and routines at the beginning of the 2004-05 school year; two more teachers said they started using the program after receiving training, one teacher began utilizing the program 2 years ago-after receiving training, and one educator indicated she started utilizing the strategies after an educational training and experience in 1969.

Item 4

If respondents answered “Never” to either item 2 or 3, they were asked why they do not implement SAS learning strategies and/or in their classrooms.

One respondent indicated that she has only been taught how to utilize “SLANT” and the “Until Organizer”. Another teacher stated that *‘these strategies are not newly developed; she’s been using “very similar strategies”*. However she feels *“these strategies are geared more towards slower learners”*.

Item No. 5

Teachers were asked to check off the strategies they had implemented in their classroom from a list of 19 strategies and routines.

The table below (Item No. 6) shows the strategies and routines teachers indicated they had implemented. Ten (10) of the 19 strategies or routines were never utilized by at least 30% of the teachers at Campus “A”. Those strategies are as follow: *Pirates, RAP, Dissect, Concept Mastery, Concept Comparison, Course Organizer, Multipass, Recall, Theme Writing, Quality Assignment, and Frame.*

Item No. 6

If respondent checked a SAS strategy/routine, they were asked in how many of their classes was it implemented?

The following nine (9) learning strategies were implemented at least 35.7% in “Few”, “Some”, “Most” or “All” classrooms. These strategies are as follows: Slant, Prepens, Pens, Lincs, Tower, Unit Organizer, Lincing, and Paragraph Writing. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus “A”. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus ‘A’.

*Strategies Implemented In Some Classes
At Least 35.7% Of The Time By Some Teachers At Campus “A”*

	Don't Use	Some	Most	All	TOTAL
SLANT	3(21.4%)	1(7.1%)	4(28.6%)	6(42.9%)	14(100%)
PREPENS	9(64.3%)	1(7.1%)		4(28.6%)	14(100%)
PENS	9(64.3%)	1(7.1%)		4(28.6%)	14 (100%)
LINCS	8(57.1%)	2(14.3%)	1(7.1%)	3(21.4%)	14 (100%)
TOWER	6(42.9%)	1(7.1%)		7(50%)	14 (100%)
UNIT ORGANIZER	6(42.9%)		1(7.1%)	7(50%)	14 (100%)
LINCING	9(64.3%)	1(7.1%)	1(7.1%)	3(21.4%)	14 (100%)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	8(57.1%)	1(7.1%)	1(7.1%)	4(28.6%)	

Item 7

Teachers were asked if they would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines. They were also asked to list the areas in which they would like to receive a refresher course.

Respondents at Campus "A" would like to receive follow-up courses in the following strategies and/or routines: "Frame", "Quality Assignment", "Multipass", "LINC", "SLANT", "Unit Organizer", "Concept Mastery" and "Concept Comparison", as well as in the areas of reading and writing. Only one respondent indicated no need for follow-up courses.

Item 8

Teachers were also asked how the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in their classroom.

Nine of the fourteen respondents volunteered comments about student performance. Most of the teachers feel *"grades and student participation have definitely increased.* Other teachers feel the SAS learning strategies and/or routines *has helped their students write proper sentences and improve vocabulary learning.* *"Writing improved – reading comprehension improved."* The SAS strategies *"clarifies – organizes. It is "great for abstract and difficult scientific concepts."*

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with the experience:

- *"Student performance has increased in my classroom as well as participation and enthusiasm."*
- *"I have 6th grade resource language arts/reading. These strategies have been the basis of what I have taught. We do not have any books like the other regular education teachers, so these manuals help me with my class structure."*
- *"Yes, most mastered hard to learn concepts."*
- *"I believe that it has helped some, if not all, students."*
- *"Students like routine. Working on learning strategies that are easy to learn and used consistently makes them feel successful. They catch on quickly and love to help new students to the class. – they have something to 'teach' to the new students."*

Item 9

Teachers were asked if they had reported fewer Special education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of strategies and/or routines?

Five of the seven respondents to this item definitely believe that the SAS learning strategies and/ or routines have helped their students. Other remarks:

- *“Yes, because I am using SAS learning strategies and/or routines to help my students learn.”*
- *“Strategies are very helpful – have to be consistently practiced and modeled. Should be reinforced in all classes.”*
- *“Referrals are based on behavior. I never decide whether it’s a special needs student since safety is the law”*

Item 10

For data gathering purposes, teachers were asked to provide course numbers for the classes they have taught.

Out of the fourteen (14) teachers that responded to the questionnaire, only four (4) provided their teacher identification and course numbers for the classes they have taught. Reading and Writing TAKS information was extracted for the 299 students that received instruction from these 4 teachers. This number of students is about 28.7% of the total student population at Campus “A”.

The courses reported by these teachers were as follows; English and Reading 6th, 8th grade, Basic Reading 6th, 8th, Basic English 6th grade, and Reading Elective 6th, 7th grade. The complete name and course numbers will not be reported to protect teacher’s anonymity.

TAKS Reading Data

Out of the 299 students at Campus “A”, only 258 had a record in the TAKS data file. More than 55% of the students in grades 6 and 8 met the state reading standard of 2100 scale score points. The average Reading TAKS Scale Score for the 258 students at Campus “A” was 2,121.00 points.

Ten (10) 6th graders and fourteen (14) 8th graders scored at least 2400 points, making them meritorious of a Commended Score. See chart on next page for complete information.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Reading at Campus “A”

Grade Level	Total Number of Students Tested by Grade Level	Met Standard in Reading					
		No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 6	75	31	41.3%	44	58.7%	10	13.3%
Grade 7	2	2	100.0%				
Grade 8	181	79	43.6%	102	56.4%	14	7.7%
	258	112		146		24	

N=258

Forty-one students did not have a scorable document in the Reading TAKS file; students were absent, ill or exempt from the test.

Writing TAKS Data

There were only 2 students at Campus “A”, for whom Writing TAKS data were available. Of these, one student was absent and the other one did not meet the state standard in the writing portion of the TAKS.

CAMPUS “B”

Item 1

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning strategies in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Strategies

	Frequency	Percent
Never	14	19.2
Sometimes	43	58.9
Often	8	11.0
Always	8	11.0
Total	73	100.0

Almost 59% of the teachers that responded to the questionnaire reported using the SAS strategies “sometimes”, and only 19% of the seventy-three respondents reported “never” using the learning strategies in their classroom. Altogether, slightly over 80% of these teachers use SAS strategies at one time or another. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

Item 2

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning routines in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Routines

	Frequency	Percent
Never	15	14.3
Sometimes	37	50.7
Often	11	15.1
Always	9	12.3
Total	72	98.6

Fifty percent of the respondents reported utilizing the SAS learning routines in their classrooms “sometimes”; fifteen respondents have never used the SAS routines. As a whole, more than three-fourths (78.1%) of the teachers use SAS strategies.

Item 3

If respondents answered “Sometimes”, “Often” or “Always”, to items 2 and/or 3, they were asked when they started implementing the strategies or the routines.

Four teachers reported starting using the strategies or routines in the school year 2004-05, two in 2003-4, and four in 2002-03.

