

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dwayne Umbarger at 1:38 p.m. on March 7, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Hensley (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Carol Dermeyer, Coordinator Student Support Services, State Department of Education
Winston Brooks, Superintendent, Wichita Public Schools
Pat Apple, Louisburg Board President
John Heim, Superintendent, Emporia Public Schools

Others attending: See Attached List

Briefing on School Violence

Carol Dermeyer, Coordinator Student Support Services, State Department of Education gave an overview of Wraparound Kansas, which has been named Safe and Caring Schools Grants. Wraparound Kansas was funded in the 1999 session and assigned to the State Department of Education. Representatives were brought together from Families Together, Keyes for Networking, mental health agencies, SRS, and school districts. They developed a request for proposals that were reviewed by a panel of members across the state who had an interest in the project. Eight proposals were recommended for funding and they did fund these eight grantees. These eight are listed in the attachment with the amount awarded that year. The eight were required to include a 25% local match. The attachment shows how much went to school districts and mental health agencies. The funding for these eight grantees was approved again in the years 2000 and 2001, but the funds came from the Tobacco settlement and oversight was moved to the Children's Cabinet, but still administered by the State Board of Education.

The focus of the grant has been around prevention and early intervention. Part of the grant required an assurance of collaboration between the school, community mental health center and local community council. The eight grantees approached the project in various ways. Several brought together community mental health centers to provide services directly in the schools; others did more training and staff development in early intervention to develop prevention skills for both teachers, parents and students. They discovered that the early training seemed to be more successful and more difficulty seemed to occur when they waited until crisis happened and then tried to provide intervention.

The attachment has a brief summary of the evaluations of each of the projects and an anthology of the work done with the student improvement teams which will be used statewide with the student improvement team training. ([Attachment 1](#))

Briefing on New Facilities Weighting

Winston Brooks, Superintendent, Wichita Public Schools, described how the current "new facilities weighting" adversely impacts the Wichita school district and a number of other districts. He stated that the original intent of this weighting held true for many years, but that the changes in LOB law has eroded the original arguments and has resulted in the unintended consequence of encouraging boards of education to increase local property taxes to secure this needed funding. Mr. Brooks believes it is time to separate the new facilities weighting from LOB use. ([Attachment 2](#))

Representative Jene Vickrey introduced Pat Apple, Louisburg Board President to the Committee. Pat's district has built a new high school with a bond issue for \$19 million which is to be paid with 90% local

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION at on March 7, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

and 10% state money. Their LOB is at 17%. They would prefer not to max their LOB to 25% because of the tax burden that would be placed on their property owners. He would like to be able to use the new facilities weighting without increasing the LOB to 25%. (Attachment 3)

John Heim, Superintendent, Emporia Public Schools, explained to the Committee how the new facilities weighting law affects his school district. His district is building two new elementary schools, adding on to the high school and improving other buildings. The new facilities weighting option was attractive to the district and they began making plans to increase their LOB to 25%. When a new law went into effect last year passing special education funds through the general fund, their general fund budget was artificially inflated not just by their own special education, but also by the six special education cooperatives under their district. The intent of the new facilities weighting was to provide additional state support for districts that were making a significant local effort to support their schools. Emporia is making that significant local effort. An adjustment needs to be made for the few districts that were hurt by the inability to access new facilities weighting because of the change in the law. (Attachment 4)

Committee discussion followed each conferee's testimony.

Senator Downey made a motion to approve the minutes for February 20, 21 and 25. Seconded by Senator Vratil. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

School Violence Prevention Grants Wraparound Kansas

Evaluation Report 2000-2001

The school violence prevention grants were targeted to address violence by providing children with mental health support and services in the school setting through collaborative partnerships among schools, mental health centers, and local coordinating councils. Families were seen as equal partners within each of these three entities. Funds were allocated for the 1999-2000 school year, the 2000-01 school year and continued for the 2001-02 school year. The original eight communities awarded grants in the first year have been awarded continuation grants each year.

The purpose of these grants was to champion the connection of the Kansas State Board of Education's needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life. This purpose was consistent with the State Board's strategic directions and the Governor's Commission on Children and Families outcomes addressing the overarching statewide vision, "to insure the well-being of Kansas children and families, we must target up front early childhood programs". It also fit with the mission of the 30 Kansas Community Mental Health Centers (to wrap services around children with special needs so that they can be successful in their own homes, schools, and communities).

Each of the eight grants took various approaches to address local needs, which were determined collaboratively by the schools and mental health centers. Three of the grantees were focused on prevention alone, two were prevention and support, one was prevention and intensive services, one was intensive only, and one was a planning grant. Each identified local benchmarks or objectives.

Applicants were required to include an evaluation component for their projects. They were asked to develop adequate, multiple measures tied to system capacity and child risk factors of violence or prevention of violence in schools. Two measures were to be described:

- (1) Local measures are those that directly determine or describe how the proposed program is successful in preventing violence in schools and are related to the individuality of the community and the proposed project. Local process measures include recognized tools, checklists or surveys that address at least some of the following important outcomes:
 - (a) appropriate, adequate supports and services for children, adolescents, families, or teachers;
 - (b) measures of family involvement, and
 - (c) procedures (documentation) of collaboration, integrated service delivery and planning, non-traditional mental health services, and building local capacity to implement the proposed activities.

Senate Education
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Attachment 1

- (2) Grant measures are those that should be collected and reported for all funded programs. They include existing data elements that directly relate to school violence or risk factors currently collected by schools as part of their yearly accountability reports and accreditation requirements or by local mental health centers, such as child status indicators, Child Behavior Checklist scores, or other relevant mental health programmatic data.

Grant evaluations utilized a variety of data to assess the results of the activities and intervention strategies. Many used the "Communities That Care" survey; others used School Climate survey's, risk survey's for families and students. Feedback from parents, teachers and students participating in training activities measured the benefits of the training and implementation of the skills learned. Quantitative data reported to KSDE, mental health centers and collected locally provided outcome measures.

The data collected generally indicated positive results for those students and families who were served through the grants. There were decreases in acts of violence and suspensions. Teachers, parents and students felt safer at school. More student problems were being dealt with at the building level resulting in students staying in school and continuing with their learning. Teachers felt more supported by building level intervention teams that utilized a problem-solving process to address student issues. Mental health professionals and school personnel were collaborating to support students and families and to keep students functioning appropriately in the school environment. Several grants indicated that a fewer number of students and families participated than was expected and they would plan to expand the services to include more in the future.

It generally appears that the most successful strategies were those addressing prevention and early intervention such as curriculums teaching pro-social behaviors, crisis intervention, peer mentoring, peer mediation and collaborative teaching. Successes were also realized when grants utilized and build on existing systems and programs in the school and community, such as Safe and Drug Free Schools, Student Improvement Teams, mental health programs and juvenile justice and court systems. When interventions were available at times of crisis it was more difficult to get families and students to participate. At times of crisis more personal, intensive services are required. The evaluations concluded that change in student's behaviors and attitudes take time and should start early and continue through the educational system.

Common strategies used by the grants to meet their goals included:

- Collaboration with mental health programs to provide on-site services, participation in Student Improvement Teams, development and delivery of staff, student and parent training as well as early intervention and prevention activities provided for students, staff, families and communities.
- Provision of parent and staff development for learning skills in dealing with violent behaviors and to provide prevention skills to students at home and in the

classroom. The use of violence prevention curriculums such as: Second Step, Kansas Bullying Program, Love and Logic.

- Including students in the process, through activities such as peer mentoring, peer mediation, and community service.
- The use of building-level, early intervention, Student Improvement Teams to address student issues through a problem-solving process to bring supports to students and families.
- Collaboration with existing programs in the schools and communities such as Safe and Drug Free Schools, Character Education, Alternative Schools, Juvenile Justice and court services.

Some of the limitations identified by the grants in implementing the activities included:

- An extensive amount of time is necessary to develop collaborative relationships between schools, mental health centers and other community agencies. Due to the year to year uncertainty of the continuation of the grants, it was difficult to sustain the efforts and to build on them.
- Several initiatives to involve parents were unsuccessful. A redirection of these efforts were tried including beginning the involvement strategies earlier, such as in early primary grades or before students were at the crisis point. Secondly, making personal contacts through home visits and phone calls was more effective than just an open invitation to participate.

The follow is a summary of the findings from each of the grants after the second year of operation, 2000-2001.

Fort Hays Educational Development Center--HAP Youth Empowerment Program (9 USD's) Elementary and Jr. High Community approach in providing prevention, recognition training and character education programs. Collaboration with Mental Health Center, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Ellis Co. Community Partnerships, Alternative and Fort Hays State University. Goals are to reduce the number of youth involved in at-risk behaviors; establish community involvement in the HAP Youth Empowerment Program; and provide training to school personnel, parents, and community members on the recognition and prevention of as-risk behaviors.

