



T/TAC Bulletin

The Training and Technical Assistance Centers at Virginia Tech and Radford University

Fall 2000 Vol. 9, No. 1

The Challenge of Making Changes in Schools and Classrooms

by Rachel Janney

Demands for improving our schools and classrooms seem to be never-ending. Politicians, school boards, school administrators, parents, teachers, and taxpayers all have theories about what is wrong with schools and how to go about fixing them. Everyone wants higher test scores, lower dropout rates, fewer behavior problems, and better citizens. Recommendations for achieving those goals are varied and even contradictory, ranging from adopting totally new curricula to going "back to the basics," and from tightening standards and discipline policies, to making classrooms more democratic.

Of course, it is much easier to prescribe solutions to the difficulties facing our schools than it is to actually design and put into action a successful school improvement plan. Schools are complicated systems, the children they serve (as well as teachers, principals and parents involved) are complicated human beings, and teaching and learning are complicated processes. Those factors, along with the shortage of resources facing many schools, make it is easy to appreciate the difficulty of school change. And we should not forget the fact that, although most people are eager for *others* to change, most of us are not wild about change when *we* are the ones that have to do the changing.

Over the past five years, the T/TACs have become more involved in assisting schools with long range planning projects to create systemic changes in their educational programs and practices. Many of the long range planning projects currently underway in Southwestern Virginia focus on three topics: increasing the effective integration or inclusion of students with disabilities, improving standards of learning (SOL) results for students with disabilities, and creating positive behavioral support teams for students with behavior problems. When undertaking significant school improvement efforts such as these, it is important to be aware that even though school change is easier said than done, there are some guiding principles and strategies that have been proven to be effective. The principles and strategies described below come from the work of Fullan (1991), and Ginsberg, Johnson, and Mofet (1997). These are the same principles and strategies that guide the long range planning projects that are supported by the T/TAC.

Guiding Principles of School Change

☞ *Genuine school change requires a change in the culture of the school.* That is, authentic school change does not just involve superficial or technical changes; the *people* in the school setting have to learn to interact differently. This

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different interaction style typically translates into increased collaboration among teachers, administrators, and families.

☞ *School change requires a plan.* This plan includes a vision or mission statement, goals, objectives, tasks, and timelines. However, realize that the plan will need to be adapted and transformed over time. As Fullan says, there is no “blueprint” for change.

☞ *School change is a developmental process.* Change requires learning, including both new ways of thinking and new skills. Therefore, not everyone is ready to change at the same time, and not everyone progresses through the stages of change at the same pace. Those who are ready for action should not assume that those who are holding back are being “resistant” or stubborn; they may just need more time to understand the reason for the change and to learn new competencies.

☞ *Change creates conflict, disagreement, and frustration.* If everything is going smoothly, and everyone is happy, then nothing has changed! Remember that tough problems need complicated solutions—not easy fixes that do not make waves.

☞ *School change requires both bottom-up and top-down support.* Administrators, teachers and families must push for and support the change effort.

☞ *School change takes time.* Any significant change in educational practice will require from two to five years. Expect to spend a year or more just on planning and preparation, and do not be discouraged if progress comes in small steps.

Effective Strategies for School Change

1. *Form a team to manage the change.*

The group should include representatives of all of the groups of people who will be affected by the change, and who have the authority to make the change. For example, each T/TAC long-range planning project has a Site Team that meets at least monthly. The site teams in schools working on inclusive education practices include central office administrators, building administrators, general and special education teachers, parents, and students.

2. *Engage in “visioning.”* Site Team members and their peers will need to discuss the school’s mission, values, and goals. If the team cannot agree about everything, work to discover what common ground is shared by all.

3. *Assess needs and determine priorities.* The T/TAC’s long range planning Site Teams have used written surveys, focus groups, and interviews to gather information about the change from other teachers, parents, and students. For example, Site Teams that are working on improving SOL results for students with learning disabilities have surveyed general education teachers to determine what professional development activities they need, and their perceptions of the special education supports that are in place for students within their classes.

