

Contents

Practitioner's Voice

- School Dropouts: A Global Issue
Steven W. Edwards 1

Research Articles

- AVIDizing a High-Poverty Middle School: The Case of Magnolia Grove
Hans W. Klar, Curtis Brewer, and Marissa L. Whitehouse 9

- A Discursive Approach to Restorative Practice: Improving the Learning
Environment Through Professional Learning
Maria Kecskemeti 24

- Incarceration Within American and Nordic Prisons: Comparison of
National and International Policies
*Katie Ward, Amy J. Longaker, Jessica Williams, Amber Naylor,
Chad A. Rose, and Cynthia G. Simpson* 36

Youth Voice

- Kindergarten Drawings of School
Rachel L. Lindle 48

- Call for Manuscripts 55



Vol. 1 No. 1
ISSN 000-0000

www.dropoutprevention.org/engage



National Dropout Prevention Center
209 Martin Street
Clemson, SC 29631-1555
864-656-2599



ENGAGE

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
RESEARCH AND PRACTICE ON
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Volume 1, Number 1

The National Dropout Prevention Center sponsors *ENGAGE: An International Journal on Research and Practice in School Engagement*. This journal is widely accessible and free for a global audience online. *ENGAGE* raises awareness of issues related to school engagement as it explores and shares strategies and solutions that work globally. School engagement means that all constituencies need to be engaged in the school experience: students, teachers, administrators, parents, and members of the community including, but not limited to, businesses and social service organizations. *ENGAGE* is internationally refereed. The journal is published twice annually by the National Dropout Prevention Center and Clemson University Digital Press.

Editor

Dr. Jane Clark Lindle, Clemson University

Editorial Assistants

Ms. Kenya Reese, Clemson University
Dr. Amanda Werts, Appalachian State University

Production Editor

Mr. David Windham, Clemson University

Editorial Advisory Board

Dr. Sonia Bahri, United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization, France
Mr. Steve Edwards, Edwards Educational Services, Inc., USA
Dr. Maurice Elias, Rutgers University, USA
Dr. Phillip Garner, University of Northhampton, UK
Dr. David Gillborn, University of London, UK
Dr. Carol Hayden, University of Portsmouth, UK
Dr. Leslie F. Hergert, Education Development Center, Inc., USA
Dr. Relebohile Molesane, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Dr. Kathleen O’Neill, Southern Regional Education Board, USA
Dr. Carl Parsons, University of Greenwich, UK
Dr. Beth P. Reynolds, National Dropout Prevention Center, USA
Mr. Franklin Schargel, Schargel Consulting Group, USA
Mr. Stu Silberman, Prichard Committee, USA
Dr. Robert Langley Smith, University College of Oslo and Akershus, Norway
Dr. Crain Soudien, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Contents

Practitioner’s Voice

School Dropouts: A Global Issue
Steven W. Edwards 1

Research Articles

AVIDizing a High-Poverty Middle School: The Case of Magnolia Grove
Hans W. Klar, Curtis Brewer, and Marissa L. Whitehouse 9

A Discursive Approach to Restorative Practice: Improving the Learning Environment Through Professional Learning
Maria Kecskemeti 24

Incarceration Within American and Nordic Prisons: Comparison of National and International Policies
Katie Ward, Amy J. Longaker, Jessica Williams, Amber Naylor, Chad A. Rose, and Cynthia G. Simpson 36

Youth Voice

Kindergarten Drawings of School
Rachel L. Lindle 48

Call for Manuscripts55



School Dropouts: A Global Issue

Steven W. Edwards



Students in class at Ngunyuma Primary School.

The challenge of school completion is not confined to the United States; millions of children and youth around the world are denied or have limited access to education. For those who are fortunate to have the opportunity for some level of public schooling, it is often limited to a primary education. For those who attend school, the promise for a future based on their education is dim, causing countless numbers to drop out of school and look to survive on the streets.

By examining the dropout issue globally, it becomes clear that many of the challenges around completing school are the same—what varies is the scope and depth of the problem. In January 2008, the United Nations established the Millennium Development Indicators. The second goal of this auspicious list references education, and it reads as follows:

“Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.”

United Nations Guidelines (2008)

Although a worthy goal, it pales in comparison to the educational needs of children and youth around the world; even with a primary education, the opportunities to a sustainable future are minimal at best. Yet there is hope. There are strategies and techniques that are proven to reduce school dissatisfaction and they transcend all regions, national borders, and cultures. The National Dropout Prevention Center has identified 15 effective strategies for reducing school dropouts. These strategies, listed below are the cornerstone of any effective dropout prevention initiative and can and are being applied globally.

School and Community Perspective

1. **Systemic Renewal**—A continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learners.
2. **School-Community Collaboration**—When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, a strong infrastructure sustains a caring supportive environment where youth can thrive and achieve.
3. **Safe Learning Environments**—A comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, that must deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe learning environment provides daily experiences at all grade levels that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills in all students.

Early Interventions

4. **Family Engagement**—Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school.
5. **Early Childhood Education**—Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out of school is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience through the primary grades.
6. **Early Literacy Development**—Early interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills in order to establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all other subjects.

Basic Core Strategies

7. **Mentoring/Tutoring**—Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Tutoring, also a one-to-one activity, focuses on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies.
8. **Service-Learning**—Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility, and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

9. **Alternative Schooling**—Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual social needs and academic requirements for a high school diploma.

10. **After-School Opportunities**—Many schools provide after-school and summer enhancement programs that eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. Such experiences are especially important for students at risk of school failure because these programs fill the afternoon "gap time" with constructive and engaging activities.

Making the Most of Instruction

11. **Professional Development**—Teachers who work with youth at high risk of academic failure need to feel supported and have an avenue by which they can continue to develop skills, techniques, and learn about innovative strategies.

12. **Active Learning**—Active learning embraces teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn.

13. **Educational Technology**—Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction to engage students in authentic learning, addressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students' learning styles.

14. **Individualized Instruction**—Each student has unique interests and past learning experiences. An individualized instructional program for each student allows for flexibility in teaching methods and motivational strategies to consider these individual differences.

15. **Career and Technology Education (CTE)**—A quality CTE program and a related guidance program are essential for all students. School-to-work programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them to measure up to the larger demands of today's workplace.

National Dropout Prevention Center (n.d.)



When teachers are absent, there are no substitutes. A lead student at the school will take on the responsibility of teaching the class for the day.

One example of the implementation of the 15 strategies in the developing world is at the Ngungumu Primary School in the Korogocho slum settlement in Nairobi, Kenya. The Ngungumu Primary School has a student population of approximately 1,100 students from ages 4-13 (often there are overage students attending the school—many times students are not sure of their age). The faculty consists of a headmaster and 10 teachers who in many cases have limited professional credentials. Often teachers do not come to work because they are not paid on a regular basis.

Korogocho is one of about 200 informal settlements recognized in Nairobi. It is located in the Kasarani district, 11 kilometers northeast of the business district and is adjacent to Dandora, the main dumpsite of the city (Korogocho Situation Analysis: A Snapshot, 2010). Approximately 200,000 people inhabit the settlement where there is no electricity, no safe water supply, and crime and violence are the norm. Life expectancy in Korogocho is 30 years (Oronje, & Crichton, 2008).

Children from slums like Korogocho are not likely to enroll in school, and if they do, it is unlikely they will complete primary education due to the high level of poverty. High levels of poverty often force households to choose between food for the family and school for the children. This situation becomes magnified when looking at higher levels of education and contributes to the cycle of poverty passed on from generation to generation.

Often families choose to take their children out of school and involve them in activities that produce income, and many times these activities are illegal, immoral, and extremely detrimental to the lives of the children. In Kenya, primary education is free. In Korogocho, there are only two public primary schools, which service a small number of children (Chiti, 2010).

The conditions in the Korogocho Slum are among the most dire in the world, and yet the 15 strategies for dropout prevention apply. A number of these strategies are currently being implemented at the Ngungumu Primary School with marked results. The following are examples of the 15 strategies and how they are being applied at the Ngungumu School.

Systemic Renewal. At the Ngungumu School they have made several modifications to school policies and structures. An example of this is allowing overage students to continue their education. Primary education typically ends at age 13, but for countless children there has been so much disruption in their education that starting school at age five and finishing public primary education at 13 is not realistic.

School-Community Collaboration. A community advisory committee has been established. Members of the community, both parents and nonparents, participate in regular meetings about the school structure, student life in and out of school, and school-community relations. The committee is acutely aware of the high mobility of the student and teacher population and high number of students who drop out and never return.

At a recent meeting of the advisory committee, school administration and student leaders identified the following as key contributors to students dropping out of school:

- Students not understood by both teachers and parents
- Lack of space to do homework at home
- Child labor at home
- Lack of electricity at school
- Poor student-parent-teacher relationships
- Lack of adequate and modern school facilities
- Lack of exposure to the outside world
- Lack of common school report book and diary
- Dilapidated fence
- Peer to peer conflicts



A typical classroom at Ngungumu Primary School has 70 students.



View of school grounds.

Safe Learning Environment. Efforts are being made at the school to address the learning environment both from a facility standpoint and a programmatic perspective. The community advisory committee, school administration, student leaders, and representatives from The Abbas Project have identified and prioritized a list of facility needs at the school. Efforts have already begun to improve safety by addressing the school buildings and grounds.

On the programmatic side, the school has begun a martial arts program, incorporated an athletic program, and adopted the iLead 21 youth leadership program. Initial training for students and staff took place in June 2012, and a follow-up session will take place in August 2012, with implementation beginning when school starts again in September 2012.

Early Childhood Education. The school has encouraged parents in the slum settlement to take their children to school starting as early as four years old. The headmaster and his team have gone door-to-door to encourage parents to get their children started in school at an early age. The faculty and administration have had some success, but they face many challenges; many parents are unaware that they can send their children to school and that it is free. Also when teachers do not come to work, parents lose interest and keep their children at home to perform duties in the home. Once this happens, it is unlikely that the children will ever return to school.

Mentoring and Tutoring. Because of the high student-to-teacher ratio, mentoring and tutoring become a challenge. This has been a topic for the advisory committee, and one of the goals of The Abbas Project is to provide mentors, both face-to-face and virtual mentors. This is a new endeavor and has begun with a small number of students.

Service-Learning. Currently students play an essential role in the maintenance and care of the school facilities and school grounds. It is a regular practice to see students picking up the school grounds and scrubbing classroom floors.

After-School Opportunities. The new headmaster, in his fourth year at the school, has worked with the faculty to implement a number of after-school opportunities for the students. As mentioned earlier, a number of athletic programs have been started, along with a music program and a scouting initiative.

Professional Development. Opportunities for professional growth for faculty and administration are extremely limited. As part of The Abbas Project, efforts are being made to provide professional development services to the faculty and administration. Plans include educators from the United States conducting field experiences in Nairobi for visits ranging from one to four weeks. Through The Abbas Project, the school has been provided an iPad, and can communicate via Skype with the world.

Educational Technology. With the addition of the iPad, the schools first piece of technology, children at the school are beginning to make use of Web sites that enhance their learning experience. The goal (with additional resources) is to add more technology. With no electricity, this presents a problem, but alternative energy sources are currently being considered.

At the Ngunyumu Primary School, the challenges are immense, yet the students, faculty, and administration approach each day with hope and promise for the future. The school has made significant progress in creating an environment where children cannot only survive but also actually thrive. By adopting and embedding the proven strategies a shift is taking place. This will take time, but there is excitement and energy based on the successes to date.

Although the depth and scope of the challenges vary, the solutions remain relatively similar. The research on dropout prevention is consistent; adapting the strategies to each unique context is required. Applying proven practices will yield results regardless if it is in the slums of the developing world or in our most affluent communities.



Good hygiene is taught and encouraged.



Classroom fun at Ngunyuma Primary School.

References

- Chiti, R. (2010). *Korogocho situation analysis: A snapshot*. UN-HABITAT, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Oronje, R. & Crichton, J. (2008). The burden of disease profile of residents of Nairobi's slums: Results from a demographic surveillance system, *Population Health Metrics*, 6:1. Retrieved from <http://www.pophealthmetrics.com/content/6/1/1>
- National Dropout Prevention Center. (n.d.). The 15 effective strategies for dropout prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast/34-15-effective-strategies-dropout-prevention>
- United Nations Millennium Goals. (2008). Retrieved from <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=indicators/officiallist.htm>

About the Author

Steven W. Edwards, Ph.D., is President and CEO of Edwards Educational Services, Alexandria, VA. A former school administrator, he has worked in 49 states and 24 countries with both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, such as schools, corporations, municipalities, and countries, in identifying and achieving individual and organizational goals.

AVIDizing¹ a High-Poverty Middle School: The Case of Magnolia Grove

Hans W. Klar, Curtis Brewer, and Marissa L. Whitehouse

Abstract

In the article, we presented a case study of successful leadership in a high-poverty middle school in the southeastern United States. The study showed how the school's principal and other leaders enacted leadership strategies to implement Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). Utilizing data collected from documents and nearly 50 interviews with school and community members, findings indicated that these leadership strategies turned around the school, engendering improvements in both student engagement and academic achievement. In particular, findings highlighted how the principal AVIDized the school by setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program in context-responsive ways. As a result of these actions, all students benefitted from AVID principles being incorporated throughout the school.

This case study focuses on Magnolia Grove,² a high-poverty middle school in South Carolina, a state in the southeastern United States. The school, with its poverty index of 93%, is located in a poverty-stricken and crime-ridden part of a rural town of approximately 26,000 residents. Just 10 years ago, Magnolia Grove was considered a school to avoid, with its gang violence, low academic achievement, and pervasive sense of hopelessness in terms of postsecondary opportunities for students. At that time, many students felt disengaged from the school community and dropped out soon after entering high school. Today, Magnolia Grove is characterized by high levels of student and staff engagement and rising academic achievement. According to staff, students, and parents, this transformation is due in large part to the leadership team's selection and successful implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) as a schoolwide reform strategy.