- Student pre and post self-evaluation conducted after mentor training and three-day empowerment program showed a greater degree of thought and internal thinking, such as, "I learned how to listen to other people's ideas," "I can trust my group," and "I learned I can make the right decision."

- Teacher focus groups reported positive results in the classroom, such as, increase in sensitivity and respect toward fellow students and teachers and increased leadership skills in the class and school activities.
- School data reported an increase in attendance rates.
- “Communities that Care” survey indicated a reduction in number of students, who, at least once, had smoked cigarettes, used smokeless tobacco, drank alcohol or used marijuana.
- The age of initial use of alcohol and cigarettes increased by 1.3 years and 1.7 years respectively.
- Numbers of student trying alcohol decreased from 63.8% to 55.1%.
- Alcohol consumption decreased from 76.2% to 70.2%.
- Use of marijuana decreased from 33.2% to 23.8%.

Ottawa Middle School--Emotional Skill Building

The Peer Assistance Leadership/Emotional Skill Building class (PAL/ESBC) is a non-traditional mental health program to be offered at the middle school collaboratively by the school and Franklin County Mental Health staff. Referrals may be voluntary or made by principal, staff or parent to the six-week elective course. Another component of the project is to increase parent collaboration and empowerment through outreach from a Parent Support Worker as well as “Love and Logic” classes provided for parents in the fall and spring at all of the elementary schools.

- An in-service provided for teachers on "School Discipline and Reaching the Apathetic Youth" was rated extremely useful by 92% of attendees.
- The “Kansas Bullying Program” was rated highly by 73% of staff.
- Data indicated a reduction in out-of-school suspensions and repeat offenders.
- During 2000-2001, a minimum of 2048 hours of community service was performed.
- The "Communities that Care" survey, "Americorp" survey and "Youth Risk Survey" were all being implemented to monitor changes in behavior.
- The JJA's immediate intervention program ensures that students arrested are returned to school the next day, may deter fighting and out-of-school suspensions.

Kansas City Kansas Public Schools--Student Improvement Teams - Catalyst for Change

The over all goal is to develop and strengthen the implementation of the Student Improvement Team (SIT) process to ensure equity to both the social and academic development of students to make them productive, lifelong learners. Each building team is required to include Wyandot Mental Health Center in the overall process to ensure the success and well being of students and families. Staff from the mental health center participate in building SIT meetings and provide some services at the school site. The Student Improvement Teams used a problem-solving process, which includes clearly identifying the target issue, identifying intervention strategies, develop a plan for implementation and data collection, and assess the impact of the intervention.

- Referrals may be made from the SIT to other services such as a 504 plan, special education evaluation, counseling or any number of community services.

- Some of the most frequent intervention strategies used include: behavior contract, curriculum adjustments, reward system, school counselor, conflict management, parent conference, peer mediation, adult and peer mentors, and after school programs.
- Data indicate that approximately 12-13% of the student population is referred to the SIT process. About 50% of referrals are for academic concerns, 40% for behavior/social and 10% other.
- Approximately 5% of the students were found eligible for special education and about 2% resulted in the development of a 504 Plan. This is a decrease from previous year and indicates that general education and community interventions are successful with the need of special education.
- School suspensions were down by 30% of the students involved in the SIT process.

East Central Kansas Cooperative in Education - Working to Recognize Alternative Possibilities (WRAP)

WRAP is a delinquency, school drop out, and violence prevention program created through the combined efforts of the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center and the East Kansas Cooperative for Special Education and the Baldwin-Eudora School District. WRAP provides an educational-mental health linkage in the public schools by placing mental health counselors on-site in the schools where they provide screening, counseling, consultation with school staff and parents, referrals for services, and other treatment and prevention activities.

- Served 179 students
- Primary reason for referral--risk of dropping out, attendance and discipline. Problems included mental health (i.e., depression), education (failing classes), and family problems (conflicts over rules). Attendance was primary issue in high school.
- Primary interventions provided were consultation with staff and parents, brief student check-ups and individual counseling.
- Data indicated that of the students served by WRAP 75% had perfect or improved attendance at the high school and 99% at the junior high. Of the 173 students referred for disciplinary issues, 157 had zero or improved, with only 16 who increased discipline problems.

Garden City Public Schools--Positive Impact

Created a coordinated school-based behavioral assessment, intervention and referral program. Purpose is to create a support base for behavior change, to reduce risk factors, to promote a safe, disciplined school where students can successfully meet academic standards and enhance physical / social well-being. Mental health provides two staff that participate on Positive Impact Teams and provides mental health services to students in schools.

- Results of the "Communities That Care" survey indicate little change in the use of drugs and alcohol, but a slight decrease in anti-social behavior, except for suspensions.
- Results of a parent survey indicated an increase in the number of parents that believe the school provides a safe environment from 95% in 2000, to 98% in 2001.
- Results of a student survey to the question "Do you feel safe at school?" were as follows: 2000-Elementary, yes 95%, no 5%; Middle-yes 87%, no 13%; High-yes

83%, no 17%. 2001-Elementary, yes 94%, no 6%; Middle, yes 82%, no 18%; High-yes 84%, no 16%.

- A survey of teachers indicated that 96% thought that the Positive Impact Teams had provided a needed service to the district.

Northeast Kansas Education Service Center--Safe and Caring Communities Project

Established a collaborative program with NEKESC, NEK Community Mental Health Association, Jefferson County Coordinating Council, law enforcement, Juvenile Justice and court services. Purpose of the project was to develop and refine the interagency responsiveness to the needs of families with violent or potentially violent children.

- Over 300 parents participated in three evenings or Saturday trainings in "Love and Logic". 78% of the parents reported implementing the strategies and 60% said it was "working very well."
- Over 70 elementary teachers participated in the "Love and Logic" training as well.
- The "Risk Assessment Worksheet for Violent Juvenile Behavior" was developed and is now available on-line at NEKESC website. This assessment is used for determining the level of risk involved in various situations.
- Interagency participation increased significantly through exchanges of in-service for staff, participation in building level problem-solving teams, providing counseling and therapy services at the schools.
- Data indicated decreases in student violence, school hot line calls were down and school suspensions decreased by 50%

Wichita Public Schools--Wraparound Wichita Kids

The project was designed to explore more effective ways to coordinate services among staff at three elementary schools and representatives of the Family and Children's Community Service at COMCARE of Sedgwick County. The ultimate goal of the project was to more effectively coordinate services between school and mental health systems, thus providing a more comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of children and family. Two main strategies were developing models for violence prevention and for violence intervention. "Second Step" is a research-proven, school-based social skills curriculum designed to teach children how to develop decision-making skills that result in making appropriate choices regarding behaviors that contribute to violence. This curriculum was implemented with teachers and students.

- The results of using the curriculum indicated that students were gaining knowledge about violence prevention strategies and attitudes toward working together to solve problems improved.
- COMCARE presented parenting classes at all three schools. Parents received a school-wide invitation and targeted families received a special letter and a phone call. Few parents attended and the sessions were cancelled due to lack of participation. It proved difficult to get families involved in COMCARE services, many refused the services.
- It was recommended that the district and COMCARE develop a model for the coordination and implementation of the service delivery system.

Topeka Public Schools--Operation Stop Violence

The Topeka Public Schools in collaboration with Family Service and Guidance and the Shawnee County Children, Youth and Families Community Planning Team have developed an at risk assessment and service delivery system. Through the grant they were to train staff to recognize potentially violent situations; identify and assess potentially violent students; and provide services to these students. Students are also referred to School Resource Team/Site Support Teams. Students who were referred for the risk assessment totaled 50. Only 44 of those were completed. Twenty-two were referred to Family Service and Guidance Center. Students and families received a variety of services with mixed results.

- Some of the problems identified in so few students being referred included: Student was suspended instead of referred; other priorities of school personnel; only two students from the high school were referred; transfer of schools; and referral to court services.
- Initially, a high percentage of the students and their families refused services or failed to keep appointments. After Family Service and Guidance Center staff agreed to go to the homes of the students in an effort to gain their support for their student participation in the program, the problem decreased immensely.
- Student who participated in the services had fewer suspensions and acts of violence.
- In 1994, the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Safety and Security conducted a survey of faculty and staff. Questions asked about how safe the school environment was. This same survey was administered in 2000 to assess change over the last six years. Responses to the question, "How safe do you feel while at school?" in 1994 were: "very safe" 26.5%, "safe" 67.9%, and "not safe" 5.7%. In 2000, respondents indicated "very safe" 43.4%, "safe" 54.3%, and "not safe" 2.3%.
- The question responses to, "Do you feel you have adequate training to deal with violence at school?" were less positive. In 1994, 74.1% of the responses and in 2000, 64% of the responses did not believe they had adequate training to deal with violence.
- Generally, the survey results were positive and had improved over the years.