4. *Seek outside support, but realize that the experts are already among you.* For example, Site Team members may want T/TAC staff to assist them in learning teamwork skills (e.g., how to run effective meetings, or how to

engage in collaborative problem-solving), or to provide consultants and workshops on SOL accommodations or positive behavioral supports. But the T/TAC staff will always view themselves as facilitators of the change effort, not as the experts who dictate all the answers to the Site Team.

5. *Maintain early, frequent, and open communication with parents, teachers, and everyone who will participate in and be affected by the change.* Site Teams typically report frequently to school faculty; at least semi-annually to central office, and at least once a year to their School Board.

6. *Take time to acknowledge your accomplishments, have fun, and celebrate.* At Site Team meetings, check off tasks that are done. As a school, take time at faculty meetings or other gatherings to recognize and applaud the activities that have been completed and the successes that have been achieved, no matter how small.

The challenge of making genuine, long-lasting improvements in schools and classrooms is that it requires determination, lots of effort, and persistence. However, the benefits can unquestionably outweigh the costs when administrators, families, and teachers work together to help all students succeed in school.

References

Fullan, M. G. (1991). The new meaning of educational change. NY: Teachers College.

Ginsberg, M. B., Johnson, J. F., & Mofet, C. A. (1997). Educators supporting educators: A guide to organizing school support teams. Alexandria, Va.: ASCD.



Virginia's Alternate Assessment Program

Virginia Department of Education

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997, all students with disabilities must be included in state and district-wide assessment programs. They may participate in these assessments with or without accommodations or modifications, or they may participate in an alternate assessment. The 2000-2001 school year marks the first year that students with disabilities in Virginia may participate in the statewide assessment program through an alternate assessment.

Development of the Alternate Assessment

Over the past two years, the Department of Education has worked with a steering committee composed of general and special education teachers, parents, directors of special education, building administrators, division directors of testing, and university faculty from across the Commonwealth to develop a system of alternate assessment for a small portion of students with disabilities who are unable to participate in the state's general assessment (i.e., SOL). The Department has also enlisted the assistance of the Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Mid-South Regional Resource Center and Inclusive Large Scale Standards and Assessment program at the University of Kentucky. Major activities completed by members of this group during the spring of 2000 are highlighted below.

- A philosophy statement was developed to articulate the Steering Committee's beliefs about the alternate assessment program.
- Participation criteria were developed to define the ages at which students will participate in the alternate assessment

process and the criteria IEP teams will use to determine student eligibility for the alternate assessment process. Copies of the participation criteria have been distributed to each school division's superintendent, directors of special education and testing.

- A "Question & Answer Document" was produced in response to questions from the field about the alternate assessment program and disseminated to special education directors and division directors of testing at regional awareness meetings.
- An assessment process and scoring rubric were developed and field-tested with approximately 65 teachers representing 32 school divisions from across the Commonwealth.

The remainder of this article provides an overview of the alternate assessment process, scoring rubric, and participation criteria that will be implemented in the 2000-2001 school year.

Participation in the Alternate Assessment

Decisions about participating in the alternate assessment will be made by the student's IEP team. The team must use the participation criteria developed by the Department of Education to make determinations annually. These criteria take into account both current and historical data to establish that the student

- has an IEP,
- demonstrates significant cognitive impairments and adaptive skills deficits, and
- needs extensive direct instruction and/or intervention in a variety of settings.

Students who participate in the alternate assessment program will be assessed at approximately the same age as students who participate in the SOL assessment. For the 2000-2001 school year, the alternate assessment will be administered:

Elementary I No later than the school year in which the student is 8 years old on or before September 30,

Elementary II No later than the school year in which the student is 10 years old on or before September 30,

Middle School No later than the school year in which the student is 13 years old on or before September 30, and

High School One year prior to the student's exit year.