AVID is a program based on empirically proven instructional, professional, and organizational methods which encourage transformation amongst both teachers and students. Studies have shown that the successful implementation of AVID can increase student achievement and reduce dropout rates (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2000; Watt, Yanez, & Cossio, 2002). In this case study, we describe a leadership team's successful implementation of AVID as a whole school reform effort, the results of which helped to realize higher levels of academic achievement and engagement among students. We argue that integral to the successful implementation of AVID was the enactment of research-based leadership practices that were context specific (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Louis et al., 2010). Specifically, we report how the leadership team intertwined these strategies of (a) setting direction, (b) developing people, (c) redesigning the organization, and (d) managing instructional improvement in order to successfully implement AVID and thus enact change in the school. In doing so, we highlight the way in which the principal and staff AVIDized their school. That is, in this article we explain how school staff systematically

implemented the principles of AVID, usually offered as an elective course, throughout the school so that all students could benefit.

This explanation includes a discussion of comprehensive school reform (CSR), AVID as a comprehensive school reform strategy, and CSR literature highlighting the importance of context-responsive leadership. Next, we describe the case study along with findings which illustrate how the leadership team's actions contributed to the successful implementation of AVID. Finally, we conclude with practical implications for the successful implementation of AVID.

Comprehensive School Reform, AVID, and Context-Responsive Leadership

Principals across the state of South Carolina, like their peers in other U.S. states, are under pressure to show continuous increases in academic achievement for all students. This pressure primarily stems from the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (2002) and state-mandated benchmarks instituted to measure individual schools' progress toward realizing higher levels of academic achievement. As this progress is determined by performance on state standardized exams, it is understandable why some schools become overly focused on test preparation at the expense of other initiatives (Fullan, 2000; Datnow, 2005). Research has, in fact, shown that under such circumstances a great deal of attention is often paid to bubble students (Booher-Jennings, 2005) who are near the pass/fail cut-off scores.

Prior to the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) and its commensurate focus on standards based accountability, educators in the U.S. experienced the third wave of education reform since publication of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's catalytic report, *A Nation at Risk*, in 1983. According to Desimone (2002), this third wave of reform, comprehensive schoolwide reform (CSR), offered a "renewed focus on the importance of restructuring schools to foster changes in teaching and learning" (p. 434). Desimone noted that, "In contrast to past efforts, comprehensive schoolwide reform focuses on improvement for entire schools rather than on particular populations of students within schools; and it is not limited to particular subjects, programs, or instructional methods" (p. 434).

One reason for the emergence of CSR was the inability of previous strategies to reform instructional practices. Desimone (2002) argued that in order to address this limitation, school reforms "must fundamentally change not only the structure and organization of schools but the curriculum and delivery of instruction" (p. 434). In recognition of the advantages of schoolwide reform efforts over piecemeal attempts to support targeted populations, Title I legislation was amended to focus on schoolwide reform efforts (Desimone, 2002), and the federal Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program was created in the 1990s (Borman, 2005; Datnow, 2005; Desimone, 2002).

Datnow (2005) conducted a longitudinal study of six CSR strategies implemented in 13 schools. An important finding from her study was that high stakes accountability systems can "inhibit the sustainability of reform efforts in schools" (p. 147). Datnow also noted that "for a reform to be sustained, it must become institutionalized," that is to become a "taken-for-granted feature of life in a school" (p. 123). Additionally, Datnow's findings emphasized the importance of persisting with school reforms, despite the initial effort required to institutionalize new practices. Her study also emphasized the importance

of school leaders understanding local as well as district and state level contexts in order to sustain CSR efforts.

The CSR implemented at Magnolia Grove was AVID. AVID (<http://www.avid.org/>) was created in 1980 in an attempt to "increase schoolwide learning and performance" to boost college readiness in moderately performing students. According to information found on AVID's Web site, its empirically proven instructional, professional, and organizational methods encourage transformation amongst both teachers and students. AVID also provides greater access to Advanced Placement classes for minority and low socioeconomic students (Watt et al., 2002). These advanced learning methods also work to reduce achievement gaps by confronting school disaffection head on.

Research indicates that AVID can have positive effects on the school community as a whole. Student engagement can be dramatically increased due to AVID (AVID Web site, n.d.). Research on middle school students in AVID found that students were more adequately prepared for comprehending and completing advanced classroom material. Parents of these students also saw a marked enhancement in their children's emotional investment in their education (Black, McCoach, Purcell, & Siegle, 2008). Research has also shown that students in AVID have "improved in their own behavior, as well as their expectations for other students in their cluster" (pp. 121-122). Longitudinal research also found that those individuals who experienced two years of AVID involvement during the middle grades earned notably higher grade point averages than those who had had one or fewer years of AVID training (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002).

AVID students have also been shown to experience far lower dropout rates than their non-AVID peers. In a study of Mexican-American students, "Seventy-nine percent of the AVID students in the sample were on-track to graduate from college in six years, compared to 54% nationally and only 28%" at the study's home university (Review of AVID Research, n.d.). Research on African-American students in AVID showed that these students were attending college at 1.5 times the national average (Mehan, Villanueva, & Lintz, 1996).

AVID has also proven helpful in diminishing student disaffection by increasing students' capabilities and confidence. Watt et al. (2002) conducted research on AVID in high schools. Teachers interviewed for their study described being able to tell the difference between the AVID students and the non-AVID students based on their levels of engagement. This increased motivation not only improved AVID students' educational performances, but also strengthened their relationships with others. Mendiola, Watt, and Huerta (2010) noted that AVID students form relationships with others who positively influence their future educational opportunities.

AVID as a Comprehensive School Reform

The implementation of AVID within a schoolwide setting supports comprehensive school reform by changing organizational structures and eventually institutionalizing new practices (Watt, Huerta, & Cossio, 2004). Though AVID's components focus heavily on students enrolled in its elective course, "the success of AVID students increases opportunities for all students" (AVID Web site, n.d.). Continued extensive professional development and "dedication to implementing AVID strategies schoolwide" are necessary characteristics of an AVID faculty member (AVID Web site, n.d.). As schools work to implement

AVID's instructional methods, they become infused into the school's everyday happenings (Guthrie & Guthrie, 2002). This reculturation can affect schoolwide improvement in attendance, standardized testing, and other indicators of schoolwide performance (Watt, Powell, & Mendiola, 2004).

Adapting Leadership Practices to Institutionalize a Comprehensive School Reform

Regardless of the comprehensive reform model a school may decide to adopt, the principal and other formal leaders of the school play key roles in ensuring that the reforms are institutionalized. Research on school leaders has shown that they can have a significant, if indirect, effect on student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). In a recent review of research, Leithwood and his colleagues (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood, et al., 2008; Louis et al., 2010) identified four core sets of transformational and instructional practices that have the potential to positively influence student learning including: (a) building vision and setting direction, (b) understanding and developing people, (c) redesigning the organization, and (d) managing the teaching and learning program.

However, as Leithwood et al. (2008) noted, it is not these practices themselves, but the manner in which these practices are applied by leaders in concert with their unique environments that determines the degree to which they influence student learning. Following their study of principal leadership, Hallinger and Heck (1996) concluded that it is "virtually meaningless to study principal leadership without reference to the school context" (Hallinger, 2003, pp. 346). This is due to the belief that leaders' actions are at least partially shaped by the school's context. Notwithstanding the influence of contextual factors on leadership behaviors, Bredeson, Klar, and Johansson (2011) reported that effective leaders need not be mere victims of their circumstances. Rather, following their study of superintendents in Sweden and the U.S., they argued that successful leaders use their practical wisdom to shape contexts and stakeholders in ways that advance student learning and growth.

In summary, AVID can be enacted as a CSR to support student engagement and academic achievement. Though successful school leaders employ core leadership strategies to effect these changes, they need to adapt the strategies to suit each school's unique context.

Research Methodology

Magnolia Grove was selected for study as it was a high-poverty school, which had shown an increase in student achievement on standardized tests for a period that coincided with the tenure of its current principal. This school case study was developed using a research design and interview protocols adapted from the International Successful School Principals' Project (2010). The semistructured interviews were designed to capture information related to the school's challenges, the strategies that had been employed to overcome those challenges, and the principal's contributions to the success of the school.

Data was collected during multiple visits to the school, during which interviews were conducted with the principal, other administrators, more than 30 teachers and staff, six parents and six students. Analyses of the interview transcripts, field notes, documents, and other data collected during school visits were used to develop the case study.

Magnolia Grove Middle School

Over the past half decade, Magnolia Grove improved from a school known for violence and poor academic achievement to a school with high expectations and no excuses accepted for poor performance. The school's mission is to "Prepare students to be citizens who demonstrate social and personal responsibility, cultural awareness, physical fitness, academic competence, and a desire for lifelong learning by providing challenging and diverse educational experiences in a safe environment."

Over the last several years, Magnolia Grove maintained an Absolute Rating of "Average," and improved its Growth Rating from "Below Average" to "Good" as a result of its increasing level of achievement on state standardized exams. This was the highest rating among South Carolina middle schools with similar demographics. Magnolia Grove also met 20 of 21 of its annual progress benchmarks during the 2009-2010 school year. In recognition of these achievements, Magnolia Grove received the South Carolina Department of Education's "Silver Flag" award for six of the past seven years.

Magnolia Grove was also acknowledged for its achievements beyond South Carolina. It was twice recognized by AVID as a demonstration site due to its exemplary use of AVID's strategies. The National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades identified Magnolia Grove as a "School to Watch." This distinction is awarded to high-performing schools that demonstrate academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, and social equity (<http://www.schoolstowatch.org/>).

Introducing AVID at Magnolia Grove

Magnolia Grove was first introduced to AVID seven years ago when the school's two assistant principals Susan Davis and George Williams went to an AVID conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Recognizing that AVID was a program that would be well suited to their school, they immediately contacted Principal Ann Martin and urged her to join them at the conference. Principal Martin did join them and also recognized the natural fit between AVID and the vision she and other school and district leaders had for Magnolia Grove. During the case's first interview, Martin said she felt AVID had a particular philosophy and that "this is a philosophy that we need to bring into the school." She also described AVID as the means to "help change our culture because it will get everybody thinking college." Principal Martin said she saw AVID as a way to give "children that are capable but don't have a support network" the support they need to "get them into the advanced tracks and college bound." Martin described AVID as "perfect for us" and noted, "really what it was in my eyes was a mindset for our school." In addition to being a good mindset for the school to adopt, Martin also wanted to see AVID's teaching strategies adopted schoolwide. She stated,

They're very good teaching strategies. So I didn't feel like it was fair that just those select children that were in the AVID strategies class got those strategies. I said, "Susan, we need to take this schoolwide." So we trained [teachers to use AVID].

Implementing AVID

In 2006, AVID was first taught as an elective to a single, sixth grade class. By the 2010-11 school year, Magnolia Grove was enjoying its second year as an AVID demonstration site thanks to the successful implementation of the program. AVID was coordinated at Magnolia Grove by Ms. Davis and was taught by two dedicated AVID teachers. Students went through a competitive process to enter the program. To get into AVID, fifth grade students had to first be recommended by a teacher. They were then interviewed by the AVID elective teachers, and, if selected, entered the program in the sixth grade. Ms. Davis estimated that the AVID teachers would interview 150 students for the 40 spots available in the 2011-2012 year. Davis noted that students selected for AVID are those that have the ability to succeed, but are “not showing it in their daily grades.” A parent with a child in AVID said,

Basically what it is, is you take children that are capable but don't have a support network and you put them in these AVID kind of strategy classes and give them support so that you can get them into the advanced tracks and college bound.

Students accepted into AVID have an AVID elective class every day as well as tutoring sessions with local college students after school. However, all students have access to AVID concepts. Students not in the AVID class receive instruction in AVID strategies in their regular classrooms. Mr. Williams reported that as a result of all teachers being trained in AVID, “the kids are learning these strategies in the AVID elective, but then their [other] teachers are also using them in their classes with all of our students, not just AVID students. So it's spread throughout the school.” In this way, not only are the study strategies reinforced for the benefit of the AVID students, but all students have the potential to improve their academic achievement and become more engaged in school through the AVID approach.

Documents included in the school's handbook (see Appendices A and B) describe how Magnolia Grove has been AVIDized so that all students can benefit from the program. Strategies to AVIDize the curriculum at Magnolia Grove include providing AVID training for all teachers; distributing binders to all students so they can organize their schoolwork using the same study strategies taught to AVID students; promoting AVID's philosophy, practical teaching organizational strategies, such as Cornell notes for note taking; and incorporating AVID's learning support structure, Writing as a Tool for Learning, Emphasis on Inquiry, Collaborative Approach, and Reading to Learn (WICR), in every classroom.

In a student focus group, the student council president explained that students not enrolled in AVID “still do AVID. Like they're not in the AVID program but, they're still required to do AVID things like C-notes [Cornell notes] and different stuff.” Another student noted, “We're all about AVID. You can walk down the hall and look on the walls, you'll see all kinds of AVID stuff.”

The process of AVIDizing Magnolia Grove was aided by the fact that all teachers received formal AVID training. Once teachers returned from this training, they shared what they learned with their colleagues. One of the two AVID teachers reported “we send teachers to the AVID conference every summer and when we come back...those teachers are in charge of teaching a strategy to everybody else.” Principal Murphy explained that in addi-

tion to all teachers being formally trained in AVID, the AVID teachers also provide professional development to the staff by modeling the application of AVID strategies to “something that we're doing, so they can actually see how it works and feel how it feels to be the student doing it.” Martin described an additional benefit for all teachers being trained in AVID: It reduces parental pressure to have students placed in AVID. She explained:

All of our teachers have been trained. So, that's one thing that I can say to parents: Yes, I know you want your child in there. As a parent, I would want mine too. The good news is every teacher has been trained in these strategies, and they will get these AVID strategies in every single content class that they have.

Another way in which all students benefited from the AVID program was through the three-ring binders that students were issued and required to use to organize their schoolwork. Principal Martin used Title I funds to purchase binders at the beginning of each semester. Martin described buying the binders as the “best thing we ever did.” One of the eighth grade department chairs noted that students take pride in their binders and consider them special. Mr. Williams said that “another thing that I think [has] made a difference since we've been here is our AVID folders.”

Implementing AVID as a Schoolwide Reform

In our interviews, teachers, student services staff, parents, and students regularly credited Principal Martin and the two assistant principals with being key to the successful implementation of AVID at Magnolia Grove. One AVID teacher said she and her colleague had seen AVID implemented in many schools in other districts and other states. During these visits they noted that the success of the program depended on support from the schools' administrators. The teacher reported that when the principal in particular is not behind the initiatives in these schools,

We've seen it suffer and we've seen it fall apart and that's not the case with us. Everyone knows she's behind us. We know she's behind us. She does fight for us, which makes a huge difference. That is a reason why the program has been successful.