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**School Violence Prevention Grants
Wraparound Kansas
2001- 2002**

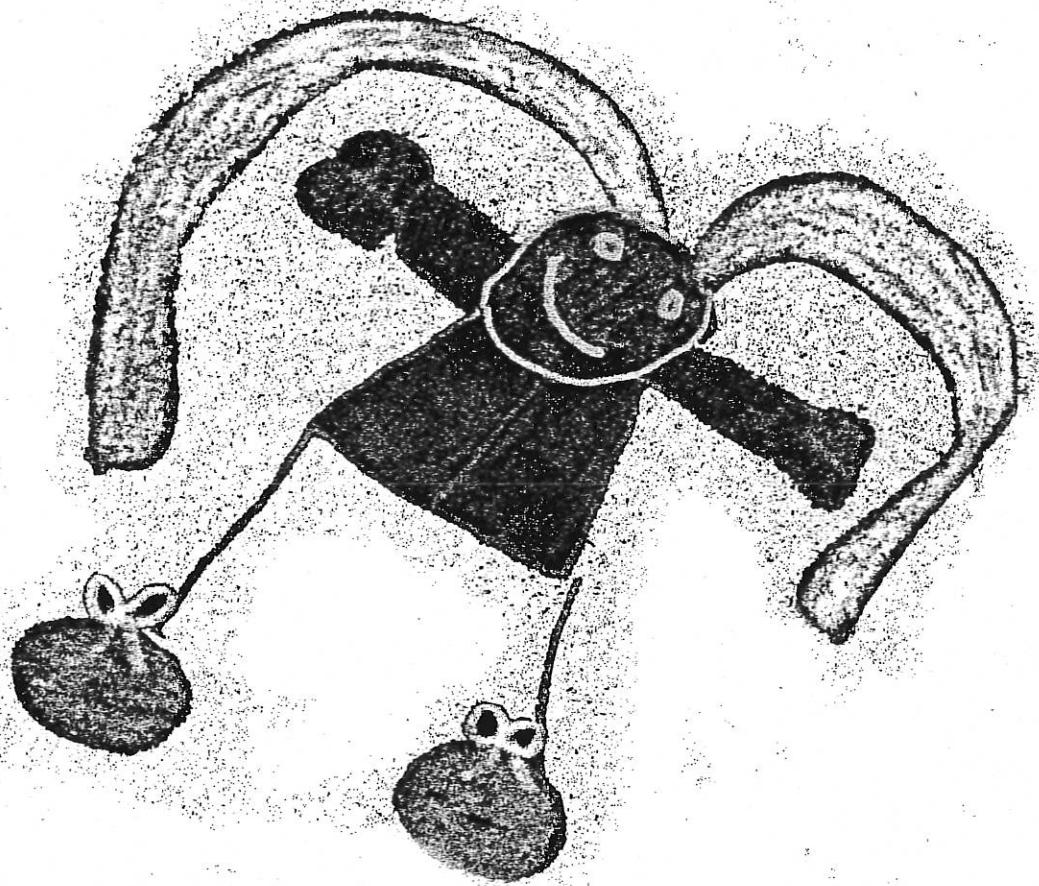
School Name Project Name	Total	Mental Health	USD	Match	
Fort Hays Educational Development Center HAP Youth Empowerment Program	\$ 42,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 34,500	\$ 10,500	USD
Ottawa Middle School Emotional Skill Building	40,000	40,000		17,400	MH
Kansas City Kansas Public Schools Student Improvement Team - Catalyst for Change	12,000		12,000	37,043	USD
East Central Kansas Cooperative in Education Working to Recognize Alternative Possibilities	60,000	60,000		4,193 37,722	USD MH
Garden City Public Schools Positive Impact	65,000	63,500	1,500	10,000 75,000	MH USD
Northeast Kansas Education Service Center Safe and Caring Communities Project	75,000	12,500	62,500	5,000 30,000	MH USD
Wichita Public Schools Wraparound Wichita Kids	103,000	69,000	34,000	42,460	MH
Topeka Public Schools Operation Stop Violence	103,000	86,050	16,950	25,750 46,024	USD MH
TOTALS	\$ 500,000	\$ 338,550	\$ 161,450	\$ 341,092 (158,606 (182,486	 MH) USD)

Vision of Excellence



Student Improvement Team Anthology





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Dawn Hubbard, PhD

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About the Authors:

Kelli E. Mather, MSM

Ms. Mather is the Director of Prevention Services for the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, USD500. Ms. Mather is responsible for program design, implementation and administrative oversight of over 30 various initiatives that focus on Safe and Drug Free Schools, Violence Prevention, Truancy Diversion, Parent Involvement, Extended Day, Alternative School Settings, Family Literacy and Community Collaborations. Ms. Mather is one of the original authors of the Student Improvement Team process and has been assisting the Kansas State Department of Education and Northeast Education Service Center in providing quality SIT trainings throughout the State for the last 9 years.

Dawn Hubbard, Ph.D.

Dr. Hubbard coordinates a Kansas Statewide Technical Assistance and Resource System project for the Northeast Kansas Education Service Center in LeCompton, Kansas. This project provides customized, quality training and technical assistance for schools in the areas of developing, strengthening and sustaining Student Improvement Teams; designing meaningful and functional individual evaluations; facilitating entitlement decisions for special education; and learning new assessment procedures which contribute to confident and meaningful decision making. Dr. Hubbard has been one of the lead SIT Trainers for the State of Kansas for the last 5 years, and continues to coordinate and ensure ongoing training opportunities for schools throughout the State.

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Michele Bridges

Ms. Bridges is the Vice President of Staff and Curriculum Development for Storytellers Inc., a multicultural visual and performing arts organization designed to provide new venues for local artists and then train those artists to educate and re-sensitize youth. As an artist, Michele produces books for the purpose of educating communities on the importance of art for a healthy learning environment.

Acknowledgements:

The “*Vision of Excellence through Student Improvement Teams*” anthology is the result of hard work and dedication of many professionals, including administrators, teachers, support staff, students and families throughout the State of Kansas.

This anthology was made possible by the coordinators, administration and staff at the 18 participating schools in this process. It is the hard work, dedication, and commitment of the entire faculty at each of the schools that makes this process successful for the students and families we are serving.

We would further like to acknowledge the Kansas State Department of Education for providing financial and technical support to the Student Improvement Team process since its inception. Ms. Carol Dermeyer, Coordinator in Student Support Services, along with Mr. Ken Gentry, Team Leader of Consolidated and Supplemental Programs, have provided the leadership and commitment necessary at the State level to make the SIT process as successful as it has been. In addition, the current leadership of Ms. Tracie Kalic, KSDE Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, has also contributed to the availability and success of this process throughout the State.

Locally, Dr. Ray Daniels, Superintendent of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, and Mr. James White, Assistant Superintendent of Student and Family Services, have both shown constant support for the continued work of the Student Improvement Teams throughout the district. All involved have recognized the value of this process and how it contributes to continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the current state approved SIT trainers for their commitment to assisting schools as they begin the implementation of the SIT process:

Becky Bird, Garden City Public Schools
Karen Boyce, Flint Hills Special Education Cooperative
Anita Burton, Northwest Kansas Education Service Center
Marty Christie, Smoky Hill/Central Kansas Education Service Center
Rosie Cooper, Resource Center for Independent Living - Topeka
Shelia Dautel, Northeast Kansas Education Service Center - LeCompton
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Lorna Larson - Beaulieu, Lawrence Public Schools
Dwight Powell, Smoky Hill/Central Kansas Education Service Center
Pam Speaks, Marion Public Schools
Patsy Wells, ANW Special Education Cooperative

SIT Belief Statement:

Educators, community members, parents,
and students can generate much higher
levels of student achievement
can virtually eliminate school failure
by
connecting with students and
coordinating the resources they need to
succeed.

Student Improvement Team (S.I.T.):

is a group of professional individuals working in or around area schools with varying backgrounds and expertise who are committed to building supports for students that are experiencing academic or behavioral problems.

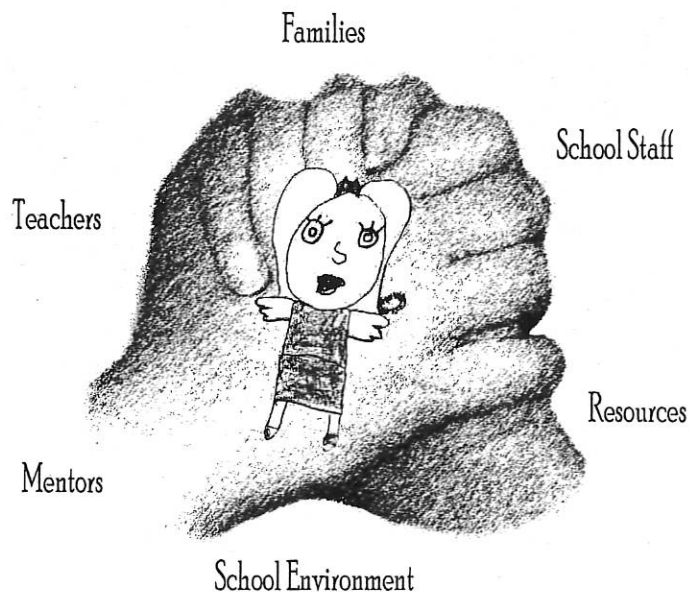
SIT

- ...request for assistance
- ...request for information
- ...intervention plan
- ...connect resources
- ...monitor progress
- ...evaluate effectiveness

students who need help are identified by teachers, parents and others who have concern. These students are then referred to the Student Improvement Team.