Item 4

If respondents answered “Never” to either item 2 or 3, they were asked why they do not implement SAS learning strategies and/or in their classrooms.

Four of the eight respondents indicated they did not know about the SAS strategies and routines, three teachers said GT (gifted and talented) strategies are utilized instead. “GT Depth & Complexity – Strategies are similar but student needs are so different,” one teacher added.

Item No. 5

Teachers were asked to check off the strategies they had implemented in their classroom from a list of 19 strategies and routines.

The table below (Item No. 6) depicts the strategies teachers reported they had implemented in their classrooms.

Fourteen (14) of the 19 strategies or routines were never utilized by at least 30.1% of the teachers at Campus “B”. Those strategies are as follow: “Pirates”, “Prepens”, “Pens”, “RAP”, “Dissect”, “Concept Mastery”, “Concept Comparison”, “Course Organizer”, “Multipass”, “Lincing”, “Recall”, “Theme Writing”, “Quality Assignment”, and “Frame”.

Item No. 6

If respondent checked a SAS strategy/routine, they were asked in how many of their classes was it implemented?

The following five (5) learning strategies were implemented at least 30.1% in “Few”, “Some”, “Most” or “All” classrooms. These strategies are as follow: “Slant”, “Lincs”, “Tower”, “Unit Organizer”, and “Paragraph Writing”. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus ‘B’.

Strategies Implemented In Some Classes
At Least 30.1 % Of The Time By Some Teachers
Campus “B”

	Don't Use	Few	Some	Most	All	TOTAL
SLANT	26(35.6%)	1(1.4%)	14(19.2%)	8(11%)	22(30.1%)	71(97.3%)
LINCS	41(56.2)		9(12.3%)	11(15.1%)	11(15.1%)	72(98.7%)
TOWER	43(58.9%)	1(1.4%)	8(11%)	6(8.2%)	12(16.4%)	70 (95.9%)
UNIT ORGANIZER	49(67.1%)		6(8.2%)	4(5.5%)	11(15.1%)	70 (95.9%)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	51(69.9%)		6(8.2%)	5(6.8)	9(12.3%)	71 (97.3%)

Item 7

Teachers were asked if they would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines. They were also asked to list the areas in which they would like to receive a refresher course.

The 18 respondents that addressed this item would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in the following strategies and/or routines: “Dissect”, “Word Identification”, “Quality Assignment”, “Pirates”, “Tower”, “Graphic Organizer”, “SLANT”, “Recall”, “Unit Organizer”, “Pens”, “Lincs” and “Paragraph Writing”. Two respondents listed the following strategies and/or routines: “Lincing”, “Concept Mastery”, and “Course Organizer”, and three more would like to receive follow-up courses in “Pirates”.

Item 8

Teachers were also asked how the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in their classroom.

The majority of teachers indicated that the SAS learning strategies and/or routines positively affected student performance. Four teachers reported the learning strategies “increased organization,” and “helped with classroom management.” In contrast, two teachers made the following remarks: “*They work for some students – but not for all. Additionally, they seem to require a lot of class time,*” and “*Classes too large – harder to use.*” The majority of teachers made positive remarks about the effect of the learning strategies and/or routines in their students, such remarks follow;

- “*My students have improved in comprehension, writing, and TAKS.*”
- “*Grades have gone up. Kids feel success.*”
- “*Attention, focus in oral presentations.*”
- “*It makes them be more focused, improve their learning and understanding concepts as well be more successful learners. It also helped improve their grades.*”
- “*Yes, learning takes place in small details.*”
- “*Some students do well with TOWER for prewriting.*”
- “*Keeps students organized and focused.*”
- “*Improved vocabulary retention and usage.*”
- “*They know the steps, but sometimes don’t generalize the information.*”
- “*Has increased their word-attack skills.*”
- “*It’s helped them stay focused and organized. I also think that its improved some of their study habits.*”
- “*Students have options that are creative and self-esteem building. Grades and task completion have been higher.*”
- “*Benefited.*”
- “*Unit organizer put students/teacher on track.*”

- *“It enhances their learning capabilities.”*
- *“Performance, not so much, but has helped with our class management.”*
- *“For those who perform the tasks, moderate positive improvement.”*
- *“Yes, and they will help them in the future – all are applicable to other (higher) grades and for life.”*
- *“Seems to improve their test-taking skills.”*
- *“I think they help all students learn. It is important to have strategies for kids to follow . These are simple and effective.”*
- *“Better organization and comprehension.”*
- *“They do better academically.”*
- *“Performance has improved.”*
- *“SLANT helps with getting students to focus especially at the beginning of the period. LINCOS helps in teaching vocabulary.”*
- *“More focused attention/better recall.”*
- *“The writing strategies have helped tremendously.”*
- *“Better understanding/real life.”*
- *“Students doing better. More participation.”*
- *“TOWER has complimented my own note taking style. SLANT does what it was designed to do.”*

Item 9

Teachers were asked if they had reported fewer Special education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of strategies and/or routines?

Only three teachers addressed this item with the following remarks:

- *“Yes, because they feel successful.”*
- *“No, students are distributed evenly.”*
- *“I teach inclusion, and this positively affects their performance (I have no referrals).”*

Item 10

For data gathering purposes, teachers were asked to provide course numbers for the classes they have taught.

Out of the seventy two (72) teachers that responded to the questionnaire, only six (6) provided their teacher identification and the course numbers for the classes they have taught. This number equates to 30 different classes, and 536 students. This is about 30% of the students at Campus “B”.

Reading and TAKS data were extracted for the 536 students that received SIM instruction during the current school year. The courses reported by these 6 teachers are as follows: English and Reading 6th and 7th grade. The complete name and course numbers is not reported to protect teacher’s

Reading TAKS Data

Out of the 536 students at Campus “B”, only 507 had a record in the TAKS data file. A great number of students in grades 6 and 7 met the state reading standard of 2100 scale score points. The average Reading TAKS Scale Score for the 507 students at Campus “B” was 2,272.92 points. See chart below for complete information.

Thirty eight percent (134) of the 6th grade students and twenty-one percent of the 7th grade students participating in this study scored at least 2400 points in the reading portion of the TAKS, making them meritorious of a Commended Score. These students demonstrated a thorough understanding of writing knowledge and skills measured at this grade level by the state.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Reading at Campus “B”

Grade Level	Total Number of Students Tested by Grade Level	Met Standard in Reading					
		No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 6	353	39	11.0%	314	89.0%	134	38%
Grade 7	154	26	16.9%	128	83.1%	33	21.4%
	507	65		442		167	32.9%

N=507

Twenty nine students did not have a scorable document in the Reading TAKS file; the students were absent, ill, or exempt from the test.

Writing TAKS Data

The next table identifies students who participated in the TAKS Writing Assessment. Almost 92 percent of the 155 seventh graders tested with the Writing portion of the TAKS met the Standard of 2100 scale score points. Forty-two percent (42%) of those students also reached the Commended Score of 2400 scale score points. See the chart below for detailed information.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Writing Campus “B”

Grade Level	Met Standard in Writing					
	No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 7	13	8.4%	142	91.6%	65	41.9%

The next chart illustrates the composition ratings by grade level. All of the students tested with the Writing Portion of the TAKS at Campus “B” received a score of 3 or better in their composition. Forty-three percent of the students wrote a “*Generally Effective Response*” and eleven percent received the highest score of 5 for their “*Highly Effective Responses*.”