A related arts teacher noted the importance of the principal maintaining a consistent focus when implementing a whole-school reform. She stated,

Well, I mean you have to have a leader to help, because you can lose focus very quickly. You can become overwhelmed or you can become in your narrow field of whatever and fail to see how everything is interconnected. But you have to have a leader to say we've got to keep this and continually helping you to refocus.

Another related arts teacher, who had been at Magnolia Grove longer than anyone in the building, noted that Martin's constant reminders had been helpful in adopting AVID as vision for the school. She reported that,

Over the years, we have been reminded, or the children have been reminded, about our successes so often that I think that's a driving force for them. Also, because they see where we've come over the years and they want to continue the trend and they know that we're reminded constantly.

This teacher also reported that Principal Martin reminded people of these successes in a variety of ways, including over the intercom and in meetings with staff, students, parents, and the Parent Teacher Association. She noted that these reminders particularly encourage the students, stating that "they take that and they run with it. I think they want to be as successful as we want them to be."

The school's guidance counselor noted that while Ms. Davis had also been a champion of AVID, everyone in the school had been a participant in the process in one way or another. She reported, "She's been a very large contributing factor to the success of our AVID program here, and so I think that that's been important. But all of us have kind of contributed in our own way."

In addition to providing money for the binders to support all students, one department chair described how she saw professional development as a form of support. She reported,

As a faculty, I believe every one of us has now been trained for at least one cycle of training. And that's a lot of support that we had to get from the school, from the district, just to have this...because none of the training is local. So, financially they've supported us.

This chair also noted that any time teaching materials related to AVID were needed, "we've just had to ask." She also described how a system had been put in place where AVID teachers would go to various classrooms and teach demonstration lessons. As a result of all of these approaches, this chair noted that, "we've been supported with AVID in a lot of different directions." Principal Martin was able to use Title I funds to cover many of the expenses associated with implementing AVID. However, as Mr. Williams noted, "especially in [these difficult] budget times" board members may just think of AVID as an elective which is expensive and only benefits a small number of students. As a result of these tensions, he noted that Principal Martin at times had to fight to keep AVID.

Effects of AVIDizing Magnolia Grove

As noted earlier, many of the participants we spoke to in this study felt the successful implementation of AVID greatly contributed to Magnolia Grove's recent successes. A male related arts teacher said he thought AVID was one of the "best things" the administrators had done, and that it "fits this school to put that college focus in front of [students]." Another related arts teacher agreed, noting that "these are the kids who don't think college is an option for them... and they've probably been told 'You can't go to college because of money.' So this lets them know that that is an option for them." A seventh grade teacher stated that although there was plenty of focus on the state exam, "there's been a lot of focus on, through AVID and other things, helping kids be successful in other ways."

The president of the student council described going to school at Magnolia Grove as "interesting." When pressed to explain what about school he found interesting, the student replied. "I would say AVID. AVID has a lot of techniques that we use during class and it makes it easier for us to learn." One of the student's peers added that "the relationship that students and teachers and principals have together, like-it's sort of a family, especially at AVID. It's a big family. You get to know everybody" also contributed to making studying at Magnolia Grove enjoyable.

During the focus group with parents, they were asked why they felt the school was succeeding. One mother replied "AVID. I think AVID is a big reason." Another parent, with a daughter in AVID, explained that her daughter, "just loves school and she loves the AVID program here. She likes the structure of it, the organization of it. It's good for her, so we like it too." Another mother, who had two daughters go through the AVID program, said, "It really sets the tone for where these kids are going to go." She also reported that the skills her daughters have learned, like organization, had transferred to their home lives.

The longest-serving teacher also noted that students became better organized and took more responsibility for their learning as a result of AVID. Due to this commitment, she felt all students took great pride in Magnolia Grove becoming recognized as an AVID demonstration site. She said, "When we got the National Demonstration Site award, most of the children, I don't think, felt that it was just an AVID award. I think they felt that they had taken some part in that, too." This teacher also noted that, unlike other programs which had been partially adopted at Magnolia Grove over the years and had "kind of come and gone" she clearly saw what the AVID program "will do for our children."

Teachers at Magnolia Grove regularly described the benefits of AVIDizing the school for all students. An eighth-grade department chair said implementing AVID was one of the things which had contributed to the school's successes. In particular, she noted that, "It's just not in the AVID classroom. It's schoolwide. You know, things that they implement, it's not just for one little group of people. It's pretty much implemented for everybody, and everybody just jumps onboard." This chair's colleague concurred, noting "No child is made to feel left out of that AVID mentality. You know, just because you're not in the class doesn't mean you're not a part of what we're trying to achieve with AVID, so that's important."

Through this case study we show that AVID has allowed a school to change not only what they do in the classrooms, but also how people feel and think about the school. This was achieved through the constant support from the leadership team and the commitment of the teachers. In this case, AVID was the right approach for this school community, effectively strengthening its identity as a "family."

Discussion and Implications

Discussion

The successful implementation of this middle school's AVID program supported other findings related to the importance of research based leadership practices that are context-specific (Leithwood, et al., 2008; Leithwood et al., 2004; Louis et al., 2010). Specifically, the leadership team intertwined several core leadership strategies to AVIDize Magnolia

Grove, resulting in greater engagement and academic achievement for its school community.

Setting directions. One of the keys to successful leadership for change is the setting of a direction. While this is sometimes described as creating a vision, in this case study, the leadership team was able to recognize that AVID's philosophy fit the needs of the community well. For example, Principal Martin in particular realized that this philosophy, based on advancement and self-efficacy, could be the guiding star for a school that had in the past been mired in hopelessness. Her continuous communication of this philosophy helped change the school culture.

Developing people. Another leadership action for change is the continual support and development of people within the organization. In this middle school, the implementation of AVID allowed for an organic train-the-trainer model. That is, the teachers sought out the knowledge and skills that other teachers had learned through their AVID training. The leadership team had made sure to fund the original training, and then supported the spread of relevant knowledge and skills through the organization. They specifically designated teacher leaders who were given time to train and support other teachers. Without this support, AVID strategies and philosophies may have been limited to a few classrooms, rather than being adopted throughout the school.

Redesigning the organization. One of the strongest levers of change available to a middle school leadership team is the master schedule. In our case study, we found that the embracing, protection, and expansion of the AVID class through scheduling and other measures was key to its success. Even in times of retrenchment, the leadership team protected this organizational change at the district level. If they had not, it may have been a strong signal that training and the direction setting were hollow gestures. The school community knew that the concrete elements of AVID had to be maintained.

Managing the instructional program. As described in detail above, the actual formal artifacts of the AVID program (i.e., the binders, WICR strategies, C-Notes) accompanied changes in teaching and learning practices within classrooms. The leadership team recognized the value of these tools, and committed to fully funding these resources from which all students benefited. In doing so, the team steered the instructional program toward proven methods. Much like the protection of AVID through the redesign of the master schedule, these concrete demonstrations of commitment fostered the actualization of the AVID philosophy along with improved teaching and learning practices within the school.

Implications

The case of Magnolia Grove Middle School highlighted the ways in which its principal and staff AVIDized their school. That is, they systematically expanded AVID principles intended for a select group of students in an elective course throughout the school so that all students could benefit. Their success was the result of four strategic aspects of school-wide initiatives:

- The selection of a reform program that fits the needs of the community
- The use of this program as a vehicle to enact change
- The use of proven leadership strategies to support the implementation and institutionalization of these changes
- The long-term commitment to protecting the concrete elements of the program that fit the needs of the community

References

- AVID Web site. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.avid.org/>
- Belchetz, D., & Leithwood, K. (2007). Successful leadership: Does context matter and if so, how? In C. Day & K. Leithwood (Eds.), *Successful principal leadership in times of change: An international perspective*, (pp. 117-137). Springer, Dordrecht: The Netherlands..
- Black, A. C., McCoach, D. B., Purcell, J. H., & Siegle, D. (2008). Advancement Via Individual Determination: Method selection in conclusions about program effectiveness. *Journal of Educational Research*, 102(2), 111-123.
- Booher-Jennings, J. (2005). Below the bubble: "Educational triage" and the Texas accountability system. *American Educational Research Journal*, 42(2), 231-268.
- Borman, G. D. (2005). National efforts to bring reform to scale in high-poverty schools: Outcomes and implications, [Special issue on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act at 40: Reviews of research, policy implementation, critical perspectives, and reflections]. *Review of Research in Education*, 29, 1-27.
- Bredeson, P. V., Klar, H. W., & Johansson, O. (2011). Context-Responsive Leadership: Examining superintendent leadership in context. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 19(18). Retrieved from: <http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/739>
- Datnow, A. (2005). The sustainability of comprehensive school reform models in changing district and state contexts. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 41 (1), 121-153.
- The International Successful School Principals' Project. (2010, October 6). Retrieved from <http://www.uio.no/ils/english/research/projects/isspp/>
- Desimone, L. (2002). How can comprehensive school reform models be successfully implemented? *Review of Educational Research*, 72, 433-479.
- Edgar, W. (1998). *South Carolina: A history*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
- Fullan, M. (2000). The return of large scale reform. *Journal of Educational Change*, 1, 5-28.
- Guthrie, L., & Guthrie, G. P. (2000). *Longitudinal research on AVID 1999-2000: Final Report*. Burlingame, CA: CREATE.
- Guthrie, L., & Guthrie, G. P. (2002). *The magnificent eight: AVID best practices study*. Burlingame, CA: CREATE.
- Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1996). Reassessing the principal's role in school effectiveness: A review of empirical research, 1980-1995. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 32, 5-44.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 3(3), 329-351.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), 27-42.

Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, G., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning: A review of research for the Learning from Leadership project*. New York: The Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/Pages/default.aspx>

Louis, K.S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., Anderson, S. E., Michlin, M., Mascall, B., & Moore, S. (2010). *Learning from leadership: Investigating the links to improved student learning*. Final Report of Research to the Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from The University of Minnesota Web site: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/key-research/Pages/Investigating-the-Links-to-Improved-Student-Learning.aspx>

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Mehan, H., Villanueva, I., Hubbard, L., & Lintz, A. (1996). *Constructing school success: The consequences of untracking low-achieving students*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mendiola, I. D., Watt, K. M., & Huerta, J. (2010). The impact of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) on Mexican American students enrolled in a four-year university. *Journal of Hispanics in Higher Education*, 19(3), 209–220.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983, April). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, § 115, Stat. 1425 (2002).

Review of AVID research. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.avid.org/dl/res_research/research_review.pdf

Robinson, V. M. J., Lloyd, C., & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: An analysis of the differential effects of leadership type. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 635–674.

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. (2011-2012). *Accountability manual: The annual school and district report card system for South Carolina public schools and school districts, Columbia, SC*. Retrieved from <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/reportsandpublications/2010-11accountabilitymanual/Pages/default.aspx>

U.S. Department of Education. (1983). National Commission on Excellence in Education. *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: Author.

Watt, K. M., Yanez, D., & Cossio, G. (2002). AVID: A comprehensive school reform for Texas. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal*, 19(3), 43-59.

Watt, K. M., Huerta, J., & Cossio, G. (2004). Leadership and AVID implementation levels in four south Texas border schools. *Catalyst for Change*, 33(2), 10-14.

Watt, K. M., Powell, C. A., & Mendiola, I. D. (2004). Implications of one comprehensive school reform model for secondary school students underrepresented in higher education. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 9(3), 241–259.

Watt, K. M., Huerta, J., & Mills, S. J. (2010). Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) professional development as a predictor of teacher leadership in the United States. *Professional Development in Education*, 36(4), 547-562.

Watt, K. M., Powell, C. A., Mendiola, I. D., & Cossio, G. (2006). School-wide impact and AVID: How have selected Texas high schools addressed the new accountability measures? *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 11(1), 57–74.

Endnotes

1. AVIDizing is a term used both in literature about AVID and by the school to refer to the intentional schoolwide implementation of AVID strategies.
2. All names reported in this study are pseudonyms.
3. These are designations based on a state accountability act passed in the 1990s in South Carolina. They reflect a level of mean performance on criterion-based state exams.

About the Authors

Hans W. Klar, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in Educational Leadership at Clemson University. His research examines the principal's role in leading change and fostering leadership capacity in schools. Dr. Klar is the principal investigator of the South Carolina Successful School Principals' Project.

Curtis Brewer, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counselor Education, and Human and Organizational Development in the Eugene T. Moore School of Education at Clemson University. His research interests include federal education policy, political action by educators. He also works to apply political theory in education.

Marissa L. Whitehouse is a Graduate Research Assistant for Clemson University's Educational Leadership program. She is currently seeking her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling in the department of Counselor Education.

Note: In the web-based version of *ENGAGE* (www.dropoutprevention.org/engage), you will find an opportunity to engage in an online conversation regarding this article.

Appendix A

Ways we AVIDize Magnolia Grove Middle School

1. New teams of teachers go every year to summer institute training. We only have two content area teachers that have not been trained. They were new hires this summer and we plan to have them trained summer of 2010. One hundred percent of the administrators, 92% of the content teachers, and 75% of the special education teachers have been trained as of August 2009.
2. Hallways are named with AVID terms—Binder Boulevard, Costa Court, Avid Avenue, etc.
3. Teachers display college banners and flags on their doors representing the college that they attended.
4. AVID binders are given to all students who attend Magnolia Grove.
5. Cornell notes are used throughout classes at Magnolia Grove. We encourage all teachers to use C-notes.
6. All teachers have an AVID binder to keep AVID professional development materials in. They bring this binder with them one Wednesday a month to team meetings because that Wednesday is designated as AVID Professional Development Day.
7. AVID elective teachers have a calendar ready for teachers to sign up when they want elective teachers to come teach a model lesson in their classroom that month. Model lessons incorporate AVID strategies into regular content, special education, and related arts classes.
8. AVID elective teachers publish and distribute AVIDIZER newsletters each month.
9. AVID students are given a free “Think College” T-shirt.
10. Vertical teaming meetings are held with elementary and high school AVID programs.
11. Teachers adopt the “Think College” atmosphere here by wearing the same T-shirts as the AVID students and decorating their doors.
12. A college of the week is highlighted on our weekly news show.
13. All teachers have been encouraged to use Costa’s levels of questions and have a Costa poster in their classroom.
14. WICR posters are in every classroom.
15. AVID students invite VIP’s from the district to an AVID elective class during the month of their birthday. During the birthday celebration, AVID students give them birthday cards and perform a skit telling what AVID means to them.