The team evaluates the needs of the student, creates an action plan, follows through in getting the student the resources he/she needs, then assures that the students needs are met.

The Student Improvement Team is the web of support necessary within schools to make sure that every student has the opportunity to learn and grow.



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

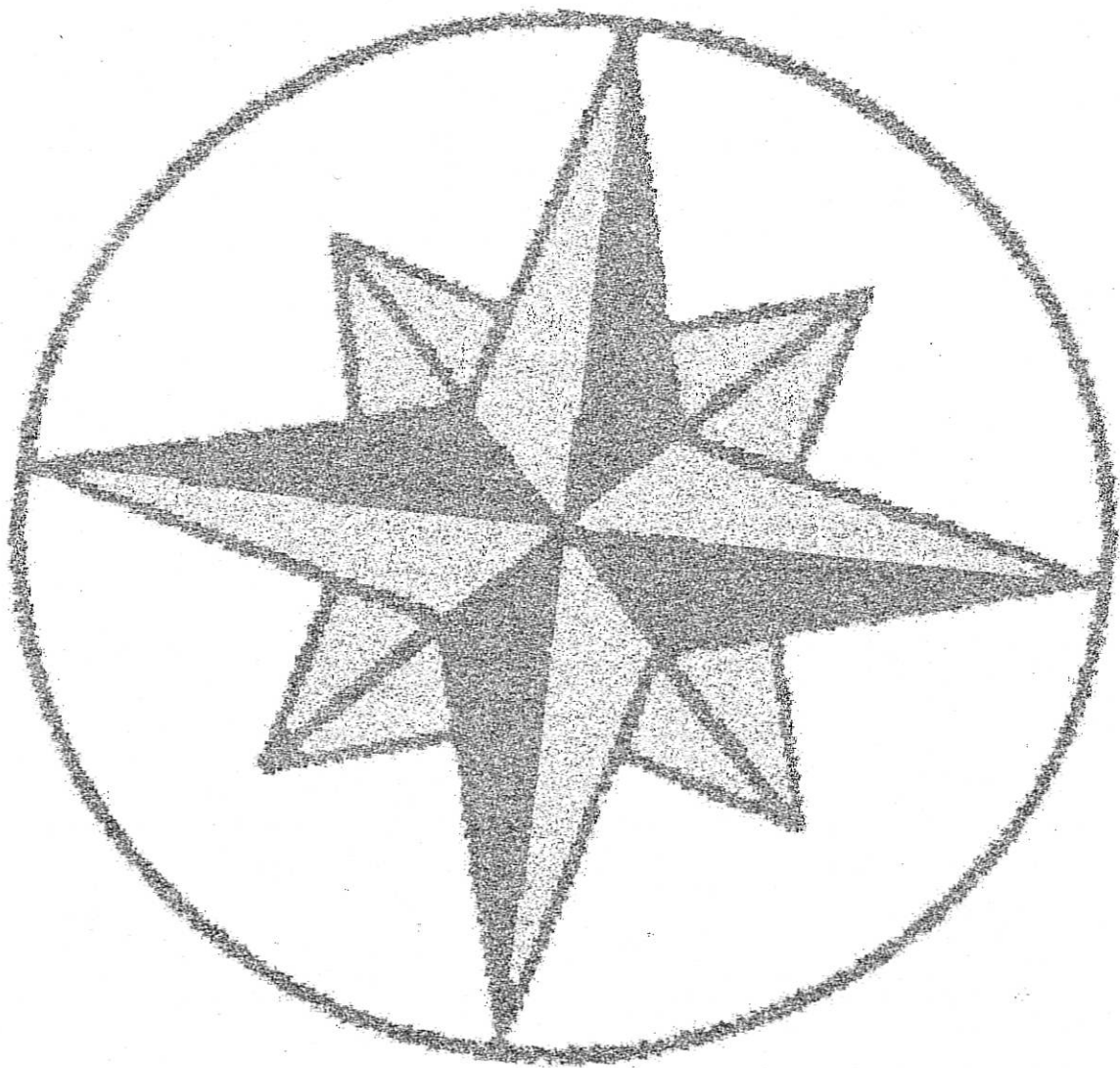


Forward:

The "Vision of Excellence, Through Student Improvement Teams," has been made possible through funding from the Kansas State Department of Education, Safe and Caring Communities Grant. This anthology has been the result of two years of data gathering, documentation, and reflection by Student Improvement Team coordinators in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools about the implementation of the Student Improvement Team process. The anthology is designed to assist new and existing teams in exploring, understanding and recognizing the challenges and successes experienced by teams of all grade levels while implementing the Student Improvement Team process. The anthology also captures the thoughts and insights of the students, themselves, that have gone through the SIT process.

The Anthology will provide all professionals in the field of education an opportunity to pause for reflection and begin to understand the significant impact that they have on every single student that they come into contact with over the course of any given school year. It has also provided insight into ways in which to strengthen the overall process of Student Improvement Teams. Coordinators spent the last two years journaling their personal and professional experiences, along with team members contributing to the schools' journal. The journal exercises allowed for self-exploration, seeking of answers, venting of frustrations, and professional growth through understanding and awareness of many barriers to learning and teaching. The thoughts and insights of all the coordinators and team members who took the time to journal are reflected throughout the anthology.

Historically in education, programs and processes come and go. This is not the case with the Student Improvement Team process. This process was designed over 9 years ago and has steadily gotten stronger through continuous improvement in the training modules and implementation techniques of various schools throughout the State. The SIT process is a true problem solving process that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of any school, no matter the student or faculty population. This process will not be replaced, and this anthology contributes to the philosophy of "honoring the change process through examining the system." Through continuous exploration and understanding, the SIT process continues to gain momentum across the State, and is beginning to show solid outcome-based data for our students.