Composition Ratings (Number and Percent) Campus “B”

<u>Composition Ratings</u>									
	Non-scorable Response (Score =1)	Ineffective Response (Score =2)	Somewhat Effective Response (Score =3)		Generally Effective Response (Score =4)		Highly Effective Response (Score =5)		Total
Grade 7 th	N/A	N/A	71	45.8%	67	43.2%	17	11.0%	155

Campus “C”

Item 1

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning strategies in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Strategies

	Frequency	Percent
Never	N/A	N/A
Sometimes	8	42.1
Often	9	47.4
Always	1	5.3
Total	18	94.7
Missing	1	5.3

At Campus “C” almost every teacher that returned the survey implements the SAS learning strategies “often” or “sometimes,” with the exception of one educator that always utilizes the SAS strategies and one that omitted addressing this item. Altogether, 94.7% of these teachers use SAS strategies at one time or another. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

Item 2

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning routines in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Routines

	Frequency	Percent
Never	N/A	N/A
Sometimes	9	47.4
Often	8	42.1
Always	1	5.3
Total	18	94.7

Exactly the same number of teachers that utilize the SAS strategies, implement the SAS routines in their classroom. As a whole, all teachers use SAS routines at one time or another.

Item 3

If respondents answered “Sometimes”, “Often” or “Always”, to items 2 and/or 3, they were asked when they started implementing the strategies or the routines.

Only two teachers responded to this item; one respondent started utilizing the SAS strategies and/or routines in the year 2003-04 and the second one from September 2004 to January 2005.

Item 4

If respondents answered “Never” to either item 2 or 3, they were asked why they do not implement SAS learning strategies and/or in their classrooms.

No responses were received for this item.

Item No. 5

Teachers were asked to check off the strategies they had implemented in their classroom from a list of 19 strategies and routines.

The table below (Item No. 6) shows the strategies and routines teachers indicated they had implemented.

Twelve (12) of the 19 strategies or routines were never utilized by at least by 21.1% of the teachers at Campus “C”. Those strategies are as follow: “Pirates”, “Prepens”, “Pens”, “RAP”, “Dissect”, “Concept Comparison”, “Unit Organizer”, “Course Organizer”, “Multipass”, “Theme Writing”, “Quality Assignment”, and Frame.

Item No. 6

If respondent checked a SAS strategy/routine, they were asked in how many of their classes was it implemented?

The following seven (7) learning strategies were implemented at least 21.1% in ‘Few’, ‘Some’, ‘Most’ or ‘All’ classrooms. These strategies are as follow: “Slant”, “Lincs”, “Tower”, “Concept Mastery”, “Lincing”, “Paragraph Writing” and “Recall”. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus “C”.

*Strategies Implemented In Some Classes
At Least 21.1 % Of The Time By Some Teachers
Campus “C”*

	Don't Use	Few	Some	Most	All	TOTAL
SLANT	1(5.3%)	1(5.3%)	2(10.5%)	2(10.5%)	13(68.4%)	19(100%)
LINCS	7(36.8%)	1(5.3%)	3(15.8%)	1(5.3%)	7(36.8%)	19(100%)
TOWER	13(68.4%)		2(10.5%)		4(21.1%)	19(100%)
CONCEPT MASTERY	14(73.7%)	1(5.3%)	2(10.5%)	1(5.3%)	1(5.3%)	19(100%)
LINCING	9(47.4%)	1(5.3%)	3(15.8%)	1(5.3%)	5(26.3%)	19(100%)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	12(63.2%)		2(10.5%)	2(10.5%)	3(15.8%)	19(100%)
RECALL	14(73.7%)	1(5.3%)			4(21.1%)	19(100%)

Item 7

Teachers were asked if they would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines. They were also asked to list the areas in which they would like to receive a refresher course.

Seven of the 19 respondents that addressed this item would welcome refresher courses and updates. Four respondents would like a refresher course in “RAP”, two respondents would like an update on the following strategies: “Tower”, “Unit Organizer”, “Paraphrasing”, and “Pirates”. Other areas listed are as follow: “Concept Mastery”, “Concept Comparison”, and “Course Organizer”. The following dissimilar comment came from one respondent: “...I have other strategies that have worked better in my field (Spanish).”

Item 8

Teachers were also asked how the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in their classroom.

Fourteen (14) of the teachers that addressed this item indicated that the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance positively. Three teachers reported it helped students “remember more information and write better”, another teacher added that “student ability in writing areas has increased.” Two teachers commented that *SLANT* is one strategy that helps students with behavior problems because it reminds student to ‘listen-up’. Another respondent indicated that “...LINCING motivates kids but it takes too much time.” Only one teacher indicated that the SAS learning strategies and/or routines have not affected student performance positively in their classroom.

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with the experience:

- “It has helped their efficiency and long-term retention.”
- “They have helped students learning the skills they need to understand content and develop language proficiency.”
- “For attention and retention of concepts, they have really helped.”
- “Helps students to know what is expected and how to do assigned work.”
- “It has improved student performance for many of my students.”
- “Lowered frustration level by giving them more procedural understanding.”

Item 9

Teachers were asked if they had reported fewer Special education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of strategies and/or routines?

Only one respondent addressed this item with the following statement: “Yes, these students come with very few skills and the natural ability to figure things out. SAS provides structured ways for them to develop these skills.”

Item 10

For data gathering purposes, teachers were asked to provide course numbers for the classes they have taught. Reading and Writing TAKS scores were extracted from TAKS files to address evaluation questions posed by the initiative manager.

Out of the nineteen (19) teachers that responded to the questionnaire, only nine (9) provided their teacher identification and the course numbers for the classes they have taught, this equates to 44 different classes, and 318 students. This number is about 54.1% of the students at Campus “C”.

Reading and writing TAKS data was extracted for the 318 students that received SIM instruction during the current school year. The courses reported by these 8 teachers are as follows; English and Reading 6th, 7th, 8th grade; Basic English and Reading 7th and 8th; and ESOL courses for grades 6th, 7th, and 8th. The complete name and course numbers is not reported to protect teacher’s anonymity.

Reading TAKS Data

Out of the 382 students at Campus “C”, only 318 had a record in the TAKS data file. A great number of students at campus “C” met the reading state standards: Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the 6th graders, 66% of the 7th graders, and 73% of the 8th graders. Refer to the chart below for complete information.

The average Reading TAKS Scale Score for the 318 students at Campus “C” was 2,160.41 points. A minimum of a 2100 scale score is required to meet the reading standard.