Description of the Alternate Assessment

The actual "assessment" will consist of a Collection of Evidence (COE) that measures the student's performance on his/her IEP objectives that access the Standards of Learning. Unlike a traditional paper and pencil test, the COE will consist of multiple forms of data collected about the student over time. These data may include work samples (including actual work or pictures of work); observations of the student; interviews with teachers, parents, or employers; videotapes of the student; reflective documentation or journal entries; and instructional data sheets. The sources of data selected will be determined by the teacher and other individuals who submit the COE. Regardless of the data sources, each COE will consist of the following elements:

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- Table of Contents
- Parent Consent Form
- Introduction to the Reviewer (sample of student communication system)
- IEP at a Glance
- Student Schedule
- Student Demographics
- Parent Validation Letter or Parent Survey
- Four Completed Entry Cover Sheets (one for each SOL area)
- Four Entries Referencing the Standards of Learning. One entry is required for each of the following areas: 1) English, 2) Math, 3) Science/Technology, and 4) History/Social Sciences (extended to include Vocational Performance Indicators)

Each of the entries (i.e., one for each SOL area) in the COE will be scored according to five elements. For each element students may receive a rating of progressing, competent, or generalized. The five elements to be scored include:

- A. Performance (student performance on IEP objectives that address the Standards)
- B. Linkage to the Standards (degree to which work samples evidence the Standards in the four content areas)
- C. Variety of Settings and Social Interactions (degree to which students participate in integrated settings and extent of social interactions)
- D. Contexts (degree to which activities are functional and skills are embedded across the students' day)
- E. Independence (level of prompting required for the student to participate in the targeted activity)

Upcoming Training

During Fall 2000, the Department of Education will offer a series of workshops for teachers and parents across the state to prepare school personnel to implement Virginia's Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP). The teacher implementation workshops will be open to all teachers who have at least one student who will participate in the Alternate Assessment process during the 2000-2001 school year, as well as all directors of special education and division directors of testing. The

parent training, coordinated by the Department of Education, will be provided through the parent resource centers. Additionally, the Department is in the process of developing a series of materials that will assist school personnel and parents in understanding the VAAP. These materials include a training manual that articulates the assessment and methods for developing a COE, a policy and procedures manual for administrators, a brochure and workshop series for parents, and a videotape overview of the VAAP.

SOL Proficiency Initiative Offers Long Term Assistance to Region

T/TAC's Early childhood expansion, serving programs for children, ages birth to nine, with disadvantages or at risk for school failure, will embark on a new initiative beginning with SY 2000-2001. The *SOL Proficiency Initiative* is modeled after the success of Radford University T/TAC's Long Range Planning Initiative. This method of service delivery involves long term (up to three years) technical assistance to schools who have identified, through an application process, a focus area for school improvement. The role of the T/TAC is to facilitate the growth and progress of the school's improvement in the identified area through a wide array of technical assistance and support.

The opportunity to apply for the *SOL Proficiency Initiative* is being offered to schools in Regions 6 & 7 that have demonstrated the lowest performance at the third grade level of the Standards of Learning Tests. Representatives from the Virginia Department of Education, Compensatory Programs have worked in collaboration with the Virginia Tech T/TAC to offer this specialized T/TAC service.

SOL Proficiency Initiative applications will be sent to school principals and Title I Directors in August, followed by informational sessions to be held in two locations in each region in September (Region 6, Friday, September 15 and Region 7, Wednesday, September 13). Locations and times will be announced in the application packet. The application deadline is October 6, 2000. Upon review of applications by T/TAC and DOE Compensatory Programs staff, schools will be notified of the status of their application. Schools selected for the *SOL Proficiency Initiative* may expect initial site visits prior to the holiday break in December.

For additional information, contact Deb Schwabe, Early Childhood Education Coordinator, at 800-848-2714 or 540-231-5167.

Bits and Bytes

by Glenna Gustafson

The leaves are falling
One by one.
Summer's over
School's begun.

It's hard to believe but a new school year is here! In this issue of Bits and Bytes you will find a variety of resources to help get your year off to a great start.