Contents

commitment

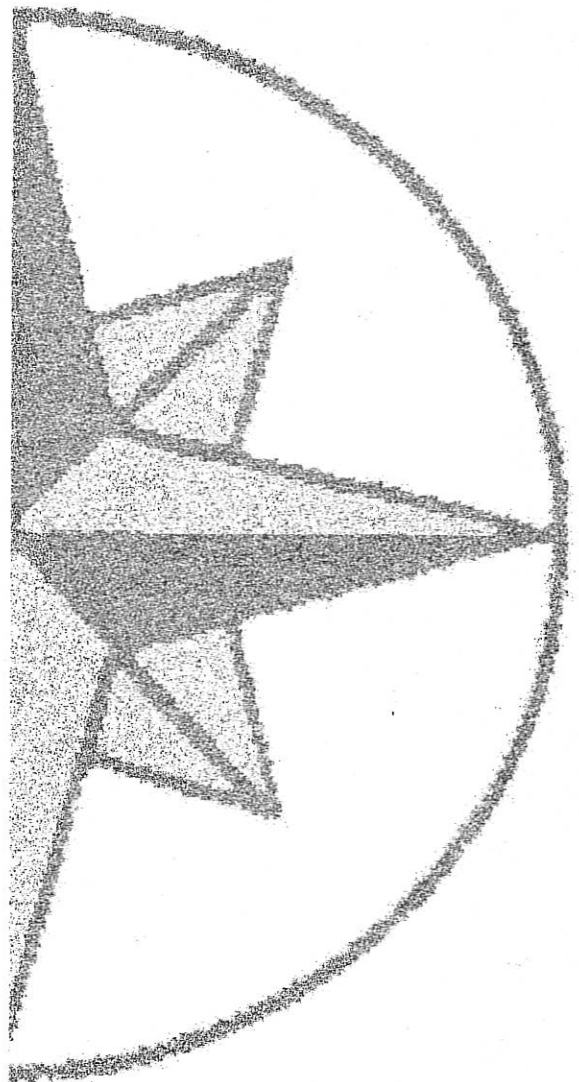
team development

individual student

partnerships

organizational/systemic

additional resources



commitment

strengths

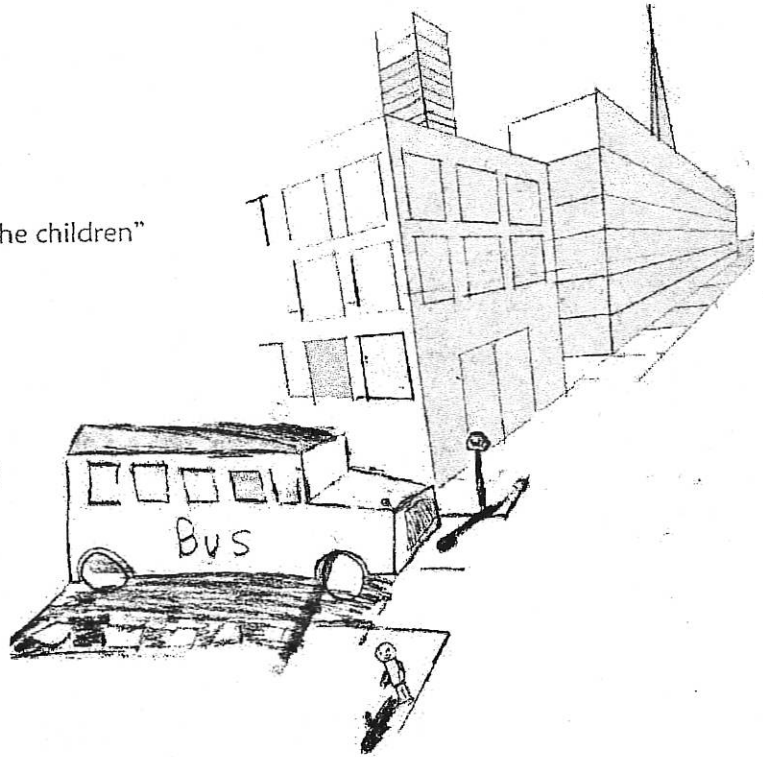
If we have a shared mission/goal...we stay on task, move in one direction, and are a more powerful force

Our motivating force for SIT is remembering that "We Care"

Think win-win situation

Motto: "It's good for the children"

"Every time SIT was on the agenda, I would come moaning and groaning. However, there is no doubt that the students would lose out"

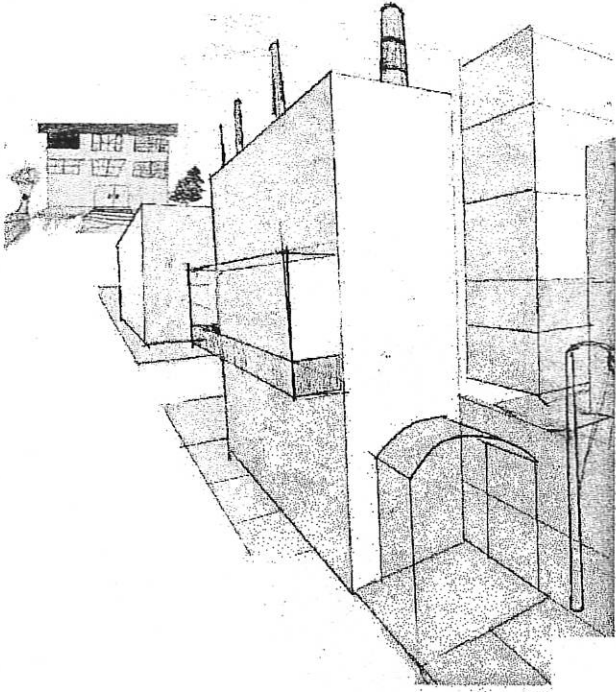


"Use proverbs to help keep focus on what SIT is about"

My experiences with SIT have been very rewarding. My major in college was Special Ed. and I hope to eventually go back to school for a Masters. I've liked having the opportunity to work with our kids who need extra help and could benefit from S.I.T.'s services.
- Dorothy Keller

"Held a Saturday end of the year meeting to restructure and review for following year...all team members attended, showing the dedication of the staff"

“Set up meeting with SIT team and administrators to discuss concerns and no one showed up”



I have been the nurse at Washington High School for 27 years. Four years ago I was recruited by my principal to be our building SIT coordinator. My greatest challenge, due to teacher turnover, has been retaining trained SIT team members. However, I have some very dedicated team members and they are the “backbone” of our team. Together, we have become more aware of the various programs designed for the benefit of our children. One of the keys to our success is the continuous communication with the staff. SIT has made a positive difference in improving the chance for academic success of Washington High School students.

- Sharon Sparkman

“Administration voiced skepticism, discouraged SIT team
...not sure of the continuing effort”

challenges

“Need to motivate and encourage staff to look at true focus - helping students. This is a constant struggle”

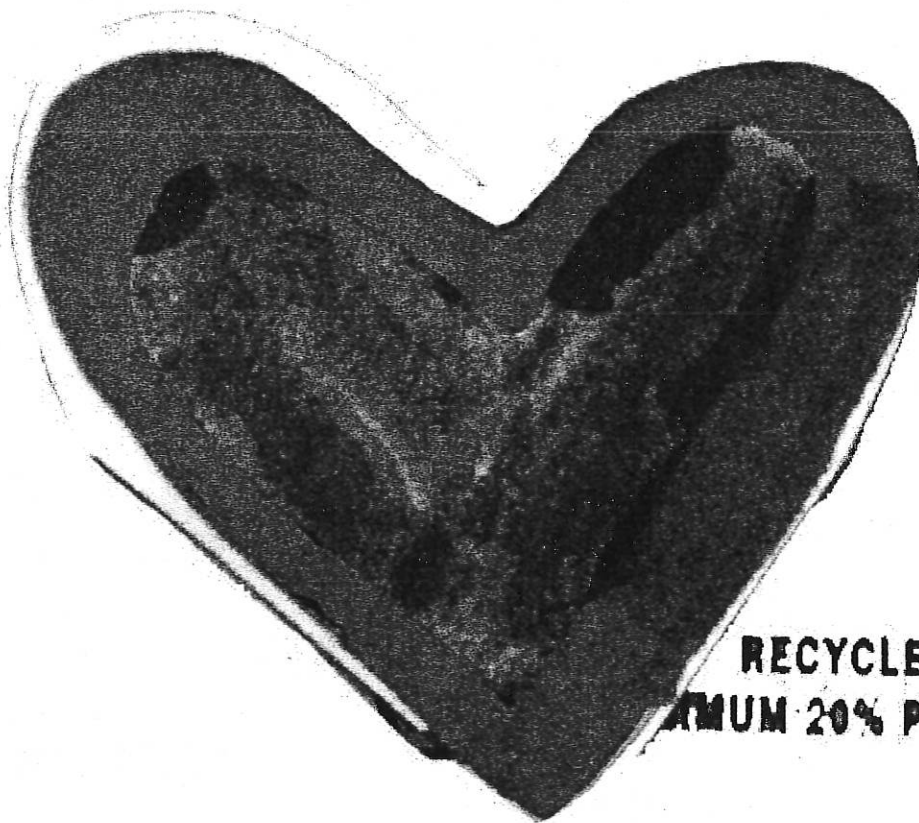
Lack of administrative support for process

Lack of administrative support on team

To many excuses/conflicts not to come to SIT meeting

If focus on process is not present, the staff needs to be retrained

My name is Tenisha. What I learned is that anger does not control you - you control your own behavior, how to think before I speak, and how to calm myself down when I am in a bad mood. I should count to ten. The program really helped me a lot and I think that I will use my skills next year. I really enjoyed the program, thank you very much.



RECYCLED
PAPER 20% POST

My name is Chris. I am in the 3rd grade. Mrs. Yadrich helped me on my self control. Mrs. Powell helps me with my anger. She really helps me with my work. I really enjoy going with her. She is really fun. We made dioramas. I go there everyday at 3:30. I learned that nobody should use out of control anger.

solutions

Team Issue:
Lack of administrative support.

Analysis:
We think that there is a lack of administrative support because the administrator(s) do not attend the SIT meetings and do not have a good understanding of the process.

Solution(s): The team will improve the communication to the administrator about the dates and times for the SIT meetings, making sure that they know when the meetings are occurring.