Appendix B

How Does Magnolia Grove Middle School Use AVID?

Teachers use WICR daily in all content areas. Here are some of the ways our teachers use WICR as a basis of instruction.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>W</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cornell Notes • Writing in ALL content areas • Research in ELA, social studies, and science • Marking texts • PQRSST • Brainstorming KWL charts • Learning logs • Graphic organizers • Outlines • Interactive notebook in science, social studies, and math 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>I</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry-based lessons • Science inquiry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research in ELA, science, and social studies • Philosophical chairs • Socratic seminars • Costa’s questions in Cornell Notes • Costa’s questions activities • Use of the Costa Three Level House • Interactive notebook in science, social studies, and math • Real-world math problem solving
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work in all classes • Drama/performing arts • Group posters/presentations in science • Peer evaluation of interactive notebooks in science • AVID tutorials • Tutorials in academic environment 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>R</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SQ3R in science and social studies • Independent reading time • Reading in ALL content areas • Academic enrichment reading program • Vocabulary development in ALL content areas • Focus on vocabulary schoolwide

A Discursive Approach to Restorative Practice: Improving the Learning Environment Through Professional Learning

Maria Kecskemeti

Abstract

This article introduces an innovative approach to restorative practice and the model of professional learning that was used to teach it to teachers in three New Zealand schools. Examples of specific conversational and reflection skills recommended for relationship management in the classroom are provided along with a possible process of facilitating teacher practice development and change. The potential positive relational outcomes of applying a discursive stance in interactions are also highlighted. It is claimed that both the specific content and the method of teacher training have potential for managing relationships, building learning communities, and improving well-being in a diverse school.¹

The Context

Restorative Practice as a Strategy of Daily Relationship Management

The restorative philosophy, values, and principles have for some time been seen, both in New Zealand and elsewhere, to match several current projects of schools, such as inclusion, citizenship education, and the teaching of key competencies. It is no surprise that there have been numerous calls internationally to utilise restorative practices (RP) for more than just behaviour management and the reduction of both wrongdoing and punitive responses to rule breaking (Cremin, 2010; Drewery, 2007; Liebman, 2007). These calls represent a considerable shift away from the original objectives of introducing RP into schools as an alternative to punitive responses to behaviour problems (Morrison, Blood, & Thorsborne, 2005). Though RP has been found to be effective as a responsive strategy of reducing problematic behaviours and achieving positive outcomes for disengaged students, reconnecting them with their school communities (Buckley & Maxwell, 2007; Maxwell, 2007; Mirsky, 2003), educators have shifted their attention to the benefits of RP as a proactive strategy. In recent years RP has been increasingly credited with the potential of changing the culture of a school and managing differences in diverse communities (McCluskey, et al., 2008). However, it has remained a challenge to work out how the restorative philosophy and values can be upheld in the classroom and how they might inform relationship management on a daily basis.

There are many versions of restorative practice and possibly many interpretations of its principles. Most advocates of RP agree that respect, upholding the dignity of all, a commitment to relationships, collaboration, participation and contribution, tolerance for differences, and accountability are essential for successfully managing the wide range of values and ways of relating that compete for dominance in most schools (Hopkins, 2004; Moxon, Skudder, & Peters, 2006; Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2006; Zehr, 2002). These same

principles also inform inclusive policies and practices. In New Zealand the recent promotion of key competencies in the NZ Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) has added support to the arguments of those who claim that restorative practice can usefully inform the managing of diversity and creating inclusive and caring school communities. McCluskey et al. (2008) sum up these arguments well:

If we accept that schools are complex institutions then there will always be competing ideas, tensions and personal disagreements. Restorative practices are seen as offering ways to manage these fairly and positively, to prevent conflict and harm but, importantly, still allow the expression of difference. (p. 211)

My doctoral study was, in part, a response to this call for utilising RP as the basis of general relationship practice rather than as a response to wrongdoing (Kecskemeti, 2011). In working out how it would be possible to adapt various restorative processes for daily classroom use, I concluded that it is the multistep nature of well-known restorative practices—restorative chats, interviews, mediations, and circles—that is most likely to invite resistance from busy and stressed teachers. Teachers would argue that these processes interrupt the flow of lessons and thus dismiss them as unhelpful strategies for relationship management. The teachers that I have worked with over the years informed me that they had found it a challenge to transport restorative practices into the classroom. This challenge has called for some development work, which resulted in proposing a discursive approach to relationships and the adaptation of specific conversational moves from narrative therapy.

The discursive relationship theory that I put forward provides a theoretical framework for conceptualising the restorative principles of respect and participation. It supports teachers with upholding restorative principles as it calls for taking a collaborative rather than an authoritarian stance. The conversational moves adapted from narrative therapy can be usefully incorporated into teachers' existing interactional repertoire, without interrupting the flow of a lesson, but upholding restorative principles of respect and tolerance for differences nevertheless. The same conversational strategies can also be used as part of more complex, multistep processes, such as class meetings. Class meetings can be utilised by teachers who are willing to allocate more time for not only addressing relationship problems but for engaging students in conversations that aim to establish a classroom culture conducive to learning and teaching.

This specific discursive approach to restorative practices builds on an earlier project by The Restorative Practices Development Team (2004), who investigated the potential of restorative conferences for reducing stand-downs and suspensions. They developed conference, class meeting, and interview processes that draw on Māori hui protocols (Macfarlane, 2004), constructionist theorising (Burr, 2003) and narrative therapy (White & Epston, 1990). While the approach introduced here is based on the same theoretical framework as the earlier Waikato project, its preventative focus and a number of additional characteristics distinguish it from both other restorative approaches and the work of the Waikato Team.

It is important to also mention here that the term *discursive* denotes not only a social constructionist theoretical orientation but specific relationship practices that are informed by the Foucauldian notion of discourse and power/knowledge (Foucault, 1980). The word *discourse* is used to refer to a coherent system of rules or norms that organise persons into

particular power relationships (Parker, 2005), rather than to communication or dialogue. The emphasis of the approach is on respectful classroom interactions and prevention. The aim is to change teachers' ways of speaking and interacting through simultaneously teaching them both specific conversational moves and a theoretical framework that offers new perspectives on relationship problems. Equal time is allocated for skill practice and reflective professional discussions, where theory is utilised for reconceptualising and changing practice. In the following, first I describe the theoretical concepts and conversational skills that form the basis of a discursive approach to restorative practice. I then outline the specific format of professional learning that was used to teach this approach to teachers in three schools. I argue that a theoretical framework and sufficient time allowed for reflection can provide significant support for practice change and the development of teachers' professional identity.

The Content of the Professional Learning

A Constructionist Theoretical Framework: Support for Upholding Restorative Principles

Before being introduced to any new relationship strategies, the teachers who want to learn a discursive approach to RP are first invited to familiarise themselves with two major assumptions from constructionist theorising: the significance of language use and ways of speaking and the central role of discourses in shaping individual identities, relationships, and organisational culture (Burr, 2003). The practical implications of these theoretical assumptions are demonstrated through exercises and discussions.

Constructionism attributes a productive power to language. It suggests that speech is not merely words but a social act that has consequences for people's individual identities and the quality of their relationships (Drewery, 2005). It matters and makes a difference if we call a student or colleague "hopeless" after they have made a mistake or if we consider this one mistake in the context of their other actions. The qualification "hopeless" is totalising, and it only accounts for those actions or behaviours that support a negative identity description. However, if we talk about one mistake then there is space for acknowledging a person's positive contributions. Teachers are shown how the ways they speak about others, students, or colleagues, can produce them, and their relationships, in helpful or unhelpful ways with consequences for their further interactions. It is not more time that is required of them but speaking differently and taking more care with naming.

The constructionist meaning of discourse, which informs most of the conversational moves taught within this particular approach, is introduced as a set of rules or cultural norms that reflect worldviews and prescribe how people should be with each other. Discourses are also shown to be storylines that persons use to make up their individual identities. Teachers become to understand that through the ways they speak, they place themselves and others in different storylines, which is the process of positioning—or taking up identities and assigning identities to others from socially available discourses (Laws & Davies, 2000). Teachers learn to recognise different discourses and to explore how those might shape their interactions through authorising particular teacher and student identities and enabling and/or disabling particular practices. Teacher-centred views of schooling allow students and teachers different roles and rights from the ones that child-centred views

might promote. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on the various discourses of schooling that inform both their professional practice and professional identity. They are asked to consider how these discourses influence the ways they interact with colleagues and students and/or what personal qualities and identities they might support. They are also asked to identify and ponder the consequences, for teacher-student relationships, of the discourse of schooling that is accepted as the dominant view in their school and as such defines the school culture.

Within a discursive conceptualisation of relationships, a great number of classroom disruptions can be conceived of as the work of discourses. The currently popular discourse of "learning should be fun" might create an expectation that all classroom activities should be entertaining. When they are not, students might resist by complaining, back chatting, or calling out. Discourse knowledge can help teachers address such disruptions through questioning students' stance on particular notions of learning rather than through telling them off and blaming. Constructionist theorising thus can offer a useful framework for conducting relationships based on the principles of respect, participation, and tolerance for differences.

Some practical benefits for the classroom:

- Greater teacher sensitivity to the potential effects of negative language use
- Greater care is taken with naming
- Teachers speak in ways that validate rather than alienate
- Teachers understand the influences of the wider social context, which can help challenge those unhelpful ideas that undermine respectful interactions

Respectful Ways of Speaking as Relationship Strategies

In addition to the most well-known restorative processes of chats, circles, and various meetings, the discursive approach to RP proposes to adapt several conversational moves or ways of speaking from narrative therapy for classroom use. Narrative therapy has been informed by constructionist theorising and narrative therapists have developed a number of conversational strategies that uphold the principles of respect and tolerance for differences (White & Epston, 1990). The ways of speaking that are proposed within a discursive approach are not scripted scenarios but one-off responses that can be tailored to the unique characteristics of a specific interaction (this is not suggesting that scenarios are not useful). They include externalising, curious questioning, repositioning, and deconstruction. These strategies can be used selectively, in subject lessons and various interactions with students and adults. They can also be utilised in mediation, class meetings, and other meetings with parents or colleagues.

Externalising. Externalising is a way of using language that locates problems in discourses and in the social context, as relationally produced rather than an aspect of or located in a person (White, 1988). Instead of considering a student to be violent, their relationship to violence can be explored. This subtle shift to using a noun rather than an adjective can produce a more productive conversation between teacher and student(s) later than the use of a permanent qualification of someone as aggressive or a bully. Externalising ways of speaking can be included in classroom discussions about issues such as bullying, violence, anger, disruptions to learning, and off-task behaviours.

Some practical benefits:

- Entry is provided into discussions about issues
- Students get support to clarify their moral position on issues and develop their competency in relating to others

Curious questioning or taking a not-knowing stance. The stance of curiosity or not knowing (Anderson & Goolishian, 1992) requires persons to give up their own assumptions along with a desire to fix, problem solve, or to give advice. Instead, it is a stance that calls for the clarification and exploration of other persons' meanings and interpretations of events. It is very different from the stance of certainty that teachers are required to take up when they introduce new material. While it could be counterproductive for teachers to give up the stance of certainty when they explain new concepts, they also have to be able to take a not-knowing stance if they wanted to unsettle the dominance of one worldview and/or ways of being that are considered "normal" by dominant social groups. The not-knowing stance can help address power relationships in the classroom and it can ensure that a range of voices and viewpoints are heard. It is more of an habitual stance, that competent teachers can skillfully apply, when leading discussions and/or building relationships with students, in addition to the stance of certainty that might be more appropriate when teachers model new skills (Drewery & Kecskemeti, 2010). It is not always possible to ask curious questions in a lesson but it is possible to clarify the meanings that students make of information presented to them or the views they share with others.

Some practical benefits:

- Teachers model tolerance for different views and values
- Students participate and contribute ideas
- Teachers shift from an authoritarian to a collaborative paradigm of relationship

Repositioning. Repositioning is the skill of using discourse knowledge to inform an interaction. The aim is to position others in discourses or storylines that allow them agency participation and contribution, as opposed to silencing them and rendering them mere spectators (Drewery, 2005; Laws & Davies, 2000). So instead of saying "Don't say that!" or "Stop it!" or "You are out of this class, go to the deans' office right now!" in response to a student who swears because he finds a teacher unfair, it is possible to say: "It is very nice that you are so concerned about fairness that you are prepared to get into trouble. However, next time you might want to think about a more respectful way of expressing your concerns." Such a response positions the student as someone who cares about fairness rather than only as a naughty student. It offers the student the possibility of taking up an accepted identity rather than only the identity of someone who has no place in the classroom. The concept and skill of repositioning can help teachers de-escalate a situation by one utterance because it can inform how teachers might formulate their responses in potential conflict situations.

Practical benefits:

- Teachers formulate responses in conflict situations more carefully
- Dialogue is maintained rather than shut down

Deconstruction. Deconstruction is the skill of listening to and identifying what is not directly articulated in an interaction but defines how it plays out nevertheless. It is identifying those hidden values and beliefs, or discourses that hold particular practices in place (Davies, 1998; Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws, & Watson, 2002). Deconstructive questions ask people to take a stand on the values, ideas, and worldviews privileged or promoted by a particular discourse (White, 1992). When teachers are willing to deconstruct a discourse, they might become more aware of its potential shaping effects on both students' and their own actions and relationship practices. The skill of deconstruction makes it possible to ask a student, who wants to change electives several times a term, if s/he thinks it is important to learn perseverance and/or if it is possible to develop this skill if they constantly choose to leave a subject when it becomes hard or challenging.

Instead of teachers lecturing to students, which they might be tempted to do, they can ask students to reflect and to articulate their position on the idea of choice (or any idea for that matter) and to consider its possible advantages and/or disadvantages. Students might find that subscribing to the discourse of choice, which enables constant change as a legitimate practice, might also undermine their ability to persevere with a subject. Deconstructive questions invite students into a moral position and they encourage them to clarify and justify their stance. It can be a strategy of developing students' relationship competencies and of transforming the culture of a classroom. Deconstructive questions are used as a major strategy in the particular version of class meetings that was described by Kaveney and Drewery (2011) in an earlier issue.