Twenty six percent (26%) of the 6th grade students and seventeen percent (17%) of the 8th grade students participating in this study scored at least 2400 points in the reading portion of the TAKS, making them meritorious of a Commended Score. These students demonstrated a thorough understanding of writing knowledge and skills measured at this grade level by the state.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Reading at Campus “C”

Grade Level	Total Number of students tested by Grade Level	Met Standard in Reading					
		No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 6	46	20	43.5%	26	56.5%	12	26.1%
Grade 7	193	65	33.7%	128	66.3%	13	6.7%
Grade 8	79	21	26.6%	58	73.4%	13	16.5%
	318	106		212		38	32.9%

N=318

Sixty-four students did not have a scorable document in the Reading TAKS file; students might have been absent, ill, or exempt from the test.

TAKS Writing Scores

The next table identifies students who participated in the TAKS Writing Assessment. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the 193 seventh graders met the state standard. Eight percent (8%) of those students also reached the Commended Score. 2400 scale score points are required to receive this special recognition.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Writing at Campus “C”

Grade Level	Met Standard in Writing					
	No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 7	47	24.4%	146	75.6%	16	8.3%

N=193

The next chart depicts a summary of the Composition Ratings. All of the students tested with the Writing Portion of the TAKS at Campus “C” received a score of 2 or better in their composition. Seventy-four percent of the students wrote a “*Somewhat Effective Response*,” and eighteen percent of the students wrote a “*Generally Effective Response*.” See chart below for detailed information.

Composition Ratings (Number and Percent) at Campus “C”

<u>Composition Ratings</u>										
	Nonscorable Response (Score =1)	Ineffective Response (Score =2)		Somewhat Effective Response (Score =3)		Generally Effective Response (Score =4)		Highly Effective Response (Score =5)		Total
Grade 7 th	N/A	15	7.8%	142	73.6%	35	18.1%	1	.5%	193

Campus “D”

Item 1

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning strategies in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Strategies

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	1	14.3
Often	5	71.4
Always	1	14.3
Total	7	100.0

At Campus “D” every teacher that returned the survey implemented the SAS learning strategies at one time or another. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

Item 2

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning routines in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Routines

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	3	42.9
Often	3	42.9
Always	1	14.3
Total	7	100.

Three of the respondents said they implement the SAS learning routines “sometimes” in their classrooms. As a whole, all teachers use SAS routines at one time or another.

Item 3

If respondents answered “Sometimes”, “Often” or “Always”, to items 2 and/or 3, they were asked when they started implementing the strategies or the routines.

Two respondents indicated they started the implementation of the strategies or routines during the Fall of 2004, one in the Fall of 2003, and another in 2005.

Item 4

If respondents answered “Never” to either item 2 or 3, they were asked why they do not implement SAS learning strategies and/or in their classrooms.

No responses were received for this item

Item No. 5

Teachers were asked to check off the strategies they had implemented in their classroom from a list of 19 strategies and routines.

The table below (Item No. 6) shows the strategies and routines teachers indicated they had implemented.

Eight (8) of the 19 strategies or routines were never utilized by at least by 28.6% of the teachers at Campus “D”. Those strategies are as follow: “RAP”, “Dissect”, “Concept Mastery”, “Concept Comparison”, “Muitipass”, “Lincing”, “Recall”, and “Quality Assignment”.

Item No. 6

If respondent checked a SAS strategy/routine, they were asked in how many of their classes was it implemented?

The following learning strategies were implemented at least 28.6% in ‘Few’, ‘Some’, ‘Most’ or ‘All’ classrooms. These strategies are as follow: “Slant”, “Pirates”, “Prepens”, “Pens”, “Lincs”, “Tower”, “Unit Organizer”, “Course Organizer,” “Paragraph Writing” and “Theme Writing”. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus “D”.

Strategies Implemented In Some Classes
At Least 28.6 % Of The Time By Some Teachers
Campus “D”

	Don't Use	Few	Some	Most	All	TOTAL
SLANT					7(100%)	7(100%)
PIRATES	4(57.1%)				3(42.9%)	7(100%)
PREPENS	3(42.9%)				4(57.1%)	7(100%)
PENS	3(42.9%)				4(57.1%)	
LINCS	5(71.4%)				2(28.6%)	7(100%)
TOWER	2(28.6%)			1(14.3%)	4(57.1%)	7(100%)
UNIT ORGANIZER	5(71.4%)				2(28.6%)	7(100%)
COURSE ORGANIZER	5(71.4%)				2(28.6%)	7(100%)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	2(28.6%)				5(71.4%)	7(100%)
THEME WRITING	4(57.1%)		1(14.3%)		2(28.6%)	7(100%)

Item 7

Teachers were asked if they would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines. They were also asked to list the areas in which they would like to receive a refresher course.

Two respondents would like a refresher course in sentence and paragraph development. Other strategies listed were DISSECT and LINCS.

Item 8

Teachers were also asked how the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in their classroom.

Six respondents indicated that the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance positively. Two teachers pointed out that student writing “*had improved a great deal*”. Other positive remarks included:

- “*Very organized.*”
- “*Lower failure rates, better grades, and higher levels of comprehension, produce more work.*”
- “*Students are able to concentrate on subject matter.*”
- “*The performance is better – meets teacher expectation.*”

Item 9

Teachers were asked if they had reported fewer Special Education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of strategies and/or routines?

Only one respondent indicated that fewer education referrals can be attributed to the use of SAS strategies and/or routines.

Item 10

For data gathering purposes, teachers were asked to provide course numbers for the classes they have taught. Reading and Writing TAKS scores were extracted from TAKS files to address evaluation questions posed by the initiative manager.

Only four surveys from Campus “D” included the teacher identification and course numbers for the classes they had taught. This equated to 18 different classes with 169 students. This number of students is about 20% of the population at Campus “D”.

Reading TAKS Scores

Reading TAKS scores were extracted for 169 students that received SIM instruction during the current school year, but only 90 students had taken the Reading portion of the TAKS. The courses reported by these 4 teachers are as follows: Reading Workshop 6th, 7th, 8th, ESOL 7th, 8th, and Reading ESOL 7th, 8th grades. The complete name and course numbers is not reported in order to protect teacher’s anonymity.

Forty-seven 8th graders at Campus “D” met the reading state standards: and eighteen of those students scored at least 2400 points in the reading portion of the TAKS, making them meritorious of a Commended Score. These students demonstrated a thorough understanding of writing knowledge and skills measured at this grade level by the state. Refer to chart below for complete information.

The average Reading TAKS Scale Score for the 90 students at Campus “D” was 2,142.28 points. A minimum of 2100 scale score points is required to meet the reading standard.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Reading at Campus “D”

Grade Level	Total Number of students tested by Grade Level	Met Standard in Reading					
		No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 6	10	8	80.0%	2	20.0%	0	0
Grade 7	12	11	91.7%	1	8.3%	0	0
Grade 8	68	21	30.9%	47	69.1%	18	26.5%
	90	40		50		18	26.5%

N=90

Seventy-nine students did not have a scorable document in the Reading TAKS file; students might have been absent, ill, or exempt from the test.

TAKS Writing Scores

The next table identifies students who participated in the TAKS Writing Assessment. Two (2) of the (11) seventh graders that were tested with the portion of the Writing TAKS met the state standard.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Writing Campus "D"

Grade Level	Met Standard in Writing			
	No		Yes	
Grade 7	9	81.8%	2	18.2%

N=11

The following chart depicts a summary of the Composition Ratings. Students tested with the Writing Portion of the TAKS at Campus "D" received a score of 1 to 3 in their composition. Thirty-six percent of the students received a score of 2, and Fifty-four percent of the students wrote a "Somewhat Effective Response."