Team Issue:
Lack of administrative support on team.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
To many excuses/conflicts not to come to SIT meetings.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
The SIT team lacks focus on the process.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Support

Trust

Passion

Dedication

Follow through

team development

strengths

Meet with students so they don't feel like we are doing something to them, but that they are involved in the process

Consistency in team membership allows for openness, honesty, and equity among all team members

Working with teachers allows for effective brainstorming strategies and interventions

It is beneficial to have counselor and assistant principal on the team

All team members should brainstorm and work with each other

Train all new members together to work and process as a team

Establish ground rules for team

Be on time and prepared

Remain student centered

"Need to use an agenda to keep our team focused"

"I will try to be my team's guide through the journey"

"After five years of struggling, coercing, and begging staff to use the process, the benefits have paid off. It may not have been quantity, but it is quality work through the process"

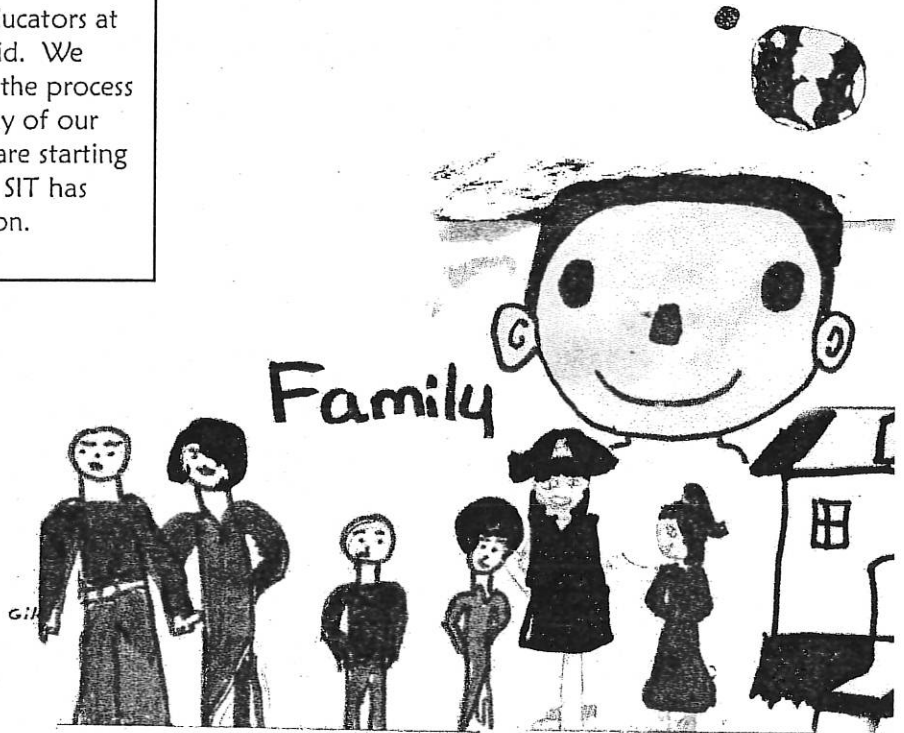
The Frances Willard SIT team is its own coordinator. Everyone has a specific job to do and together we make up the whole. I serve as the meeting coordinator for our SIT team. My job is to make sure our weekly meetings are organized and run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. We try very hard to make sure everyone is involved including parents, teachers, and all team members. To feel comfortable and respected is vitally important to working through the situation that is before us. We are committed to knocking down the "special" versus "regular" education and "us" versus "them" mentality. We are truly becoming WE.

- Rachel Commer

I currently serve as Assistant Principal at M.E. Pearson Elementary School in Kansas City, Kansas. Discipline problems were referred to my office and the expectation was that I would dole out the suitable punishment to fit the crime. Mere punishment or consequences for their actions did not change their behavior. I knew that there had to be a better process. I began to dialogue with a group of educators at my school who felt the same way I did. We attended SIT training and introduced the process to the faculty shortly thereafter. Many of our teachers have used the SIT team and are starting to see changes in student behaviors. SIT has made a clear difference at M.E. Pearson.

- Sue Elliott

"Meeting one day a month was not enough time to complete the process and find the needed support"



"We need to meet as a team, but assign individual students to individual adults to follow up"

challenges

"Need for a counselor, SPED, and elective teacher on the team"

Attendance at meetings are poor

Team members quitting for no reason or explanation

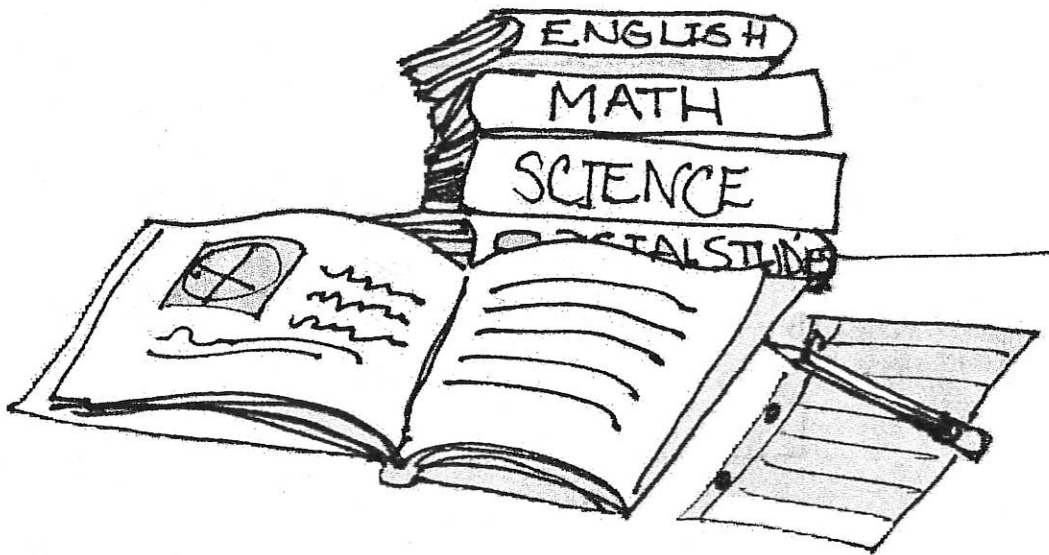
Need to address and utilize the SIT team meeting norms

Need for getting more general education teachers on the team

We must do SIT process monthly or students will fall through the cracks

Need improved communications between counselors/administration and the SIT team

My name is Matthew. One thing I like about school is the teachers. They never give up. They teach us and they never stop. They will give you as much help as you need and they love to teach.



My name is Amber. I had a problem with my attitude. Mrs. Munsey and the rest of the team helps students with their problems. My teacher helped me like Mrs. Munsey and the other teachers. I came a long way. I can talk to Mrs. Munsey and Mrs. Hall about anything. Now I have help with my school work.

solutions

Team Issue:

Lack of organization/agenda for team meetings.

Analysis:

We think that there is a lack of organization and/or use of an agenda because the person responsible for agenda has too much on his/her plate.

Solution(s):

Team will create the agenda together at the close of each meeting.

Team Issue:

There is poor attendance at meetings.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Team members are quitting for no reason or explanation.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Team members do not represent entire faculty.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Norms are not used in meetings.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Team members do not know students, making it difficult to assimilate information.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

individual student

strengths

Design a handout for all staff that outlines referral process and request for assistance

Passion found in reviewing students work, determining problem areas, and giving suggestions

Have packets developed for each team by grade level in the school

Making classroom changes was challenging yet proved successful

Assign team members to gather data for each referred student

Don't get tied up in the paperwork and forget the student

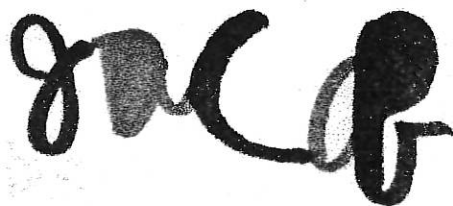
Student interviews need to be part of the gathering of data

"Prepared forms give direction to the team"

"Having a [house file] located within the school proved efficient in filling out forms. The files must be readily accessible"

I am the school counselor at New Chelsea Elementary in Kansas City, Kansas. My school is made up of 630 students with over 90% receiving free or reduced lunch. As an advocate for children, the SIT process enables me to help meet my students academic and emotional needs.

- Toni Munsey



“Not happy with the current evaluation tool we use for teacher input. It seems to have a negative bent towards the questionnaire”

“Lack of progress made by the students can become frustrating and try your motivation”



“Teachers struggle with how to implement accommodations”

“Felt like we were running out of time to get students through the process”



challenges

Need more strategies

Process is new to everyone

Staff would like more closure

Developing plans seem overwhelming

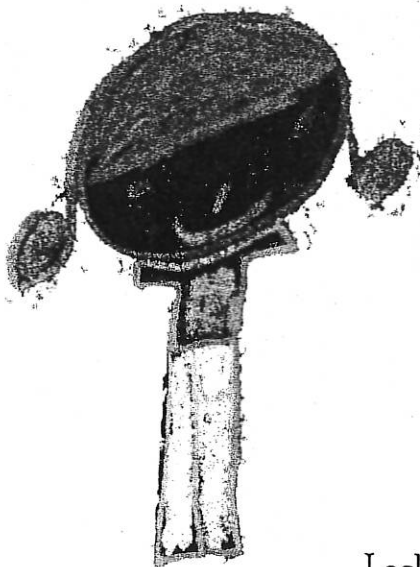
Not enough time to complete intervention plan

Some staff unwilling to cooperate and fill out needed forms

We need to make sure that the data we collect is truly useful

Lack of follow up on referrals creates frustration among team members

It is difficult to assimilate information when none of the team members know the student



My name is Samantha. For the whole time I worked with Mrs. Tomburgar, I learned how to control my anger, and when I was learning I had fun. We talked about how to control it and how to work it out. I learned other things to, like how to greet when just meeting someone. I learned how to get along with others. After our group sessions I started to do more things at home, at school, and with my friends like help them with their work. I had fun and it helped me.



solutions

Team Issue:
SIT process is overwhelming to everyone.