Practical benefits:

- An ethical dimension is added to discussions in the classroom and the staffroom
- Teachers and students are supported to clarify their stance on the different ideas that affect their relationships

These ways of speaking, when used strategically at various points in a lesson or one-to-one discussions with students, have the potential to de-escalate conflict. They can also sensitise teachers to the productive power of their conversations. They are more likely to engage rather than alienate students and thus they can be useful strategies of maintaining dialogue, collaborative problem solving, and teachers and students working together to create a respectful classroom environment as opposed to teachers easily drawing on punitive measures. My doctoral study has found that teachers' reformulation of their ways of speaking increased their capacity for tolerating differences and for maintaining dialogue with different others, which in turn reduced their stress levels (Kecskemeti, 2011).

The Delivery Method of the Professional Learning

Resourcing, Timeframe, and Structure

It is well established in the professional learning literature that embedding new practices into school systems takes considerable time (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). However, this provides a challenge as resources, especially budgets for funding teacher release during working time, can be scarce. The three schools that introduced this approach to their teachers all made it one of the major professional learning topics (out of

two or three topics) offered over the course of an academic year. They all provided release time for teachers to attend an introductory workshop and then regular, usually three weekly, focus group sessions with the facilitator. All three schools allowed their teachers to decide which topic on offer they preferred so participation in any professional learning group was voluntary, and thus, they were voluntarily learning about the discursive approach.

While the content of the professional learning and the format of delivery (workshops, focus groups) was almost identical in the three schools, three aspects of introducing the discursive approach differed in the secondary school, Midway High School: the time frame, the funding, and the relationship of the facilitator(s) with staff.

The two schools, a primary and an area school, which participated in the doctoral study opted for a one-year introduction. They both used their annual professional learning budget for providing release time for teachers who volunteered for this training. These two schools employed an outside facilitator, whose services did not have to be paid for as she was also conducting research about the approach. However, the secondary school, Midway High School, won an innovations funds award from the Ministry of Education, which paid for teacher release, though it was withdrawn after the first year. They used two members of staff to deliver the professional learning and they opted for a three-year, gradual introduction.

The take-up of both the conversational moves and the theoretical concepts was most successful in Midway High School, with most participant teachers incorporating newly learnt skills into their interactional repertoire. This suggests that the one-year time frame the other two schools allocated to the approach is not enough to embed these practices into a school's system. In addition, having on-site facilitators allowed the teachers at Midway High to draw on local expertise and support while learning the new practices. However, it is important to acknowledge that employing such a model can also be fraught with problems due to the power relationships and hierarchies that might exist in a school. In the following, I will describe the three-year gradual introduction model that was employed by Midway High School.

Midway High School offered training in the discursive approach to a new volunteer group of about 20 teachers at the beginning of each of three consecutive years from 2009 to 2011. Those who trained in the previous year could continue their training, if they opted to do so, in the following year, in a more leadership and collegial support capacity. Each new group of teachers were first given "the whole picture" during a two-day, introductory workshop, where the theoretical framework and the specific conversational moves were each introduced, demonstrated, and practised.

Two additional professional learning sessions were timetabled in each school term for all participating teachers. These lasted for two hours each and they provided regular and ongoing opportunities for practice, discussion, and development of the concepts and the conversational strategies. Teachers could also share and discuss articles and resources on RP during whole school professional learning meetings, which were held four weekly and lasted for an hour after school. These meetings further supported the acquisition of skills and the understanding of theoretical concepts. When training is run by outside consultants, which is a model most schools use, it can add considerable costs and thus undermine the feasibility of such an intensive model. Local expertise in Midway High School, and the flexible timetables of the counsellor and the deputy principal who ran the professional

learning, made it possible for teachers to receive daily in class support when requested. Teachers could practise their newly learnt ways of speaking with support from colleagues in class meetings, gradually easing into more independent facilitation. The retention rate in the third year was over 40 teachers out of the approximately 60 who attended the introductory workshops and focus group sessions for at least a year. Midway High has over 70 staff.

Some practical benefits:

- Little resistance, as participation is voluntary
- Better focus on new learning as it is done during working hours
- Sufficient support for learning new skills

Teacher Focus and the Critical Role of Reflection

Restorative practices were originally introduced into education because of concerns about students who were the recipients of bullying from other students (Morrison, 2006) as well as those who were the targets of punitive disciplinary measures due to their disruptive behaviours (McElrea, 1996). While changing student behaviours and creating classroom communities supportive of learning are expected outcomes, the discursive approach to RP focuses on teachers. One of its distinct objectives is to improve teachers' well-being through changing their ways of speaking and responding to stressful situations. Centralising teachers' well-being is based on the premise that teachers are a significant human resource. They are entrusted with the task of modelling and teaching peaceful ways of relating to students. Stressed teachers are less likely to have the mental and emotional capacity to do this.

The discursive approach to RP also privileges reflection in addition to specific conversational skills. In particular, a deconstructive approach to reflection is taught and encouraged as a framework for professional discussions. The same amount of time is devoted to developing an awareness of and a capacity to recognise and name discourses as to developing competence in the use of conversational skills. There are a number of arguments for attributing such a central role to reflection. Most teachers are very busy so their desire to seek out practices that offer quick solutions to problems is understandable, especially when they struggle with constant disruptions every day. However, the pressure to establish order can easily entice a teacher into privileging technical solutions and formulas without giving sufficient time to integrating them with the teacher's values and teaching philosophy. Theorists and proponents of professional learning and organisational change warn that solutions not integrated with the particular philosophies of individual teachers are less likely to be utilised either to their full potential or long term (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2000). My doctoral research has found that regular reflection opportunities within professional learning can support identity development and the clarification of teachers' moral positions, which in turn can have a well-being enhancing effect.

Some practical benefits:

- Time for reflection helps integrate practice with teaching philosophy, values, and beliefs
- Reflection supports the collective identification of problems and collaborative problem solving

Focus Groups: Developing Both Practice and Identity

Though the introductory workshops form an integral part of the training, the major sites of teachers' learning this discursive approach are the sessions that I have termed "focus groups" for easy reference and that I have developed as part of my doctoral research. They differ from what is meant by focus groups in qualitative research. Focus groups are professional learning sessions, during which a group of 6-10 teachers meet with the professional learning facilitator(s) for about two hours minimum twice a term during an academic year. These sessions are intentionally planned and structured to fulfil multiple functions. These functions include the demonstration and practice of the conversational and reflection skills taught, professional discussions informed by a process of deconstructive reflection and peer supervision. Thus focus groups are designed to be a complex combination of professional practice and identity development.

One of the unique features of focus group sessions, in addition to skill practice, is the use of a deconstructive reflection process, which informs and structures teachers' discussions about the concerns and dilemmas that they encounter in their work. It involves the identification of discourses and relationship patterns that teachers engage in with students as well as of recurring themes that emerge from teacher-student interactions and/or class meetings. When teachers reflect on the range of discourses that impact on their relationships with students, colleagues, and parents, they are also invited to clarify their own moral position and stance on those discourses. In other words, they engage in exploring their own beliefs and values about teaching, which can be a form of developing their professional identities and ethics.

The specific format of focus group meetings that I propose utilises so-called reflecting team processes used in narrative supervision (White, 1999). It is a structured way of facilitating the telling about practices and experiences and colleagues retelling them by adding their own meanings. Such a process can be a way of enriching both practice and identity. It can also be a way of changing those unhelpful meanings and practices, such as blame, self-doubt, and guilt, that increase teachers' stress levels. Thus teachers can perform their professional identity in front of their colleagues while examining how their practices might be congruent (or not) with their moral values.

Practical benefits:

- Teachers practise skills in a safe environment
- Teachers share practices and ideas
- Professional identity and ethics develop

The Future: Research and Development

This specific discursive approach to RP is one possible response to the daily relationship challenges that teachers and students encounter in diverse classrooms. It is important to note that both the content (the theory and the ways of speaking), and the delivery method (the design of the focus group process to incorporate deconstructive reflection and reflecting team practices), are integral to the approach and they work best when used together. The findings of my doctoral study suggest that this approach, when delivered to teachers in this specific focus group format, can reduce teachers' stress through improving their capacity to manage differences and the complexity of their work (Kecskemeti, 2011). Other

findings confirm the well-being enhancing effect for teachers of the class meeting process that builds on this approach (Kaveney & Drewery, 2011) along with its potential to develop students' key competencies (Gray & Drewery, 2011). There are further data currently being analysed, which will be reported in due course. A less measurable but possibly significant impact of the approach was articulated by a colleague who said: "Whatever the situation might be with resourcing, these practices will continue at this school as they are now part of our lives. We use them every day in both our professional and personal relationships." It seems worthwhile to further investigate the transformative potential of a discursive approach to relationships and professional learning that is structured to provide opportunities for integrating newly learnt practices with teachers' personal values and beliefs.

References

- Anderson, H., & Goolishian, H. (1992). The client is the expert: A not-knowing approach to therapy. In McNamee, S., & Gergen, K. J. (Eds.). *Therapy as Social Construction* (pp.25-39). London: Sage.
- Burr, V. (2003). *Social constructionism* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge
- Buckley, S., & Maxwell, G. (2007). *Respectful schools. Restorative practices in education: A summary report*. Wellington: Office of the Children's Commissioner and The Institute of Policy Studies, School of Government, Victoria University.
- Cremin, H. (2010). RJ into schools: Does it go? Some theoretical and practical considerations. In *Seminar One: Theoretical and conceptual perspectives of RA*. Presented at the ESRC funded seminar series: Restorative Approaches in Schools, London, 4 February, 2010. Retrieved 20 September 2011 from <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/restorativeapproaches/>
- Davies, B. (1998). Psychology's subject: A commentary on the relativism/realism debate. In I. Parker (Ed.), *Social constructionism, discourse, and realism* (pp. 133-146). London: Sage Publications.
- Davies, B., Flemmen, A. B., Gannon, S., Laws, C., & Watson, B. (2002). Working on the ground: A collective biography of feminine subjectivities: Mapping the traces of power and knowledge. *Social Semiotics*, 12, 291-313.
- Drewery, W. (2005). Why we should watch what we say: Position calls, everyday speech, and the production of relational subjectivity. *Theory and Psychology*, 15(3), 305-324.
- Drewery, W. (2007). Restorative practices in schools: Far-reaching implications. In G. Maxwell & J. H. Liu (Eds.), *Restorative justice and practices in New Zealand: Towards a restorative society* (pp. 199-214). Wellington: Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Drewery, W., & Kecskemeti, M. (2010). Restorative practice and behaviour management in schools: Discipline meets care. *Waikato Journal of Education*, 15(3), 101-113.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gray, S., & Drewery, W. (2011). Restorative practices meet key competencies: Class meetings as pedagogy. *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 8(1), 13-21. Retrieved September 2011 from <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/journals/international-journal-school-disaffection-online-issues>

Hopkins, B. (2004). *Just schools: A whole school approach to restorative justice*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Kaveney, K., & Drewery, W. (2011). Classroom meetings as a restorative practice: A study of teachers' responses to an extended professional development innovation. *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 8(1), 5-12. Retrieved from <http://www.dropout-prevention.org/journals/international-journal-school-disaffection-online-issues>

Kecskemeti M. (2011). *A discursive approach to relationship practices in the classroom: An exploratory study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand.

Laws, C., & Davies, B. (2000). Poststructuralist theory in practice: Working with "behaviourally disturbed" children. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(3), 205-222.

Liebmann, M. (2007). *Restorative justice: How it works*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Macfarlane, A. H. (2004). *Kia hiwa ra! Listen to culture - Maori students' plea to educators*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Maxwell, L. A. (2007). Baltimore district tackles high suspension rates. *Education Week*, 26(34), 1, 14-15.

McCluskey, G., Lloyd, G., Stead, J., Kane, J., Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2008). 'I was dead restorative today': From restorative justice to restorative approaches in schools. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 38(2), 199-216.

McElrea, F. W. M. (1996). Education, discipline and restorative justice. *Butterworths Family Law Journal*, 91-93.

Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Mirsky, L. (2003). SaferSanerSchools: Transforming school culture with restorative practices. Retrieved from <http://www.iirp.org/Pages/ssspilots.html>

Morrison, B. (2006). School bullying and restorative justice: Toward a theoretical understanding of the role of respect, pride, and shame. *Journal of Social Issues*, 62(2), 371-392.

Morrison, B., Blood, P., & Thorsborne, M. (2005). Practising restorative justice in school communities: The challenge of culture change. *Public Organisation Review A Global Journal*, 5, 335-357.

Moxon, J., Skudder, C., & Peters, J. (2006). *Restorative solutions for schools: An introductory resource book*. Invercargill, New Zealand: Essential Resources Educational Publishers.

Parker, I. (2005). *Qualitative psychology: Introducing radical research*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Restorative Practices Development Team. (2004). *Restorative practices for schools: A Resource*. Hamilton, NZ: School of Education, University of Waikato.

Senge, P., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). *Schools that learn*. London: Nicholas Brealy Publishing.

Thorsborne, M., & Vinegrad, D. (2006). *Restorative practices in classrooms: Rethinking behaviour management* (2nd ed.). Queenscliff, Victoria, Australia: Inyahead Press.

Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H., & Fung, I. (2007). *Teacher professional learning*

and development: Best Evidence Synthesis iteration [BES]. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

White, M. (1988). Externalizing the problem. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter, Summer*, Reprinted in White, M., & Epston, D. (1990), *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*. New York: W. W. Norton.

White, M. (1992). Deconstruction and therapy. In D. Epston & M. White (Eds.), *Experience, contradiction, narrative & imagination* (pp. 109-153). Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Centre Publications.

White, M. (1999). Reflecting teamwork as definitional ceremony revisited. *Gecko*, 2, 55-82.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Zehr, H. (2002). *The little book of restorative justice*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

Endnote

1. The particular approach described here was developed as part of my doctoral study (Kecskemeti, 2011) and so far it has been taught to teachers in three schools, one primary, one secondary and one area school. The primary and the area school participated in my doctoral study. I taught the approach to teachers in those schools over one academic year. I was employed as Head of Guidance Counselling in the secondary school. In this role I was fortunate to not only lead professional learning and implement the discursive approach over three years with my Deputy Principal colleague, Kathleen Kaveney, but also to further develop with her a deconstructive class meeting process. Two articles in a previous issue of *The International Journal on School Disaffection*, written by my ex-colleagues at Midway High School (a fictitious name), referred briefly to the specific features of the discursive approach to RP and they reported findings on various benefits of the class meeting process that we developed (Gray & Drewery, 2011; Kaveney & Drewery, 2011).