Free E-Newsletters

Begin this new school year by subscribing to one or all of these free email newsletters. These newsletters will help you stay informed of the latest and greatest information in the education field. All you need is an email account!

The Special Education

Newsline—This newsletter, published weekly via email to requestors, features a convenient compilation of all of the week's news. It is distributed every Friday and includes update notices on new items appearing on the Web site. Best of all, IT'S FREE! To subscribe send an email to: subs@specialnews.com or subscribe from www.specialnews.com

The Classroom Flyer Daily—This daily newsletter (Monday-Friday) contains a wealth of information on a variety of educational topics and grade levels. *The Classroom Flyers* are an educational service provided by *The Learning Company School Division*. To subscribe send a blank email to: mailto:join-The_Classroom_Flyer_Daily@list.learningcompanyschool.com

Connected Teacher Email List—This email list is hosted by Kathleen Housley and is the #1 list for sharing news about Internet-related K-12 education! Classroom Connect sponsors this list. To subscribe, go to: <http://connectedteacher.com/listServ/subscribe.asp>

Back to school sites

Are you tired of beginning the school year with the same old theme? Looking for new bulletin board ideas? Need a different way to organize your classroom? Then check out these sites.

Can Teach—With hundreds of lesson plans, thousands of links, and tons of other resources, you will find something useful to help you out at this site. <http://www.track0.com/canteach/index.html>

abcteach.communication—Looking for some new ideas to start your year? Then check out this great site! <http://www.abcteach.com/>

Inspiring Teachers—No matter how long you have been teaching, you will find something here for you. <http://www.inspiringteachers.com/>

Olympic links

If you're thinking of using the Olympics as a back to school theme, here are some great resources.

United States Olympic Committee Online—This is a great place to follow the Olympic Trials. Click on the "Kids, Click Here" button and you're transported to the Ronald McDonald's Big Book of Fun. <http://www.olympic-usa.org/>

Sydney 2000: The XXVII Olympiad The official Web site of the Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia. Check out the special kid's page and teacher resources by clicking on the top navigation buttons. The Kid's Zone consists of four zones: sports zone, green zone, world zone, and technozone. <http://www.sydney.olympic.org/>
Go for the Gold - This wonderful collection of Web sites is very easy to navigate. It's an excellent

launching point for Olympic coverage with variety of links for major newspaper coverage around the planet. <http://www.sydney.summertimegames.com>

What do you think?

What would you like to see in Bits and Bytes? Contact me and let me know what you would like to see in Bits and Bytes. You can send an email to: gsgustaf@vt.edu. Or send a snail mail request to: Glenna Gustafson, VPI&SU, 222 Lane Hall, MS 0254, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

Bits and Bytes can be found online at: <http://tac.elps.vt.edu/html/docsUsefulInformationBitsBytes.shtml>

Mark your calendar

Long Term Computer Loan
October 13, 2000

This year we have ten Macintosh 7200's for loan. If you are interested, please visit: <http://tac.elps.vt.edu/html/docs/ComputerLoan/ComputerLoan.shtml> for more information and an application.

T/TAC Open House and Technology Fair
Friday, November 3, 1:00-5:00

Come to Virginia Tech's T/TAC office and meet our T/TAC staff, tour our library, visit the new Special Services Lab, and see some of the newest technology.

Apple IIe and IIgs

Do you still have an Apple IIe or IIgs in your classroom. We have to make room in our T/TAC library, and are providing our Apple IIe and IIgs software for long-term loan. We have a limited selection, but would like it to go to a someone who would find it useful. Please contact Glenna Gustafson at gsgustaf@vt.edu or call (800) 848-2714 (or 231-5167) if you are interested in borrowing any of this software. We will send this out on a first come first served basis.

Services Available from the T/TAC

Requests made by phone are our most frequent means of contact with individuals; however, we welcome requests via letters or e-mail. Initially, our secretary will ask you a series of questions to help us identify the nature of your request. We address all intakes at weekly staff meetings to determine who may best answer your specific questions or needs.