Composition Ratings (Number and Percent) Campus "D"

Composition Ratings											
Grade	Nonscorable Response (1)		Ineffective Response (2)		Somewhat Effective Response (3)		Generally Effective Response (4)		Highly Effective Response (5)		Total
	Grade 7 th	1	9.0%	4	36.4%	6	54.5%				

N=10

Campus “E”

Item 1

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning strategies in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Strategies.

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	5	38.5
Often	6	46.2
Always	2	15.4
Total	13	100.

At Campus “E” every teacher that returned the survey implemented the SAS learning strategies to some degree, with the majority doing so more than minimally. Reader may refer to page 54 of this report for a complete list of strategies and definitions.

Item 2

Respondents were asked how often they implement the SAS learning routines in their classroom.

Implementation Of The SAS Learning Routines

	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	4	30.8
Often	6	46.2
Always	3	23.1
Total	13	100.0

Three of the thirteen teachers that returned the questionnaire “always” implemented the SAS routines in their classroom. As a whole, all teachers use SAS routines at one time or another.

Item 3

If respondents answered “Sometimes”, “Often” or “Always”, to items 2 and/or 3, they were asked when they started implementing the strategies or the routines.

Nine teachers responded to this item; three started implementation during school year 2004-5, and one in 2002. A fourth respondent reported starting implementation right after she started teaching, and another teacher started “... many years ago after Maggie Johnson got them approved by Dr. Anzaldua.”

Item 4

If respondents answered “Never” to either item 2 or 3, they were asked why they do not implement SAS learning strategies and/or in their classrooms.

No responses were received for this item.

Item No. 5

Teachers were asked to check off the strategies they had implemented in their classroom from a list of 19 strategies and routines.

The table below (Item No. 6) shows the strategies and routines teachers indicated they had implemented.

Twelve (12) of the 19 strategies or routines were never utilized by at least by 38.5% of the teachers at Campus “E”. Those strategies are as follow: *Prepens, Pens, RAP, Dissect, Concept Mastery, Concept Comparison, Unit Organizer, Course Organizer, Recall, Theme Writing, Quality Assignment, and Frame.*

Item No. 6

If respondents checked a SAS strategy/routine, they were asked in how many of their classes was it implemented?

The following learning strategies were implemented at least 38.5% in ‘Few’, ‘Some’, ‘Most’ or ‘All’ classrooms. These strategies are as follow: “*Slant*”, “*Pirates*” “*Lincs*”, “*Tower*”, “*Mutipass*”, “*Lincing*”, and “*Paragraph Writing*”. Refer to charts below for a break down of the implementation of these strategies at Campus “E”.

“*SLANT*” is the strategy most implemented followed by “*TOWER*” and “*PIRATES*”.

Strategies Implemented In Some Classes
At Least 38.5 % Of The Time By Some Teachers
Campus “E”

	Don't Use	Some	Most	All	TOTAL
SLANT		2(15.4%)	2(15.4%)	9(69.2%)	13(100%)
PIRATES	1(7.7%)	2(15.4%)	2(15.4%)	7(53.8%)	13(100%)
LINCS	4(30.8%)	2(15.4%)	2(15.4%)	5(38.5%)	13 (100%)
TOWER	2(15.4%)	1(7.7)	2(15.4%)	8(61.5%)	13 (100%)
MULTIPASS	8(61.5%)	1(7.7)	2(15.4%)	2(15.4%)	13 (100%)
LINCING	5(38.5%)	1(7.7)	2(15.4%)	5(38.5%)	13 (100%)
PARAGRAPH WRITING	7(53.8%)	1(7.7)	5(38.5%)	5(38.5%)	13 (100%)

Item 7

Teachers were asked if they would like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines. They were also asked to list the areas in which they would like to receive a refresher course.

Seven of the 13 (53%) respondents that addressed this item would welcome refresher courses and updates. Two respondents would like a refresher courses in “writing/paraphrasing, and Course Organizer”. Other areas mentioned were as follows: “Quality Assignments”, “Lincs, Pirantes”, “Unit Organizer” and “Course Organizer”. Another respondent had the following comment: *“No. While I enjoy learning the strategies involved, I do not feel that the trainer (the one who usually comes, like for PIRATES and FRAME) is prepared. She does not seem to address questions very well and seems to skip around during what should be a step-by-step process. I do not feel competent nor encouraged by this.”*

Item 8

Teachers were also asked how the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in their classroom.

Almost every teacher (85%) that returned the survey addressed this item, and most of them expressed satisfaction with the learning strategies.

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with the experience:

- *“All strategies affect student performance. These strategies enhance a student’s performance in the classroom.”*
- *“For the ones who will use it regularly and on their own well.”*
- *“The ones that I can motivate to use them in a conscientious manner have benefited from them.”*
- *“TOWER organization of ideas, writing structure. FRAME – taking of information from a passage, section, chapter.”*
- *“Improved study and testing skills.”*
- *“Help students get organized.”*
- *“I believe it helps students organize their thought process for better comprehension of concepts taught.”*
- *“Some have internalized. Some think it’s a waste of time. It is boring in its repetition, students stop trying.”*

A few comments expressed different opinions: one teacher saw “*slight improvement*”, another one “*has yet to see if these techniques are working*”, and a third one had the next remark: “*The LINCS have been wonderful learning techniques for students regarding technical vocabulary. FRAME has been okay, no complaints, but also no positive comments. TOWER is good for helping student organize. PIRATES is simply awful. Some of the strategies are counterproductive in helping students choose an answer. While most PIRATES strategies are good techniques, the process is too long for students to remember exactly what to do.*”

Item 9

Teachers were asked if they had reported fewer Special education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of strategies and/or routined?

Only three respondents addressed this item: one said “*Perhaps, it would be a difficult question to answer.*” another respondent commented “*it could be, but probably not*”. A different teacher made the following statement: “*SAS is not a magic cure-all. Stop forcing it down the students’ throats. Some parts of SAS, they can benefit from – you stretch it out for a 6-week period. Too long! To waste a full period all year long on “how to beat the test” is not my idea of teaching. You are looking for test scores to go up, not the actual internalization of information and applying it towards problem solving.*”

Item 10

For data gathering purposes, teachers were asked to provide course numbers for the classes they have taught. Reading and Writing TAKS scores were extracted from TAKS files to address evaluation questions posed by the initiative manager.

Out of the thirteen (13) teachers that responded to the questionnaire, only two (2) taught English and/or Reading classes. Using their teacher identification and the course numbers for the classes they have provided, TAKS data were extracted from 13 sections, which translates to 70 students. This number of students is about 10.5% of the total enrollment at Campus “E”.

Reading TAKS Data

Reading and writing TAKS data was extracted for the 69 students that received SIM instruction during the current school year. The courses reported by these 2 teachers are as follows; English and Reading 7th grade; Basic English and Reading 6th, 7th and 8th. The complete name and course numbers is not reported to protect teacher’s anonymity.