About the Author

Maria Kecskemeti, Ph.D., worked as Head of Guidance Counselling in a secondary school until September 2011. She is now Senior Lecturer in the Department of Human Development and Counselling at the Faculty of Education, University of Waikato, New Zealand.

Incarceration Within American and Nordic Prisons: Comparison of National and International Policies

Katie Ward, Amy J. Longaker, Jessica Williams, Amber Naylor, Chad A Rose, and Cynthia G. Simpson

Abstract

Prison systems throughout the world exist to enforce societal rules, maintain the safety of the general population, provide punitive sentences to offenders, and rehabilitate prisoners. While the goals of global prison systems are relatively common, the United States incarcerates more citizens per capita when compared to other European countries. In addition to the high incarceration rate, the U.S. also maintains a relatively high rate of recidivism, suggesting the U.S. prison system does not effectively rehabilitate American prisoners. Therefore, it is critical to explore the successful components of other European prison systems in order to establish stronger and more effective programs in the U.S.. The present manuscript compares the general prison functioning of the U.S. prison system to Nordic prison systems. Given this comparison, Nordic prison systems appear to do a more efficient job at reducing recidivism, providing educational services, and rehabilitating prisoners. Therefore, U.S. policymakers should consider viable options for alternative services and punitive approaches for American offenders.

The United States incarcerates more people per capita than most western European countries and Canada (Mauer, 2003), and many of those imprisoned within the U.S. will be released and rearrested within three years (Langan & Levin, 2002). While research has indicated that some prisons and programs are successful at educating and rehabilitating inmates to reduce recidivism, the majority of prisons exist to protect the public and punish the offender (French & Gendreau, 2006; Langan & Levin, 2002). Although protecting the general public should be the primary function of prison systems, increased attention should be placed on educating and rehabilitating inmates to prevent cyclic nature of offence, arrest, release, and repeat.

Many prisons in the U.S. are privately operated on behalf of the public by such conglomerates as the Corrections Corporations of America and The GEO Group (Gran & Henry, 2008). While these entities exist to serve the primary function of the prison system, these companies are for profit, and are compensated for rehabilitation success. In fact, the more incarcerates who remain in the system, the more lucrative the enterprise becomes. Consequently, rehabilitation and educational services do not generally factor in to the bottom line of these corporations when compared to construction fees, management salaries, and employee wages (Gran & Henry, 2008).

In general, the U.S. prison system is often unsuccessful at rehabilitating inmates based on the high rates of recidivism (Langan & Levin, 2002). Major impediments to rehabilitation within the U.S. prison system includes the lack of drug rehabilitation programs, overall lack of funding for rehabilitation programs, and mandatory sentencing laws for certain crimes which may force some into prisons who then learn criminal behavior from

their peers while incarcerated (Mauer, 2011). The purpose of this review is to discuss and compare the success and methods of prisons in the U.S. and abroad to rehabilitate inmates while applying general behavioral principles.

Predictors for Escalated Incarceration Rates in the U.S.

Research has demonstrated that the prison system functions, in many ways, as a receptacle for groups facing systematic challenges such as failed or inadequate educational opportunities, unemployment, reliance upon public assistance, and involvement in criminal activity (Austin, Bruce, Carroll, McCall, & Richards, 2001). High school dropouts represent the majority demographic among those on public assistance and/or incarcerated (Stanard, 2003). Dropouts are more likely to be unemployed, dependent upon public assistance, earn less in the workforce, and end up in the legal system. (Stanard, 2003). In fact, early school failure and inadequate schooling (e.g., ineffective teaching methods, problematic disciplinary practices, lack of educational resources, lack of parental involvement) serves as a predictor of increased dropout rates (Christie, Jolivet, & Nelson, 2005).

A series of studies have focused on behavioral patterns and disciplinary actions taken toward students who eventually drop out of school and become entrenched in the legal system. This body of literature suggests that students who consistently violate school rules are more likely to be punished, and as these individuals progress in age, the rule violations often increase in frequency and severity, which results in a steady escalation in the applied sanctions (Casella, 2001; Christle et al., 2005; Gottfredson, 2001). This escalation in sanctions can lead to negative labels and exclusions from peer groups, which can create a self-fulfilling prophecy and result in a cycle of antisocial behavior that can be difficult to break (Casella, 2001; Gottfredson, 2001). Therefore, this cycle of punishment, which often begins at school, could lead to a cycle of illegal activities, arrests, and incarceration.

Profitability

In addition to educational predictors, the privatization of U.S. prisons may impede the rehabilitation and education of the nation's prisoners. Fundamentally, private prisons are often quite profitable for investors, while creating jobs and stimulating local economies. As such, the political will to finance prisons is not driven by altruistic sentiment to rehabilitate (Coyle, 2003). Meanwhile, the U.S. prison population is rising over two million with expenditures that eclipse \$35 billion annually, resulting in both prison expansion and new prison construction (Coyle, 2003). In addition to the cost associated with prison expansion, increased expenditures are necessary for the supervision of prisoners and, ideally, the implementation of rehabilitative programs both within and outside of the prison walls (Coyle, 2003). While programs within the prison itself are necessary, external rehabilitative programs help reduce recidivism, which requires ongoing expenditures for the supervision of released offenders (Coyle, 2003). However, the initial link to reduce recidivism may be entrenched within the educational system.

Examination of National and International Policies

The U.S. penal system is often portrayed among the American populace as being tough on crime. To the rest of the western world, the penal system in the United States is viewed as a broken system, where the U.S. policy of mass incarceration is the epitome of ineffective practice (Mallory, 2006). While this is a tough critique, the American incarceration rate is the highest in the world at over 714 per 100,000 U.S. citizens (Walmsley, 2008). This rate is strikingly higher than that of other southern and western European countries, whose average incarceration rate is only 95 per 100,000 citizens (Stern, 2002; Walmsley, 2008). America's higher rate of incarceration might be acceptable if it resulted in a safer society. However, it can be argued that the escalated rates of incarceration do not increase societal safety based on the consistently high rates of overall crimes, violent crimes, and recidivism rate. Consequently, one could reasonably conclude that the United States' political agenda for increasing punishment to decrease crime yields an ineffective result. Therefore, in the current form, the U.S. prison system inadequately deters crimes and is ineffective at rehabilitating offenders. Ironically, the U.S. penal system inadvertently encourages antisocial behavior (Mallory, 2006).

In contrast, when examining crime rates, the percent of population that is imprisoned, and the recidivism rate in Nordic countries, the statistics demonstrate that Nordic penal systems are more successful at deterring future criminal activity when compared to the U.S. (Walmsley, 2008). The Nordic approach to punishment, the setup of their prisons, and the public perception of the purpose of the penal system are fundamentally different than the US. For example, when Norway implemented the prison model used in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden, the prison population dropped from 200 per 100,000 people in 1950 to 65 per 100,000 people in 2004 (Von Hofer, 2007). Similarly, an experimental Dutch prison was created to minimize costs and increase inmate success following release, where inmate rights are of paramount concern and the ultimate goal is to teach offenders that their choices have consequences, both good and bad (Kenis, Kruyen, Baaijens, & Barneveld, 2010). Though each Nordic country's (i.e., Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark) laws and prison policies vary slightly, as a whole the Nordic penal system deviates from that of other countries with higher rates of incarceration and recidivism, resulting in more favorable outcomes for the rehabilitation and education of offenders.

Nordic Prison Overview

Conceivably, many Americans conceptualize their global understanding of prison through their beliefs, experiences, and media portrayal of the national legal system. Consequently, it may be difficult to conceive of a prison system that does not rely almost exclusively on punitive measures, but rather attends to the rights and rehabilitation of inmates. In contrast to the American Prison System, the framework of the Nordic Prison System serves to rehabilitate inmates to directly address recidivism (Pratt, 2008). For example, while the largest Nordic prison houses approximately 350 inmates, the majority of these prisons are relatively small and house around 100 inmates (Pratt, 2008). The philosophy behind the limited prison size is to maintain several active prisons in many different parts of the country, allowing prisoners to reside in closer proximity to their family and home environment

(Pratt, 2008). Consequently, Nordic prisoners can maintain their roots in their communities and family bonds, while receiving rehabilitation services within the prison walls.

Nordic prison facilities. Nordic prisons typically fall under one of two categories: open prisons and closed prisons. These categories are generally stepwise in restrictiveness, where the typical inmate will first go to a closed, more restrictive, prison where they will serve the majority of their sentence (Baer & Ravneberg, 2008; Pratt, 2008). Toward the end of the prison sentence, the inmate will be transferred to an open prison, that serves as the foundation for inmate rehabilitation; allowing the offenders more freedoms, more relaxed surroundings, fewer security measures, and more programs aimed at societal reintegration (Baer & Ravneberg, 2008; Pratt, 2008). For example, in one Dutch open prison, creative cost-cutting measures led to increased socializing behavior by housing six inmates in a spacious cell, that includes typical daily amenities, designed to promote positive social interactions and independence (Kenis et al., 2010). The traditional Nordic cell, however, is located on a wing off of the prison's main corridor, where each wing has a central common room that contains a television and a small kitchen (Pratt, 2008).

In addition to the cell accommodations, barriers such as fences and walls are eliminated when possible (Pratt, 2008). While closed prisons maintain tight perimeters and security checks, most open prisons allow offenders to freely roam the grounds, lock their own doors, and earn in town privileges (Pratt, 2008). Given this level of freedom, many open prisons utilize technology as a means for accounting for and tracking the location of their prisoners (Kenis et al., 2010). Consequently, this level of surveillance has produced both a safer environment and increases in socializing behaviors as offenders seek to maximize the reinforcement for acceptable behavior (Kenis et al., 2010). Overall, the goal of open prisons is to shorten the physical and social distance between prison and the outside world; however, the prisons also employ strict procedures, surveillance, mandatory chores, deprivations, and sanctions that the general public does not endure (Pratt, 2008).

Nordic prison staff. Attitudes of staff, especially prison guards, are thought to directly influence the success of correctional rehabilitation programs and the successful reintegration of prisoners after their release (Kjelsberg, Skoglund, & Rustad, 2007). The make up of prison guards within a prison is carefully analyzed to maximize the success of the inmates, where prisons employ guards who vary in gender, age, and level of education (Pratt, 2008). Interestingly, working as a prison guard is a desirable vocation, which is very competitive and selective in Nordic countries (Pratt, 2008). Training includes two years of mentoring prior to independent supervision of inmates, where trainees establish an understanding of punitive policies, political influences, and public perception that serves as the foundation for the connection between the structure of the system and reform (Pratt, 2008).

Punitive Policies, Political Influences, and Public Perception

Some of our most important contributions to understanding the functionality prison systems stemmed from ethnographic methods (Austin & Irwin, 2001; Irwin, 1970/1987, 1980, 1985; Jacobs, 1977; Owen, 1998; Richards, 1990, 1995; Sykes 1956, 1958; Sykes & Messinger, 1960). Over the past few decades, a number of studies have questioned the

utility of incarceration as an effective means of reducing crime rates. For example, Blumstein, Cohen, and Nagin (1978) and Blumstein, Cohen, Roth, and Visser (1986) concluded that there is no systematic evidence suggesting general incapacitation and selective incapacitation has had or could have a major impact on crime rates. Similarly, Sherman and colleagues (1998), suggested that while the incarceration of persons who will continue to commit crimes would reduce crime rates, “the number of crimes prevented by locking up each additional offender declines with diminishing returns as less active and less serious offenders are incarcerated (p. 8).”

American policies. At the present time, American prison reform efforts face major challenges due to the changing political landscape, public perception of the penal system, and the continuing national recession. Specifically, living conditions within the prisons are often viewed as an additional means of punishment (Mauer, 2011). Warden Norton, a character in *The Shawshank Redemption* (Marvin & Darabont, 1994) gives one of the most famous, albeit fictional, accounts of prisons in American culture, “[as] [f]ar as [politicians] are concerned, there’s only three ways to spend the taxpayer’s hard-earned money when it come to prisons. More walls. More bars. More guards.” A high prison population has been one of many constraints toward establishing effective rehabilitative programs, especially in the face of limited budgets and the increasing recession.

Conceivably, prisons may also create a space for criminal networking that may further facilitate criminal activity. Linsky and Strauss (1986) found that states with the highest incarceration rates maintained the highest crime rates. Specifically, some attribute the increase in criminal activity to a lack of prison supervision (LaGrange & Silverman, 1999), or exposure to misbehavior (Longshore & Turner, 1998). Given the high rates of incarceration in the U.S., and the predictive factors associated with the cyclic nature of incarceration and recidivism, penal system reform must start to emerge as a legislative priority.

International policies. In Scandinavia, it is believed that the prison conditions should parallel real-world conditions as closely as possible (Pratt, 2008). The Finnish Department of Prison and Probation (2004) has suggested that punishment is not the elimination of basic needs; it is simply the loss of liberty, demonstrating that the Finnish believe in “gentle justice” which focuses on decreased recidivism through rehabilitation of prisoners (Ekunwe, Jones, & Mullin, 2010). Similarly, policy statements in the Netherlands are aimed at the resocialization and reintegration of inmates (Schinkel, 2003). Overall, Nordic offenders are not stripped of their basic rights; their independence is restricted while they receive rehabilitation services to deter future criminal activity (Von Hofer & Marvin, 2001).

Education Programs

America. Fundamentally, there is an inverse relationship between rates of recidivism and level of education, where the higher the level of education, the less likely the person is to be rearrested or imprisoned (Coylewright, 2004). For example, Coylewright (2004) suggested that:

Every dollar spent on education yields more than two dollars in savings from avoiding reincarceration alone. This is significant in an era of state budget pressures when our national (state and federal) corrections budget consumes more than \$50 billion a year (p. 403).

Yet, the mere implementation of these programs has been a challenge. According to Coylewright (2004), only 33% of offenders receive educational training prior to release. However, critics suggest that only specific components or domains of education assist in reducing recidivism. For example, Adams and colleagues (1994) found that education within the prison is only effective at reducing recidivism when the prison population has very little education to begin with, and when this population receives at least 200 hours of educational services.

International. In direct contrast to American prison systems, education is a high priority within the Nordic prison system and is considered to be a right of the incarcerated individual. Education is provided to the extent that the offender wishes to participate, and guards are taught to encourage them to further their education. Prisoners have the option of attending school full time, and the prisons offer all levels of education including university degrees, which can be accessed via distance education (Pratt, 2008).