Analysis:
We think that the SIT process is overwhelming to everyone because it is a new and foreign system for staff.

Solution(s):
Be patient, learn together, make changes as necessary.

Team Issue:
There is not enough time to complete the intervention plan.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
Lack of strategies to use in the intervention plans.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
Some staff unwilling to cooperate and fill out the needed forms.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
Struggle with how to implement accommodations/strategies once identified.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
Lack of progress by the student is frustrating and affects motivation of the team members.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

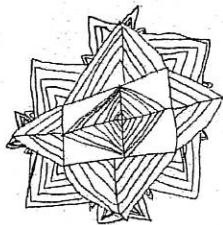
strengths

We can pool all resources school wide to gain as much information on students as possible to ensure a complete portfolio

Experience is the wisest of teachers, yet the obvious provides great insight

Know all available resources that could be helpful in assisting student

SIT can be useful in mentoring a student on behavioral issues



“It is excellent to have outside resources at our meetings”

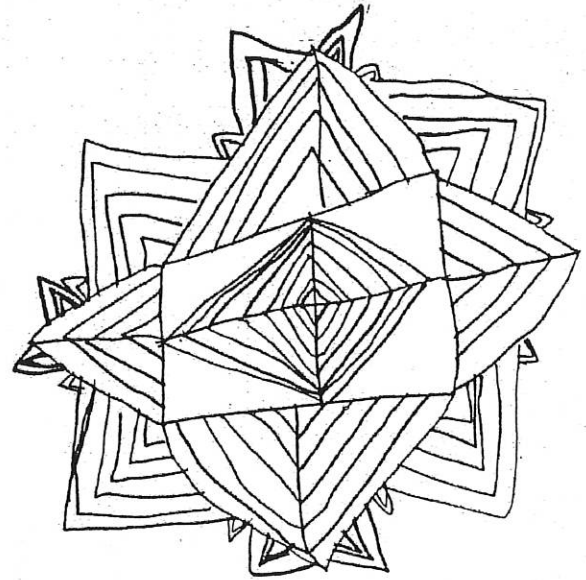
Listing resources- “need to know all resources in depth to be a successful team”

“Teacher’s sharing the responsibility ...i.e. 1st graders going into the K classroom for review”

I teach 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Language Arts and Reading at Northwest Middle Science and Technology Magnet. I have been our SIT coordinator for several years. The SIT process is a valuable tool when put into use. The students respond when brought into the decision making process. They look forward to our meeting times and often walk by us throughout the week. The key is to get all staff involved in supporting SIT.
- Mary Mikijanis

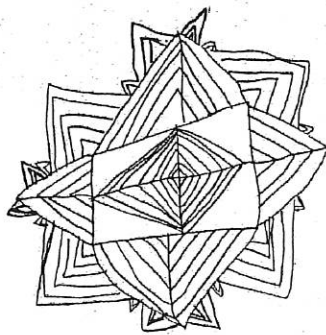
“Inviting school psychologist and counselors to SIT meetings proved helpful. They were able to provide students with plans and help to follow through with students”

"Frustrated with the lack of willingness on the part of the teachers to help brainstorm strategies and implement process"



I am the SIT coordinator for John Fiske Elementary School. This is our second year of commitment to the SIT program. It has been easy for me to become involved in this endeavor since I am very dedicated to DARE and to the use of 2nd Step. I feel that SIT is an extension of both of these programs. Even though our team is just the beginning, we all see the need and value of our school's participation. We feel that we are off to a great start and are very pleased with the success that we have had with our students.
- Terry Yadrich

"Elementary, middle, and high schools must communicate in order to follow up with students"



challenges

Lack of cooperation from other teachers

Need for more support groups for students

Home life makes it difficult for many students

Need to apply the resources of the school and community to improve school attendance

To follow through without that foundation, the students will have a more difficult time in school

Refine the process to make more direct contact with other people working towards a common goal

My name is Ashley. Some time ago, me and my parents had a SIT meeting. We talked about getting my grades up and I think it really helped. Everyday that I had a good day, I got to do something good. Since the SIT meeting I have been happy because me and my step mom get along better. I get to do more fun things, I have more friends, and I am being counseled at school. I feel very happy.



My name is P.H. I like friends that are nice to me. I did not like school at first. I was scared. I am happy now and I like it. I feel better about reading books. I get 3 points when I behave.

(Because of our SIT team, P.H.'s parent took P.H. for a medical evaluation which resulted in a diagnosis of epilepsy. P.H. is now on anti-seizure medication. P.H.'s parent is also taking parenting classes because of the SIT involvement.)

solutions

Adequate support

Team Issue:
Lack of willingness on part of teachers to help brainstorm strategies and implement the strategies.

Analysis:
We think that there is unwillingness by teachers to brainstorm and implement strategies because they are already overwhelmed and feel helpless with the students.

Solution(s):
Provide a list of strategies for the teachers to select from and ensure that they have adequate support to implement the strategy prior to leaving the meeting.

Team Issue:
There is a lack of cooperation by teachers to participate in the process.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Inservices

Team Issue:
Concern about students home life making it difficult for students to succeed.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:
There are several people/organizations working with students and no one is working toward a common goal.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Highlight successes

Share SIT plans

Team Issue:

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Team Issue:

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Family participation

Conferences

organizational / systemic

strengths

Students perform better when they have made a personal connection with an adult

We must develop academically competent life-long learners

The process improves student / staff relationship

Remember SIT can support multiple programs

Students will rise to the level of expectation

“Coordinator’s meeting -
I’m recharged for the moment”

“Meeting with feeder elementary schools through the process was very successful. We had the opportunity to discuss the students’ transition into middle school”

The SIT services at Rosedale Middle School consist of training staff on the SIT process, scheduling, and coordinating with students, parents, teachers, school psychologist, nurse, counselor, administrators, community representatives and others. At each meeting the agenda includes problem-solving, brainstorming about interventions/strategies to assist students in maximizing their education process. There is emphasis on continuity of care, high clear expectation of behavior, active engagement with the student and parent, reflection about decision making, and connectedness to alter future academic and behavioral performances.

- Carolyn Calloway

“Using Wednesday in-service time to train all staff members on SIT goals and processes proved helpful”

“The SIT is being incorporated into the QPA school plan under the citizenship goal”

"Sometimes it felt like we were finding ways to get kids out of our classrooms, rather than working to change their behavior"

"Frustrating to see that most teachers didn't use SIT as it was designed"

"We need to coordinate services with disciplinary actions for the students' benefit"



"Feel like we put out fires among the staff... resistance"

"In referring students for testing, most don't qualify for SPED or gifted services - students can fall through the cracks when they don't qualify"

challenges

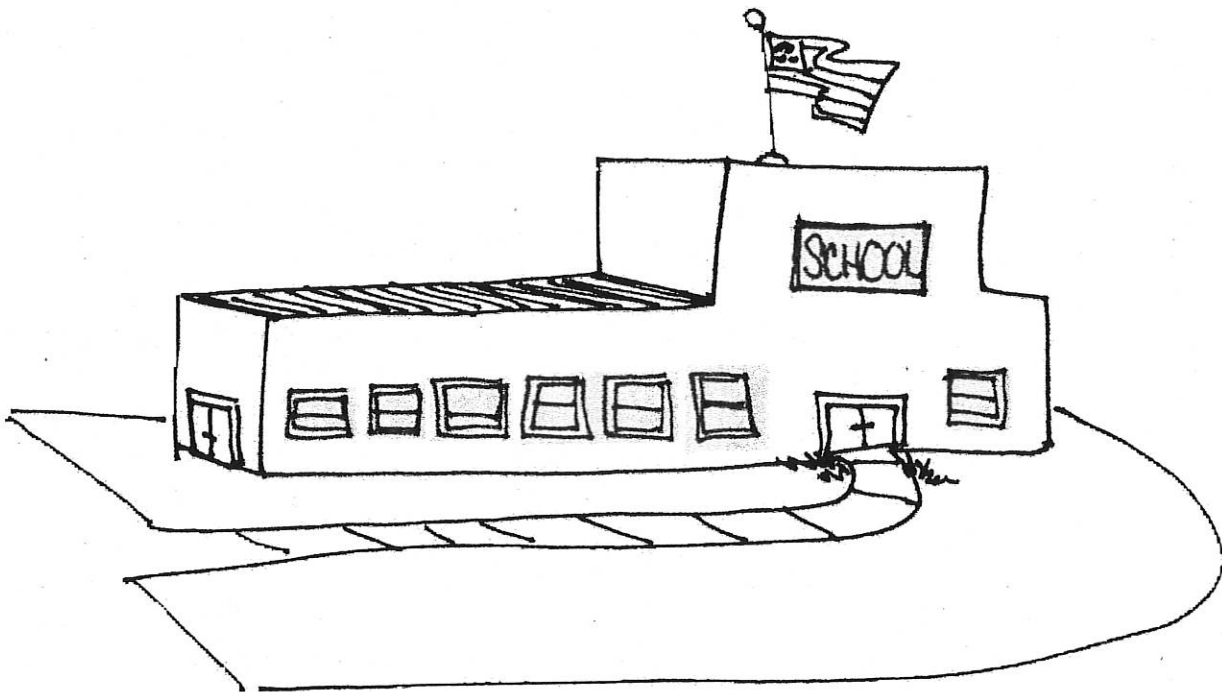
Conflict of time

Constantly question whether the process is working

Teachers are concerned about referring behavior problems for fear that they will be seen as not being able to control students

An expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students. To drive home a point, he used an illustration those students will never forget. He pulled out a one-gallon mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen large rocks and carefully placed them, one by one, inside of the jar. When no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is the jar full?" Everyone in the class answered, "Yes!" The Expert reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Filling the jar with gravel until no more gravel could fit inside, he then asked, "Now is the jar full?" One clever student answered, "Probably not!" "Good," the Expert replied reaching under the table for a bucket filled with sand. He then dumped sand into the jar until all spaces between the rocks and gravel were filled. Once more he asked the question, "Is the jar full?" "No!" the class shouted. The Expert proceeded to fill the jar to the brim with a pitcher of water. "What is the point of this illustration?" he asked his students. One eager student replied, "No matter how full your schedule is, you can always fit in more things to do?" "No," the Expert said shaking his head, "The point is that if you don't put the big rocks in first you'll never fit in everything else that's important to you. What are the big rocks in your life? Your spouse, your loved ones, your friendships, worthy causes, mentoring and teaching others? Remember to put these big rocks in first, or you'll never have time to fit them in at all."

If you sweat the little stuff, like the gravel and sand, you'll fill your life with the little things that worry you, and you'll never have the real quality time for the things that matter to you. When reflecting on this short story, ask yourself, "What are the really 'big rocks' in my life?" Put those in the jar first.



solutions

Team Issue:

It is difficult to find time to meet, there is a conflict of time.

Analysis:

We think that it is difficult to meet and there is conflict of time because there is not common planning time for all team members.

Solution(s):

Meet before or after school hours, block scheduling times, inservice days. Get creative in thinking about when and how team members can get together.

Creative scheduling

Team Issue:

Most teachers do not use SIT as it was designed to be used.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Attend training

Team Issue:

Spend a lot of time "putting out fires" among staff.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Inservice staff

Team Issue:

Students fall through the cracks when they are not eligible for SPED services.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Review SIT plans

Team Issue:

The resources and/or strategies are not coordinated with the discipline process.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Discipline protocol

Team Issue:

Teachers are concerned about referring students for behavior problems as they may be perceived as not having control of their classroom.

Analysis:

Solution(s):

Pro-social skill development

additional resources

partnerships

Return to Learn

Girls Scouts

Mental Health Organizations

Mediators

After School Programs

Tutoring Programs

Foster Grandparent Programs

Drug and Alcohol Prevention Programs

Community Volunteers

YouthFriends, KC, KS
[Mentor and Literacy Programs]

Americorps VISTA Volunteer Program

Storytellers Inc.
[Youth Art Programs]

organizational/systemic

District Code of Conduct

Positive Behavioral Support

Block Scheduling

School-Based Initiatives/Programs

Educational Reform Efforts

First Things First

Continuity of Care

Houses

Looping

team

Mental Health Professionals	Principals
Community Outreach Workers	Counselors
Juvenile Court Officials	Teachers
Community Policing	School Nurse
Campus Officers	Social Workers

Thoughts:



Senate Education Committee
Senator Dwayne Umbarger, chairman

Submitted by: Winston Brooks, superintendent

March 7, 2002

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our concerns with the committee about a specific policy within the school finance formula. This morning you will hear from Pat Apple, BOE president Louisburg; John Heim, Emporia's superintendent; and myself, representing the Wichita Public Schools. Together we will attempt to describe how the current "new facilities weighting" adversely impacts our school districts. To begin with let me review for you current policy.

Under current law to receive the new facilities weighting, school districts must:

- have full 25% LOB
- be opening new schools or new classroom space

For two years these districts receive the new facilities weighting of .25 *only* for the students attending classes in the new buildings.

The legislative history for this weighting correctly identified the additional cost school districts incur when opening new buildings, expenses beyond construction, as known as "start-up costs".

While the linkage to full LOB and new facilities may have been reasonable several years ago, we believe that link between LOB use and the new facilities is now a false premise for several reasons:

- Alterations to the LOB formula now permit districts to move to the 'average spending' for their enrollment category while avoiding protest.
- Now some school districts have reached full 25% LOBs through the averaging process. And would qualify for the weighting if they are building new schools.
- Inequities within the averaging formula:
 - the inclusion of all weightings (at-risk, bi-lingual, vocational and transportation) means districts with high weightings are mathematically slowed from reaching 25%. Wichita, with urban demographics and a rapidly growing bi-lingual population, falls behind.
 - the enrollment category includes districts from 1800 to Wichita's 49,500 students. If our enrollment category was limited to the largest districts, the average spending calculation for Wichita's would be higher.

While the original intent of this weighting held true for many years, the changes in LOB law have eroded the original arguments and has resulted in the unintended consequence of encouraging boards of education to increase local property taxes to secure this needed funding.

It is time to decouple the new facilities weighting from LOB use.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I would stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Senate Education
3-7-02
Attachment 2

March 7, 2002

State of Kansas
Senate Education Committee
Hearing on new facility's weighting

Dear Senators,

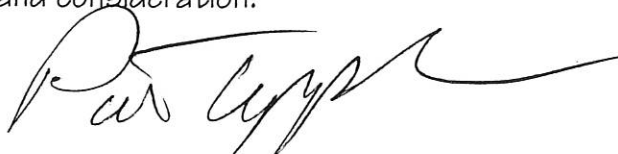
My name is Pat Apple. I am currently serving as President of the Board of Education, USD #416, Louisburg, Kansas. This is my eleventh year on the board. I am an electrician by trade and co-owner of Apple Electric, Inc. We have twenty employees and have been in business since 1983. Debbie, my wife, our two daughters and myself are products of USD #416. Our daughters now attend Baker University.

This fall our district will open a new 180,000 square foot high school. Our bond issue was \$19,000,000.00. Repayment of these bonds occurs with 90% local and 10% state moneys. As in most districts that are growing, it is difficult for some people on fixed incomes to stay in a growing community. We have seen several families move south to Linn County to avoid higher property taxes and utility bills.

I am here today in support of HB2966. Briefly I would like to describe what it would mean to our district. Since the early 1990's we have been protective of our local option budget (LOB). Each year we find our district depending more on the LOB. Presently we are at 17%. To take advantage of new facility's weighting we would have to increase our LOB to 25%. This would mean an increase of about 10 Mills locally. The way the current law is written, it is an incentive to raise taxes. Most large districts can and do take advantage of new facility's weighting without the burden that would be placed on our property owners. This is due to their higher assessed valuation per student. We would much prefer not to max our LOB and create greater hardship on our local property owners. I would like to thank you for having new facility's weighting and understanding the need for such funding when opening new schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Pat Apple
President, USD #416
Board of Education



Senate Education
3-7-02
Attachment 3

Testimony to the Senate Education Committee
John Heim
Superintendent, Emporia Public Schools
March 7, 2002

The Emporia community supports its school system. In November 2000, the community passed a \$35 million bond issue with 70% favoring the proposal. We are building two new elementary schools, adding on to our high school, and improving nearly all of our buildings.

At the same time, we were exploring options for furnishing and equipping our new schools. New facilities weighting is an option that was very attractive to us. The problem we faced was whether we could increase our Local Option Budget to the required 25% level. We began to make plans for that eventuality.

Last year, a new law went into effect that passed special education aid through the general fund. Emporia is the sponsoring district for the Flint Hills Special Education Cooperative. Therefore, our general fund budget was artificially inflated not just by our own special education aid, but also by the special education aid for North Lyon County, South Lyon County, Madison, Hamilton, Council Grove, and Chase County school districts. What had been a realistic financial goal became an artificially inflated moving target.

The intent of the new facilities weighting was to provide additional state support for districts that are making a significant local effort to their schools. Emporia is making a significant local effort. Our citizens are paying greater portions of their incomes to schools than taxpayers in many of our wealthier peer districts. It only seems fair that our district should be able to access the new facilities weighting on that basis alone.

But we were also preparing to play by the old rules, even though we did not consider them to be fair and equitable. Then the rules changed in the middle of the game. The target changed because we now must reach 25% of our general fund budget, plus our special education budget, and our neighbor's special education budgets.

Many sponsoring districts of special education cooperatives benefited from the additional budget authority they gained under the new law. Please do not take anything away from them after the fact. But an adjustment is needed for the few districts that were hurt by the inability to access new facilities weighting because of the change in the law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Senate Education
3-7-02
Attachment 4