Almost 60% of the 7th graders tested met the reading state standards, and four of those students scored at least 2400 points in the reading portion of the TAKS; making them meritorious of a Commended Score. These students demonstrated a through understanding of writing knowledge and skills measured at this grade level by the state.

The average Reading TAKS Scale Score for the 48 students at Campus “E” was 2,121.48 points. A minimum of 2100 points in the scale score is required to meet the reading standard.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Reading at Campus “E”

Grade Level	Total Number of students tested by Grade Level	Met Standard in Reading					
		No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 6	1	1	100.0				
Grade 7	47	19	40.4%	28	59.6%	4	8.5%
	48	20		28		4	

n=48

Sixty-four students did not have a scorable document in the Reading TAKS file; students might have been absent, ill, or exempt from the test.

TAKS Writing Scores

The following table identifies students who participated in the TAKS Writing Assessment. Eighty percent (80%) of the 45 seventh graders that were tested with the portion of the Writing TAKS met the state writing Standard. Three of those students, also reached the Commended Score. 2400 points in the scale score are required to receive this special recognition. See the chart below for detailed information.

Number and Percent of Students that Met Standard in Writing Campus "E"

Grade Level	Met Standard in Writing					
	No		Yes		Commended Score	
Grade 7	9	20.0%	36	80.0%	3	6.7%

N=45

The following chart depicts a summary of the Composition Ratings. All of the students tested with the Writing Portion of the TAKS at Campus "C" received a score of 2 or better in their composition. Seventy-six percent of the students wrote a "Somewhat Effective Response," and twenty-two percent of the students wrote a "Generally Effective Response."

Composition Ratings (Number and Percent) Campus "E"

<u>Composition Ratings</u>										
	Nonscorable Response (1)	Ineffective Response (2)		Somewhat Effective Response (3)		Generally Effective Response (4)		Highly Effective Response (5)		Total
Grade 7 th		1	2.2%	34	75.6%	10	22.2%			45

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

1. Conclusion: Information gathered through interviews with appropriate program staff and teachers indicates that the training of teachers in SAS strategies and routines has been founded upon sound research, was well planned, and consistently delivered to participating teachers. Furthermore, most teachers who use these strategies and routines do report their effectiveness and impact on student achievement. However, the subsequent expected uniform and consistent implementation of these strategies and techniques has been, at best, haphazard. This has been the case particularly on campuses where the site administrator does not support the program philosophy, and where teachers do not receive the desired support to implement the learned strategies.

Recommendation/Comment: The Staff Development Office, C & I staffs, in close collaboration with the appropriate site administrators need to delineate a program plan that includes the: rationale for implementation, clear defined objectives, defined teaching practices and stated outcomes. Staff Development and Curriculum and Instruction staff need to work together to come up with measurable goals, long and short term objectives, as well as an evaluation plan.

2. Conclusion: The Strategic Instructional Model (SIM) has been implemented in the District since 1993 without a program that includes specific goals, activities, and formative and summative evaluation efforts. The SIM curriculum started as a central office initiative to address the non-compliance issues with respect to the least restrictive environment (LRE). The SAS Program Assistant developed an implementation plan in 2003-04 to assist those school administrators who wished to implement SAS strategies, using the Strategic Instructional Mode (SIM). A copy of this plan is available in the Staff Development Office for review. There is no evidence that the SIM model was ever fully institutionalized

Recommendation/Comment: A decision needs to be made as to the purpose for implementing the SIM curriculum. Is the program going to target certain student populations, or is it for all middle school students? Two of the five schools in the study implemented the Strategic Instructional Model with many of their second language learners.

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning and some teachers feel that this model helps at risk students. The Center for Research (Oct. 2004) believe that strategy instruction is the only instructional method that has been shown through research to enable students with disabilities and other at-risk students to meet the complex learning demands of secondary and post-secondary schools. Some EPISD teachers reported that at-risk and special education students benefit from this model, which supports the above hypothesis

In addition, some teachers reported they had fewer Special education referrals this year because of the implementation of the SAS leaning strategies. Other teachers believe that the SIM curriculum makes students feel successful, which positively affects their performance. The SIM curriculum provides the much needed structure that these students need to develop skills.

3. Conclusion: The Strategic Instructional Model (SIM) *“strives to help teachers make decisions about what is of greatest importance”* (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://ku-crl.org/iei/sim/lscurriculum.html/>). The Center for Research recommends that teachers identify content that they feel is most critical and teach it using powerfully designed teaching routines that engages students with the content.

Recommendation/Comment: Criteria need to be developed to identify campuses' and ultimately students' needs in order to determine which strategies ought to be implemented. Because the learning strategies are student-focused, interventions designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to learn content, careful review of the campus' data and needs is important in determining which campuses will be implementing certain types of learning strategies and or routines. Educators can select strategies from the 7 different types of strategies in the SIM Curriculum.

4. Conclusion: According to the Kansas Research Center for Research and Learning the *“strategies are designed to provide the skills and strategies students need to learn content,”* in other words, these strategies are interventions that provide tools for students to learn on their own.

Recommendation: The District and individual schools have received Reading and Writing TAKS data. Utilizing TAKS data, a plan could be designed to identify specific strategies that would address the needs of schools and students. It is the Center's recommendation that *“the major factor that must be considered in the determination of any scope and sequence of instruction are the needs of the students,”* (Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://www.kucrl.org/iei/sim/faq/provide.html>). At the same time, the District would be in compliance with the new recommendations under IDEA by providing timely interventions for special education students.

5. Conclusion: The District has invested resources in training SAS trainers and teachers over the last 10 years. Four (4) high schools and seven (7) middle schools have trained the entire staff in some of the SAS learning strategies and routines. This means there are close to 500 teachers in the District who are knowledgeable about the SIM Curriculum. For complete information on training, the reader may refer to the *SAS Program Three Year Summary Report that can be found in the Office of Staff Development.*

Recommendation/Comment: An inventory of training needs to be created to find out who has received training in order to plan future follow-up and/or refresher courses. The Kansas Research Center for Research and Learning recommends a period of implementation at a high level of fidelity before teachers can become trainers. EPISD teachers that have received SIM Curriculum training need to implement numerous strategies to develop in-depth knowledge of the targeted strategies. Thus over time, *“the District could develop a cadre of trainers to serve the needs of the campuses,”* Retrieved on June 1, 2005 from <http://www.kucrl.org/iei/sim/faq/types.html>.

6. Conclusion: There are nine (9) teachers that have received certification as SAS trainers from the University of Kansas- Research Center. These teachers have become experts in the SIM model and are prepared to share their knowledge of the Strategic Instructional Model with other school districts in the nation.

Recommendation/Comment: A decision needs to be made as to how to best utilize the expertise from the certified SAS trainers. One option would be to provide modified teaching assignments for SAS campus trainers in order to allow them to coach and train on their campus. Similarly, SAS trainers would be able to work with their own campus improvement team and support the vertical team in their feeder pattern assuring that the Strategic Instructional Model (SIM) is part of the Districts' 5-Year Plan.