Occupational Programs

American occupational programs. Occupational programs in the United States seek to develop offenders’ vocational skills in order to ensure their reintegration into society as working and productive members. Like educational programs, occupational programs also suffer from budgetary cutbacks and restraints associated with an increase in recidivism for participating offenders (Petersilia, 1999). America’s overall decrease in the recidivism rate may be due to some vocational programs requiring a diploma or GED to participate, thus making it difficult to determine the extent to which vocational training was responsible for the recidivism decrease (Lawrence, 2004). This education criterion excludes a large portion of offenders from participating in the program. By the same token, occupational programs may be effectively implemented but prove fruitless because of little support finding employment once released from prison (Lawrence, 2004). More specifically, there needs to be consistent treatment and a support network for offenders both inside and outside of the prison walls, especially in vocational programs.

International occupational programs. Fundamentally, the success of the Nordic model is contingent upon the country’s ability to secure potential employers. For example, the Danish welfare state has effectively embedded policies that keep their prison model functional within the surrounding community (Lacey, 2010). This program includes helping offenders locate and secure jobs within the public sector that will maintain them following their release. Consequently, these work programs are instituted for individuals who have demonstrated the ability to engage in gainful employment, while maintaining socially appropriate behaviors.

In Finland, eligible inmates are sent to “labor camps” where they are compensated with a normal wage for completed work. In turn, these earnings are used for them to pay for their own expenses; including rent, utilities, food, and taxes. Additionally, these eligible individuals are able to save money and provide for their families, or in some cases, send financial compensation to the families of their victims (Kenis et al., 2010; Pratt, 2008). For example, Bastoy Prison, which is the model open prison in Norway, attempts to foster a sense of responsibility among the inmates by providing employment opportunities based on documented behavioral patterns and the development of trusting relationships between the inmate and prison administration (Pratt, 2008).

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Programs

American mental health and substance abuse programs. The criminal justice system has a duty to care for prisoners with physical disabilities; however, some argue that treatment of psychological illnesses and drug addictions are not the responsibility of the system (*Estelle v. Gamble*, 1976). However, the number of rehabilitative programs is disproportionate to the number of inmates (Mumola, 1999; Mumola & Karberg, 2007), where between 70-85% of those incarcerated are in need of alcohol or substance abuse treatment, and only 13% of these inmates ever receive treatment (McCaffrey, 1998). While most states reported having Therapeutic Communities (TC) or federally funded Residential Substance Abuse Treatment centers, these programs are unable to service many prisoners with substance abuse histories due to size limitations (Austin & Irwin, 2001). Similarly, effective psychotherapy is essentially nonexistent for individual prisoners, because group therapy is the most prevalent in the prison setting (Coylewright, 2004). Consequently, group therapy is often ineffective due to the fear of being perceived as weak by revealing too much personal information, or for being too cooperative with the prison administrators (Coylewright, 2004). Therefore, effective reform requires a reassessment of the legal system’s duty to provide psychological and substance abuse treatment.

International mental health and substance abuse programs. One common thread between American and Nordic prison systems is that the majority of offenders are commonly substance abusers prior to incarceration (Friestad & Hansen, 2004; Mumola & Karberg, 2007). However, the Nordic prison systems offer substance abuse and mental health counseling to their inmates. For example, in the Netherlands, all healthcare, including mental health, is viewed as a right for all individuals, including prisoners (Bulten, Vissers, & Oei, 2008). According to Lobmaier, Kornor, Kunoe, and Bjorndal (2008), the most effective way to get a prisoner to accept treatment was through rapport development and the urging of a trusted staff member. Unfortunately, when an offender with drug dependency is released, it is reported that as many as 90% of them return to drugs (Butzin, Martin, & Inciardi, 2005).

Behavioral Programs

American behavioral programs. Community-based behavioral programs have traditionally focused on providing intensive behavioral support through services and community involvement, where programs’ structures and service provisions are guided by research on social learning conceptualizations of criminal behavior (Gendreau, 1996). Gendreau (1996) explains that these programs incorporate theory, empirical data, and practice to create a space for the inmates’ behavioral growth and development. Based on the responsivity principle, these programs last a few months and apply behavioral approaches toward rehabilitating high-risk offenders, with a concrete aim of developing interpersonal skills. Therapists train and supervise the offenders in real-life, interpersonal and constructive projects, where contingencies are enforced by weighting reinforcers and punishers at a rate of at least 4 to 1. According to Gendreau and Ross (1981), reductions in recidivism routinely ranged from 25% to 60%, with the greatest reductions found for community-based programs.

International behavioral programs. In contrast to the typical U.S. model, the Dutch DCL prison uses a systematic behavioral system to ensure that desired behaviors are reinforced and undesired behaviors are either punished or extinguished. For example, prisoners plan their own schedules and are given choices regarding their preferred activities, where these choices serve as reinforcers and lead to increased independence (Kenis et al., 2010). In addition to choice activities, prisoners can earn monetary compensation for appropriate behaviors, which can earn increased privileges and access to social activities (e.g., television, phone calls, visiting hours, different accommodations; Kenis et al., 2010). Overall, policymakers selected this model to increase inmates’ behavioral responsibilities, and this model was more cost effective for inmates who were incarcerated for more than four months (Kenis et al., 2010).

Conclusion

The current view on the treatment of prisoners in the United States is that an increase in punishment yields a decrease in crime rates (French & Gendreau, 2006; Langan & Levin 2002). In reality, the U.S. crime and recidivism rate is higher than that of any other country (Langan & Levin, 2002; Mauer, 2003). Considering the relationship between individuals who are undereducated and incarcerated (Stanard, 2003), there seems to be an obvious need to reform the current education system. In contrast, other countries have models for prison systems that seem to be more effective at reducing recidivism and crime; most notably, Nordic prisons employ a philosophy of rehabilitation to decrease recidivism (Kjelsberg, et al., 2007). Consequently, the United States may possibly benefit from a decrease in recidivism by widely adopting features from the Nordic prison systems.

References

- Adams, K., Bennett, K. J., Flanagan, T. J., Marquart, J. W., Cuvelier, J. R., Fritsch, J. G., Longmire, D. R., & Burton, V. S. (1994). A large scale multidimensional test of the effect of prison education programs on offenders' behavior. *The Prison Journal*, 74, 433-451.
- Austin, J., Bruce, M. A., Carroll, L., McCall, P. L., & Richards, S. C. (2001). The use of incarceration in the United States: American Society of Criminology National Policy Committee. *Critical Criminology: An International Journal*, 10, 17-41.
- Austin, J., & Irwin, J. (2001). *It's about time: America's imprisonment binge* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Baer, L. D., & Ravneberg, B. (2008). The outside and inside in Norwegian and English prisons. *Geografiska Annaler Series B: Human Geography*, 90(2), 205-216. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0467.2008.00287.x
- Blumstein, A., Cohen, J., & Nagin, D. (1978). *Deterrence and incapacitation: Estimating the effects of criminal sanctions on crime rates*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.
- Blumstein, A., Cohen, J., Roth, J., & Visser, C.A. (1986). *Criminal careers and "career criminals"*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Bulten, E., Vissers, A., & Oei, K. (2008). A theoretical framework for goal-directed care within the prison system. *Mental Health Review Journal*, 13(3), 40-50.
- Butzin, C., Martin, S., & Inciardi, J. (2005). Treatment during transition from prison to community and subsequent illicit drug use. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 28, 351-358.
- Casella, R. (2001). *"Being down": Challenging violence in urban schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Christie, C. A., Jolivette, K., & Nelson, C. M. (2005). Breaking the school to prison pipeline: Identifying school risk and protective factors for youth delinquency. *Exceptionality*, 13, 69-88.
- Coyle, A. (2003). Editorial: A human rights approach to prison management. *Criminal Behavior and Mental Health*, 13, 77-80.
- Coylewright, J. (2004). New strategies for prisoner rehabilitation in the American criminal justice system: Prisoner facilitated mediation. *Journal of Healthcare Law & Policy*, 7, 395-422.
- Ekunwe, I., Jones, R. S., & Mullin, K. (2010). Public attitudes toward crime and incarceration in Finland. *Researcher: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 23(1), 1-21.
- Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97, 97 S.Ct. 285 (1976).
- Finnish Department of Prisons and Probation. (2004). *Annual Report*. Helsinki, Finland: Finnish Department of Prisons and Probation.
- French, S., & Gendreau, P. (2006). Reducing prison misconducts: What works! *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 33(2), 185-211.
- Friestad C., & Hansen I. L. (2004). *Levekaar blant innsatte*. [Norwegian] (Report 429). Oslo, Norway: Fafo research foundation.
- Gendreau, P. (1996). The principles of effective intervention with offenders. In A. T. Harland (Ed.), *Choosing correctional options that work: Defining the demand and evaluating the supply* (pp. 117-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gendreau, P., & Ross, R. (1981). Correctional potency: Treatment and deterrence on trial. In R. Roesch & R. Corrado (Eds.), *Evaluation and criminal justice policy* (pp. 29-57). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Gottfredson, D. (2001). *Schools and delinquency*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Gran, B., & Henry, W. (2008). Holding private prisons accountable: A socio-legal analysis of "contracting out" prisons. *Social Justice*, 34, 173-194.
- Irwin, J. (1970/1987). *The Felon*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Irwin, J. (1980). *Prisons in Turmoil*. Boston, MA: Little Brown.
- Irwin, J. (1985). *The Jail*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jacobs, J. B. (1977). *Statesville*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Kenis, P., Kruijnen, P. M., Baaijens, J., & Barneveld, P. (2010). The prison of the future? An evaluation of an innovative prison design in the Netherlands. *Prison Journal*, 90(3), 313-330. doi:10.1177/0032885510373506
- Kjelsberg, E., Skoglund, T., & Rustad, A. (2007). Attitudes towards prisoners, as reported by prison inmates, prison employees and college students. *BMC Public Health*, 7, 771-779. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-7-71
- Lacey, N. (2010). Differentiating among penal states. *British Journal of Sociology*, 61(4), 778-794. doi:10.1111/j.1468-4446.2010.01341.x
- LaGrange, T., & Silverman, R. (1999). Low self-control and opportunity: Testing the general theory of crime as an explanation for gender differences in delinquency. *Criminology*, 37, 41-72.
- Langan, P. & Levin, D. (2002). Recidivism of prisoners released in 1994. *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, 15(1), 58-65.
- Lawrence, R. (2004). Understanding fatal assault of children: A typology and explanatory theory. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26, 837-852.
- Linsky, A. S., & Straus, M. A. (1986). *Social stress in the United States*. Dover, MA: Auburn House.
- Lobmaier P., Kornor, H., Kunoe N., & Bjorndal, A. (2008). Sustained-release naltrexone for opioid dependence. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 2(CD006140). DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD006140.pub 2.
- Longshore, D., & Turner, S. (1998). Self-control and criminal opportunity: Cross sectional test of the general theory of crime. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 25(1), 81-98.
- Mallory, J. L. (2006). Globalization, prisons, and the philosophy of punishment. *Women's Studies*, 35(6), 529-543. doi:10.1080/00497870600809723
- Marvin, N., & Darabont, F. (1994). *Shawshank Redemption*. United States of America: Castle Rock Entertainment.
- Mauer, M. (2003). *Comparative international rates of incarceration: An examination of causes and trends*. Presented to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

Mauer, M. (2011). The challenges of implementing research-based policies. *Criminology and Public Policy*, 10, 69-76.

McCaffrey, B. (1998). *Drug treatment in the criminal justice system*. Washington, DC: Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Mumola, C. J. (1999). *Bureau of Justice statistics special report: Substance abuse and treatment, state and federal prisoners, 1999*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Mumola, C. J., & Karberg, J. C. (2007). *Bureau of Justice statistics special report: Drug use and dependence, state and federal prisoners, 2004*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Owen, B. (1998). *In the mix: Struggle and survival in a woman's prison*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Petersilia, J. (1999). Parole and prisoner reentry in the United States. In M. Tonry & J. Petersilia (Eds.), *Prisons* (pp. 479-529). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Pratt, J. (2008). Scandinavian exceptionalism in an era of penal excess. *British Journal of Criminology*, 48(3), 275-292. doi:10.1093/bjc/azm073

Richards, S. C. (1990). Sociological penetration of the American gulag. *Wisconsin Sociologist* 4(27), 18-28.

Richards, S. C. (1995). *The structure of prison release: An extended case study of prison release, work release, and parole*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Schinkel, W. (2003). Discipline or punishment? The case of the Dutch prison. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Sciences*, 16(3), 211-226. doi:10.1080/1351161032000126026

Sherman, L. S., Gottfredson, D. C., MacKenzie, D. L., Eck, J., Reuter, P., & Bushway, S. D. (1998). *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising. Series: NIJ Research in Brief*. Washington, DC: Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.

Stanard, R. (2003). High school graduation rates in the United States: Implications for the counseling profession. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 81(2), 217-21.

Stern, V. (2002). The international impact of U.S. policies. In M. Mauer and M. Chesney-Lind (Eds.), *Invisible punishment: The collateral consequences of mass imprisonment* (pp. 279-292). New York, NY: The New Press.

Sykes, G. M. (1956). Men, merchants, and toughs: A study of reactions to imprisonment. *Social Problems*, 4, 130-38.

Sykes, G. M. (1958). *The society of captives*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Sykes, G. M., & Messinger, S. L. (1960). Inmate social system. In D. R. Cressey, G. H. Grosser, R. H. McCleery, L. E., Ohlin, G. M. Sykes, & S. L. Messinger (Eds.), *Theoretical studies in social organization of the prison* (pp. 5-19). New York, NY: Social Science Research Council.

Von Hofer, H. (2007). Current Swedish penal policy. In P. O. Traskman (Ed.), *Rationality and emotion in European penal policy: Nordic perspectives*. Copenhagen, Denmark: DJOF Publishing.

Von Hofer, H., & Marvin, R. (2001). Sweden. In D. van Zyl Smit & F. Dunkel (Eds.), *Imprisonment today and tomorrow: International perspectives* (pp. 634-652). The Hague, The Netherlands: Kluwer Law International.

Walmsley, R. (2008). *World prison population list* (6th ed.). London, England: King's College London, School of Law, International Centre for Prison Studies.