7. Conclusion: The teachers' surveys revealed that only two strategies are mostly implemented by some teachers. SLANT is the number one strategy utilized by all 6 campuses in the study, followed by TOWER. TOWER is a pre-writing strategy that helps students brainstorm and organize ideas, as well as to write more effectively. (See chart below for complete information.) The percentages noted on the table do not add to 100% because every strategy was measured separately.

Most Implemented Strategies by Some Teachers

Campus	1	2	3
A	SLANT (78.6%)	TOWER (57.1%)	UNIT ORGANIZER (57.1%)
B	SLANT (61.7%)	LINCS (43.8%)	
C	SLANT (94.7%)	LINCS (63.2)	
D	SLANT (100%)	TOWER(71.0%)	PARAGRAPH WRITING (71.4%)
E	SLANT (100%)	TOWER (84.6%)	PIRATES (84.6%)

Recommendation/Comment: It is important to determine why these strategies were utilized more by teachers; is it because they were requested to address specific students' needs, or is it because those were the first strategies to be introduced at the campus? This information is significant to the staff development and curriculum office when writing a plan to implement the Strategic Instructional Model in EPISD.

8. Conclusion: A great percentage of the students that received strategy instruction passed the reading and writing state tests. It is unknown to which other programs or treatments these students were exposed, thus making it very difficult to determine causality.

It is also interesting to point out the small number of teachers that volunteered the information necessary to extract TAKS data for their students. See chart below for detailed information.

Capus Name and Enrollment as of May 30, 2005	Number of respondents to the questionnaire.	Number of respondents that provided course and teacher ID number.	Number and Percent of students impacted by the SIM Curriculum. ***	Met Reading Standards (6th-8th grade)	Met Writing Standards (7th grade only)
A (1,056)	14	4	258(24.4%)	146(56%)	No Data
B (1,786)	73	6	507(28.3%)	442(87%)	142(91.6%)
C (706)	19	8	318(45%)	212(66.6%)	146(75.6%)
D (837)	7	4	90(10.7%)	50(55.5%)	2(18.2%)
E (654)	13	2	48(7.3%)	28(58.3%)	36(80%)

** These are students that were impacted by the SIM Curriculum that took the reading portion of the TAKS.

** The percentage was derived from the total campus enrollment.

Recommendation/Comment: The findings of the study suggest that many of the students who received strategy instruction were able to pass the reading and writing state assessments. Thus, the outcome supports the argument for continued study with more consistent and supported use of the Strategic Instructional Model.

Teachers need to be reassured that there will be no repercussions for those educators whose students do not perform as well as others. Data is extracted for program evaluation and planning purposes, and definitely not as a tool to rate teachers' performance.

9. Conclusion: The Evaluation Plan for the SIM Curriculum did not call for principals' input; consequently only SAS trainers, teachers and the coordinator had the opportunity to collaborate in this study.

Recommendation/Comment: Further research is recommended to document the implementation of the SIM Curriculum from a principal's perspective, as well as from the sources used in this study.

10. Conclusion: The literature review revealed that several states have adopted the Strategic Instructional Model for state-wide training. Some school districts have been implementing the SIM Curriculum since 1989.

Recommendation/Comment: A literature review of these programs should be conducted to learn from their experience. It is also important to establish and maintain communication between districts that implement similar programs.

11. Conclusion: Teachers implementing the strategies did not turn in SIM Pre and Post assessments, making it impossible for evaluators to address the evaluation question dealing with the academic progress of SAS students as measured by the SIM Pre-test and Post-test instruments. It is unknown if the teachers chose not to turn them in, or if teachers have not been informed they need to save them, or if the assessment tools are not being utilized at all.

Recommendation/Comment: According to the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning Institute for Effective Instruction, the pre- and post- assessments are representative tasks of any general education program. District staff needs to communicate to teachers the purpose for saving these assessment instruments.

EVALUATOR'S COMMENT

The purpose of any program evaluation is to see if the program which includes teaching practices, and new resources intertwined with the administrative support produced the results intended; *“to what extent were stated program objectives attained? How well did the participants do?”* In other words, it would answer the question *“Did it work?”* (King, 1987). Unfortunately, the *Strategic Instructional Model* was utilized by some middle schools, but not fully implemented. There was no district strategic plan that would describe activities and outcomes. The question *“Did it work?”* was not addressed in this report.

On the other hand, this report does an excellent job of documenting and describing the beginnings of the implementation of the *Strategic Instructional Model* at five (5) middle schools in the EPISD. It describes the selection process for training, type of training, the support or lack of support from the campus administrators and central office personnel, the role of the parents, and materials. The report also includes detailed TAKS data on those students that received strategic instruction. Perceptual data are a significant component of this report, including input from district coordinator, trainers, and teachers. Respondents' feedback, input, and recommendations are woven throughout this report trying to paint a picture of *“how the program looked like in operation”* (King, 1987).

VI. REFERENCES

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VIII. Definitions

1. **IDEA-** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is the federal law which safeguards a child with a disability the right to a free and appropriate public education.
2. **TEKS-** The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills is the state mandated curriculum. (*TEA- Interpreting Assessment Reports – Spring 2005*)
3. **TAKS-** The Texas student assessment program includes: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the State-Developed Alternative Assessment II (SDAA II), the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), and the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). (*TEA- Interpreting Assessment Reports – Spring 2005*)
4. **Scale Score-** The scale score is a statistic that provides a comparison of scores with the standard and accommodated for differences in the difficulty of the test form used for each administration.
5. **Commended Performance-** This category represents high academic achievement. Students in this category performed at a level that was considerably above the state passing standard. (*TEA- Interpreting Assessment Reports – Spring 2005*)
6. **Met the Standard-** This category represents satisfactory academic achievement. Students in this category performed at a level that was at or somewhat above the state passing standard. (*TEA- Interpreting Assessment Reports – Spring 2005*)
7. **Did not meet the standard-** This category represents unsatisfactory academic achievements. Students in this category performed at a level that was below the state assign standard. (*TEA- Interpreting Assessment Reports – Spring 2005*)

- **STRATEGIC INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL (SIM)
LEARNING STRATEGIES AND/OR ROUTINES**

Some of the following definitions were provided by the District SAS Program Assistant and others were extracted from the Center for Research websites.

- ***Planning and Leading Learning***
 - ***Unit Organizer Routine*** is used to plan units and then introduce and maintain the big ideas in units and show how units, critical information and concepts are related.
 - ***Course Organizer Routine*** is used to plan courses around essential learning and critical concepts.
- ***Explaining Text, Topics and Details***
 - ***Framing Routine*** is used to transform abstract main ideas and key topics into a concrete representation that helps students think and identify key topics and essential related information.
- ***Teaching Concepts***
 - ***Concept Comparison Routine*** is used to help students compare and contrast key concepts.
 - ***Concept Mastery Routine*** is used to define, summarize, and explain a major concept and where it fits within a larger body of knowledge.
- ***Increasing Performance***
 - ***Quality Assignment Routine*** is used to plan, present, and engage students in quality assignments and then evaluate assignments with students.
 - ***Recall Enhancement Routine*** focuses on procedures teachers can use to help students remember information.
 - ***Vocabulary LINCing Routine*** provides students with memory devices that will assist them in learning and remembering the meaning of complex terms.
 - ***DISSECT*** is a strategy to help challenged readers decode and identify unknown multi-syllable words in their reading materials.
 - ***Multipass*** is a strategy with 3 steps to help students access information from textbooks written above their reading level.
- ***Strategies related to storing and remembering information***
 - ***LINCS Vocabulary Strategy*** helps students learn the meaning of new vocabulary words using powerful memory-enhancement techniques.

- ***Strategies related to expressing information***
 - ***Paragraph Writing*** is a strategy for organizing ideas related to a topic, planning the point of view and verb tense to be used in the paragraph, planning the sequence in which ideas will be expressed.
 - ***PENS*** is a sentence writing strategy for recognizing and writing 14 sentence patterns with four types of sentences: simple, compound, complex and complex-compound.
 - ***TOWER*** is a research based graphic organizer which is part of Theme Writing. It is a pre-writing tool.
 - ***Theme Writing*** is a strategy which focuses on the fundamental skills associated with writing themes and provides learning sheets to accompany instruction. It is the third in a series of 3 writing strategies. PENS and Paragraph are the other two.
 - ***Pre-Pens*** is a series of booklets designed for students who are functioning below the 4th grade level. It focuses on: nouns, verbs, adjectives, subjects, etc.
 - ***RAP*** is a paraphrasing strategy that teaches students to identify the main idea and at least two important details from paragraphs they read. Students are then taught 7 requirements for putting the main idea and details into their own words.
- ***Strategies related to social interactions***
 - ***SLANT: A starter Strategy for Class Participation*** is a simple, easy-to-teach strategy designed to help students learn how to use appropriate posture, track the talker, activate their thinking, and contribute information.

VIII. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Teachers' Survey

Appendix B: Trainers' Survey

Appendix C: SAS Program Assistant Survey

Appendix A

Teachers' Survey



Research, Evaluation, Planning, and Accountability

**STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS (SAS)
IMPLEMENTATION SURVEY**

In order to identify the following data, please give us the last four digits of your Teacher ID number: _____

The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify teachers who implement SAS instruction, determine the extent to which it is implemented, and measure the academic progress of those students who receive instruction under a SAS-trained teacher.

Please return completed survey in a sealed envelope to your SAS trainer at your earliest convenience. **The information gathered will be kept confidential and the reporting of these data will remain anonymous.** Thank you for taking the time to complete this task.

1. I implement SAS learning strategies in my classroom: Never Sometimes Often Always

2. I implement SAS learning routines in my classroom: Never Sometimes Often Always

3. If you answered "Sometimes", "Often", or "Always" to items 2 and/or 3, when did you start implementing them?

SAS learning strategies _____

SAS learning routines _____

4. If you answered "Never" to either item 2 or 3, please explain why you don't implement SAS learning strategies and/or routines in your classroom?

5. I implement the following SAS learning strategies or routines in my classroom (mark all that apply):

- NONE
- SLANT, Class Participation
- PIRATES, Test Taking
- Pre-PENS, Fundamentals of Sentence Writing
- PENS, Proficiency of Sentence Writing
- RAP, Paraphrasing
- DISSECT, Word ID
- LINCS, Vocabulary Learning
- TOWER, Writing Organizer
- Concept Mastery
- Concept Comparison
- Unit Organizer
- Course Organizer
- Multipass, Survey
- LINCing
- Paragraph Writing
- Recall
- Theme Writing
- Quality Assignment
- Frame
- Other _____

6. If you checked a SAS strategy/routine, in how many of your classes is it implemented?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Some | <input type="checkbox"/> Most | <input type="checkbox"/> All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Some | <input type="checkbox"/> Most | <input type="checkbox"/> All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Some | <input type="checkbox"/> Most | <input type="checkbox"/> All |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Some | <input type="checkbox"/> Most | <input type="checkbox"/> All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few | <input type="checkbox"/> Some | <input type="checkbox"/> Most | <input type="checkbox"/> All |

7. Would you like to receive follow-up or refresher courses in SAS learning strategies and/or routines? In what areas?

8. How have the SAS learning strategies and/or routines affected student performance in your classroom?

9. If you have reported fewer Special Education referrals, could this be attributed to the use of the strategies and/or routines?

10. For data gathering purposes, please provide the course numbers for the classes you teach:

**If available, please include your Strategic Instruction Model (SIM)
pre-test and post-test results with completed survey,
and return to your SAS trainer.**

Appendix B

Trainers' Survey



Research, Evaluation, Planning, and Accountability

The office of Research and Evaluation is preparing an implementation report about the SAS Program. We are interested in your opinions about what the program looked like in operation on your campus.

*Please briefly address the following questions on a separate sheet of paper, and feel free to add additional information that you might feel is necessary to describe the implementation of the SAS Strategies at your campus. **You will remain anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential.***

2. Provide background information as to how the SAS program was introduced to your campus. Include the role of interest groups or key district administrators, the role of your campus' administrators, and how funding was initially secured. If applicable, please describe any problems encountered in the implementation of the program. If possible, please provide dates.
3. How is the SAS program structured in your school?
 - a. How often (i.e. how many times or how many hours a week) do strategies/routines are utilized?
 - b. Describe what goes on during the implementation of one of the SAS strategies?
 - c. How involved do the students seem to be (i.e. do all students participate, are some distracted? Who are the students who are distracted?)
4. How are teachers selected for the SAS program? How are students selected?
5. What kind of training do teachers receive?
 - Is there any follow-up training?
6. What kind of support do you receive from the campus administration?
 - What kind of support do you receive from other faculty members?
7. How have the parents received the SAS program?
 - What has been some feedback from the parents?
8. What administrative arrangements do the program include (i.e. what lines of authority are used for making important decisions)?

9. What materials are utilized in the implementation of the SAS program?
 - Are materials available to all teachers?
10. What are the strengths of the SAS program?
 - What are the weaknesses of the SAS program?
11. Why do you think the SAS strategies work for students?
12. What changes would you make to improve the program next year?

Appendix C

SAS Program Assistant Survey



Research, Evaluation, Planning & Accountability

To: Lee Schwartz, Facilitator

From: Esther Hughes, and Rebeca Pérez, Evaluators

CC: Dr. Frank Ciriza
Esther Natera

Re: Strategies for Success (SAS) Evaluation

Date: February 22, 2005

Information is being collected from different sources to properly describe the implementation of the SAS Program in the District. Data has been collected from six SAS trainers, surveys will soon be administered to teachers utilizing SAS, and test scores will also be analyzed.

Your input is very valuable and has not been documented. We have prepared a couple of questions for you to address on a separate sheet of paper, feel free to add additional information that you might feel is necessary to describe the implementation of the SAS Program in EPISD. Preferably, data need to be submitted by **March 15, 2005**. You will remain anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential.

1. What is the background history of SAS in El Paso Independent School District?
 - a. How did SAS strategies first get into the classroom?
 - b. What made it successful at one site and not other sites?

2. Briefly describe your recommendation to District staff.
 - a. Recommendations to campus administrators
 - b. Recommendations to teachers