About the Authors

Katie A. Ward, M.S.Ed, BCBA, is a recent graduate of Sam Houston State University and Baylor University. She is currently Coordinator of Special Education Services for the Brazosport Independent School District.

Amy J. Longaker, M. Ed., BCBA, is a recent graduate of Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She is currently a Behavior Analyst for Aldine Independent School District.

Jessica L. Williams, M.S.Ed, is a recent graduate of the Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She is currently a special education teacher in the Spring Independent School.

Amber Naylor, M.Ed, BCBA, is a recent graduate of Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She is currently a Board Certified Behavior Analyst at MHMRA of Harris County's ECI Program.

Chad A. Rose, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Special Education in the Department of Language, Literacy and Special Populations at Sam Houston State University. His research focuses on the predictive and protective factors associated with the overrepresentation of students with disabilities within the bullying dynamic.

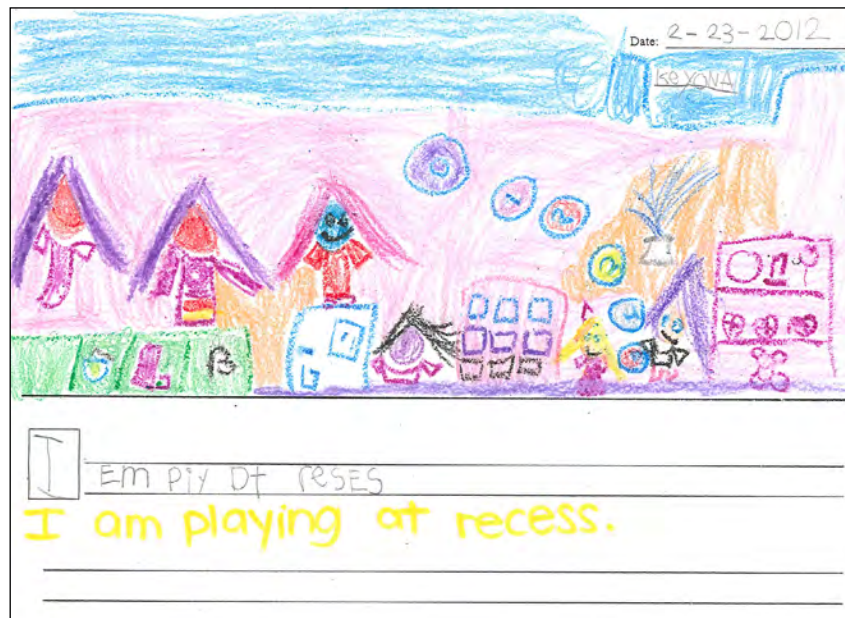
Cynthia G. Simpson, Ph.D., is the Dean of the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences at Houston Baptist University. Her research focuses on linking assessment to instruction within an inclusive classroom and gender discrepancies within the bullying dynamic.

Youth Voice: Kindergarten Drawings of School

Rachel L. Lindle

The beginning of school is a huge step in a child's life, and as with most first impressions, the memory and feelings can linger. In February 2012, kindergarten teacher, Rachel Lindle, asked her Jessamine County (KY) Early Learning Village students to think about how school made them feel.

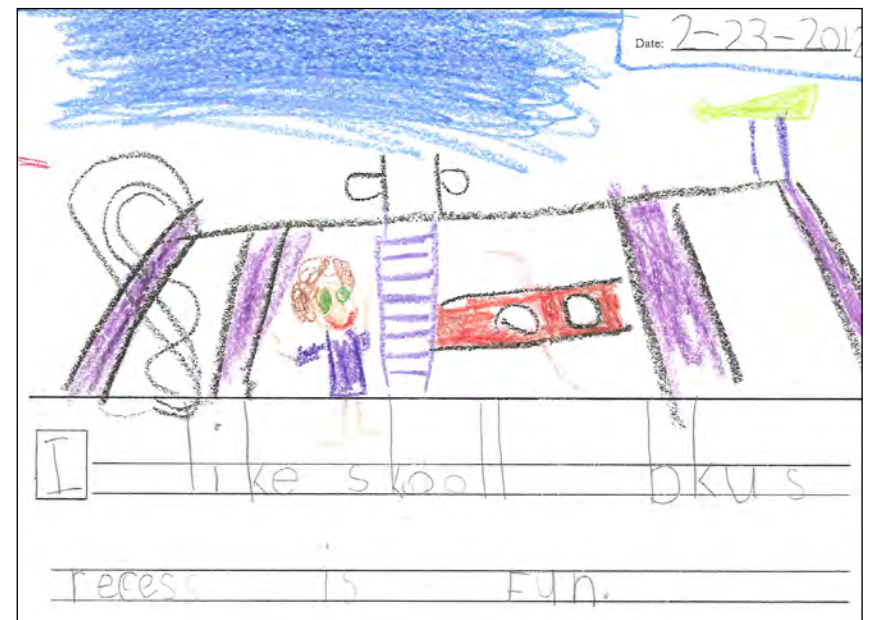
The pictures and their writing about their feelings reveal a range of emotions about life and school's place in the lives of these young children. Many of the children focused on their friends, meals, and play. Several mentioned missing parents, and Ms. Lindle noted that those children had already suffered loss of parents through divorce, death, and long separations due to military service. While a few pictures show the activities of teaching and learning, these children's perspectives illustrate many other aspects of life that schooling supports or interrupts. These pictures provide a snapshot of what keeps students in school or potentially separates them from the life of schooling.



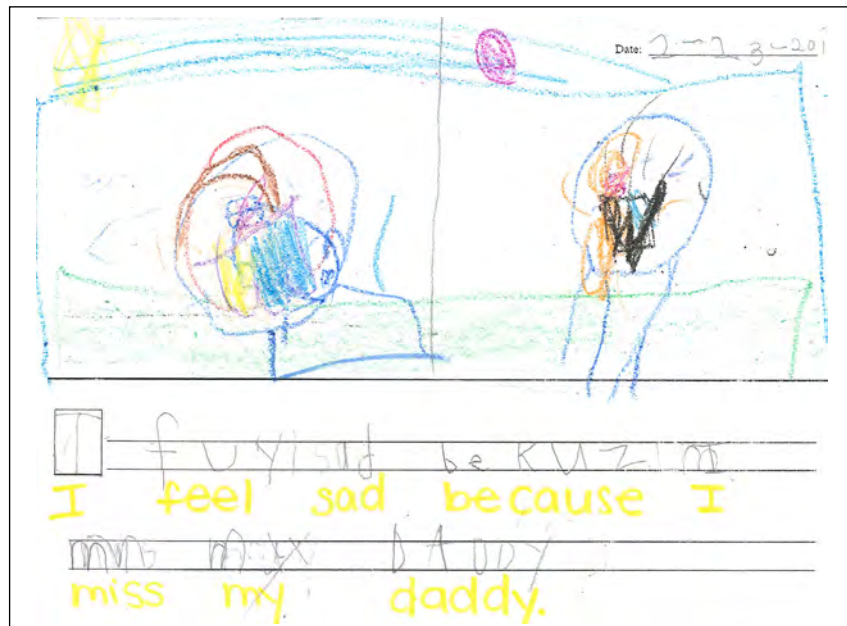
I am playing at recess.



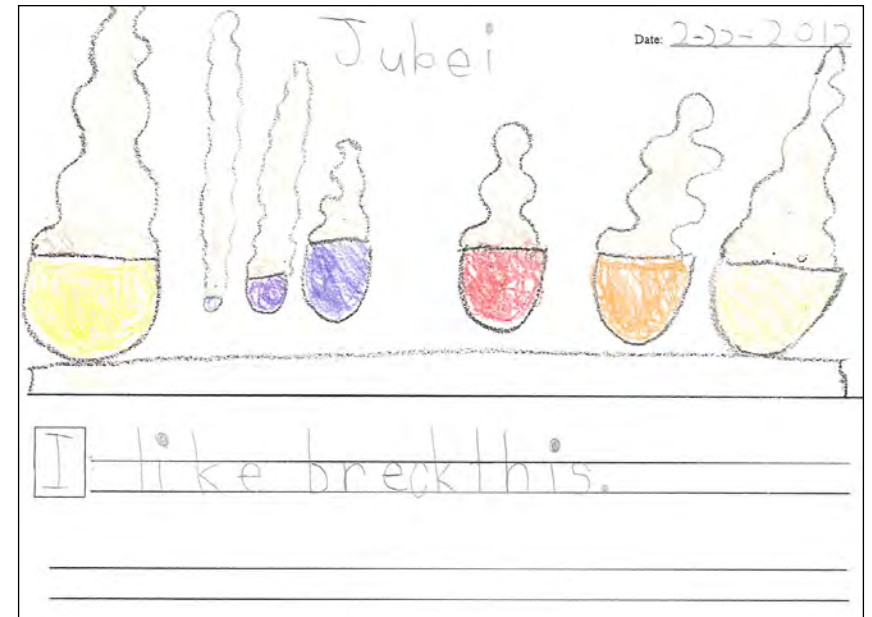
I like playing at recess.



I like school because recess is fun.



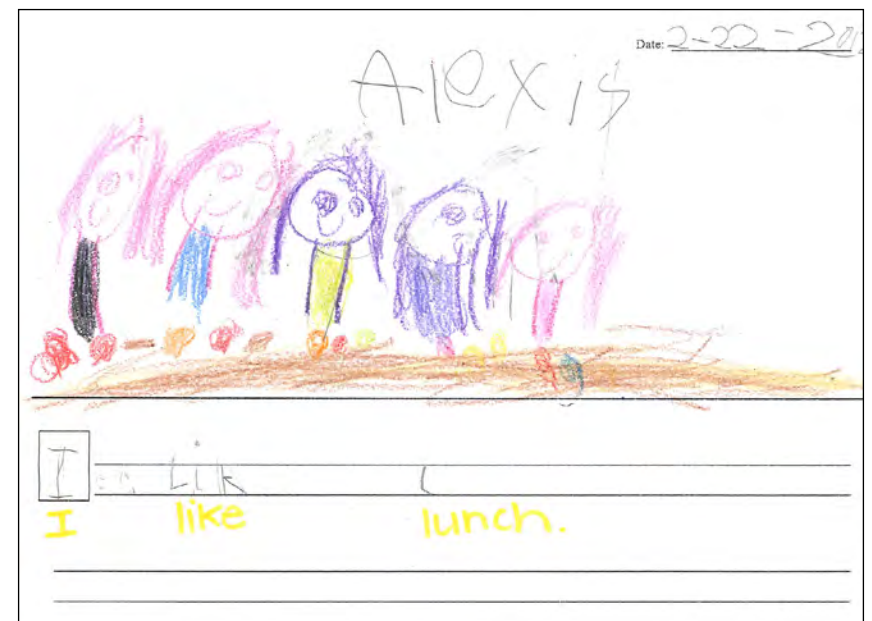
I feel sad because I miss my daddy.



I like breakfast.



I feel sad. I miss my mom.



I like lunch.



Because you get friends,
in the classroom.

Because you get friends in the classroom.



I feel happy.

I feel happy.



I like school because I am spending time
with my friends.

I like school because I am spending time with my friends.



I am happy because I like school.

I am happy because I like school.



School is fun and fun and ready to go.

About the Author

Rachel L. Lindle, B.A., is a kindergarten teacher at the Early Learning Village, Jessamine County Public Schools, Nicholasville, KY.

ENGAGE: An International Journal on Research and Practice in School Engagement

Call for Manuscripts

Send via email attachment (.doc or .docx) to engageeditor@dropoutprevention.org

The National Dropout Prevention Center is pleased to sponsor a web-based interactive journal, *ENGAGE: An International Journal on Research and Practice in School Engagement*. Using the power of the World Wide Web, this journal is accessible, free, and online, for a global audience. It supports online discussions among its international readers concerning issues raised in its articles. In addition, it enables multimedia to share videos, photos, and links to other Web sites.

ENGAGE raises awareness of issues related to school engagement as it explores and shares strategies and solutions that work globally. School engagement means that all constituencies need to be engaged in the school experience: students, teachers, administrators, parents, and members of the community including, but not limited to, businesses and social service organizations. This journal is internationally refereed and published online twice a year.

FOCUS: Manuscripts should be original works not previously published nor concurrently submitted for publication to other journals. Submissions should be written clearly in English for a diverse audience. Photographs, and other visual materials, are highly encouraged for each submission. The readership, international in scope, includes professionals conducting research on and/or working with the issue of engagement in school to promote student success, e.g., school administrators, teachers, educational psychologists, mental health professionals, juvenile justice and youth workers, governmental agency leaders, researchers, and academics. The articles for *ENGAGE* offer a mix of academic and practical; accompanied by voices of young people from diverse cultural groups around the world who were disengaged and are reengaging with school.

FORMAT: Manuscripts should follow APA style. Details can be found at <http://www.apastyle.org>. Manuscripts should not exceed 25 typed, double-spaced pages in 12-point font, including all cited references. Additional items to supplement the manuscript may include Web links, videos, photographs, and other media. Please submit via email attachment in MSWord format (.doc or .docx) to engageeditor@dropoutprevention.org.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: Each article should include an up to 150-word, APA style abstract, with one difference. The final sentence or two should be composed as starter-questions to engage readers in a window of asynchronous discussion based on the article's points.

There are three categories of submissions:

1. **Academic Research.** Submit these manuscripts using Microsoft Word. In addition, to the manuscript, include a cover page with the following information: the author's full name, title, department, institution or professional affiliation, email address, and phone number; and the full names of coauthors with their titles, departments, institutions or professional affiliations, and email addresses. Do not include any identifying information on the text pages. All appropriate manuscripts will be submitted to a blind review by two reviewers.
2. **Practitioners.** Manuscripts may include school and community-based research on services for youth or a description of successful strategies related to teaching, counseling, administrative procedures, or community engagement. Include all above information; however, in this category, the editor will be making the final selection, and there will be no peer review.
3. **Youth Voice.** These submissions represent the youth perspective on their school and/or community and should be submitted via their teacher, school administrator, or mentor. Manuscripts may be submitted at any time for review. If accepted, the authors will be notified of publication by email. There is no publication fee.

DISSEMINATION: *Engage* will be disseminated via the National Dropout Prevention Center Web site, www.dropoutprevention.org, as well as through Clemson University Digital Press, <http://www.clemson.edu/caah/cedp/cudp%20home.htm>.

Additional information about the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network may be obtained by reviewing the Web site, www.dropoutprevention.org.