T/TAC services are generally free of charge (there is a registration fee for workshops, though para-professionals may attend free of charge). Anyone in southwest Virginia working to support students with disabilities or young children in identified compensatory programs may request our services.

Consultations

Consultations are provided by phone and email, through on-site or T/TAC based visits. Consultants provide assistance tailored to specific needs.

The T/TAC provides on-site consultations in response to requests by educators on behalf of students with disabilities. On-sites are designed to provide specific suggestions to improve students' participation in educational programs. We require parent notification and their written consent prior to visiting a child. After the visit, a comprehensive written report is provided, with specific recommendations pertinent to the student's needs usually within 3 weeks.

Training

Professional development workshops address varied topics based on state and regional needs and interests. Registration information is included in this newsletter. For most regional workshops there is a fee to cover the cost of registration, materials and snacks.

This year we are offering a limited number of school-based full and half-day on-site workshops on a

variety of topics. The T/TAC will work with your school to arrange a mutually convenient date. There are a limited number of slots for these inservices so make your plans early. See page 8 for a listing of on-site workshops.

Lending library

We have an extensive library, which includes books, videos, computer software, assistive technology, and augmentative communication devices available for loan. Visit our website or call (800) 848-2714 (or 231-5167) to have up to 5 items mailed directly to you.

In addition, we have a satellite Technology Lending Library based out of the Wise County Public Schools Media Center (540-328-9636).

Long-range planning

Long range planning (LRP) is offered through an application process and is designed to meet the individual needs of the school or school division. This service is offered for 1-3 years. See the description of our new, *SOL Proficiency Initiative* on Page 4.

Transition services

Support is given to Virginia Board for Developmental Disabilities grant recipients and selected long range planning sites. Technical assistance is available for transition between schools and from secondary school to work, community participation, and post-secondary education.

Information searches

T/TAC conducts searches on current practices, syndromes and disabilities, latest research, and other topics.

Referrals

Through linking and networking T/TAC can connect you to other programs and professionals that will best meet your needs.

T/TAC home page

On our home page find archived copies of our newsletters, a listing of our library holdings, workshop schedule, public domain and shareware programs to download, software demonstrations, troubleshooting tips and, a list of links to other education and disability resources all over the world. Emails for all staff are listed on the site. The address is: <http://tac.elps.vt.edu/>

Collaborating project

We are fortunate to have the *Babies Can't Wait* regional coordinator housed with us at Virginia Tech. Beverly Crouse provides technical assistance for Part C of IDEA for southwestern Virginia. She works with local interagency coordinating councils throughout the region to strengthen and expand services to children birth to age three. For more information regarding Part C implementation, or for assistance in working with local interagency councils, please contact Beverly Crouse at (800) 848-2714 or (540) 231-6208.

Please share
the *T/TAC Bulletin*!
Route it, pass it to a
friend, post it on a
bulletin board!
There are at least 2
copies in every school.
Let others know that
T/TAC services are
available to educators.

State and National Conferences

National Dropout Prevention Center Annual National Conference

Turning the Tide in the Next Millennium
October 1-4, 2000
Baltimore, MD
For more information: (800) 443-6392

The Arc of the United States Annual Convention

October 12-14, 2000
Birmingham, AL
For more information: (301) 565-3842

Council for Exceptional Children Division on Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Biennial Conference

October 12-14, 2000
Baltimore, MD
For more information: (410) 480-9667

National Organization of Rare Disorders Annual Conference

October 13-15, 2000
St. Louis, MO
For more information: (800) 999-6673

Council for Learning Disabilities International Conference

*Tools for Life-long Success: Interventions
that Work*
October 19-21, 2000
Austin, TX
For more information: (913) 492-8755

Closing the Gap

*Computer Technology in Special Educa-
tion and Rehabilitation*
October 19-21, 2000
Minneapolis, MN
For more information: (507) 248-3294

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Teaching and Learning: Standards
October 22-24, 2000
Tampa, FL
For more information: (800) 933-2723

ACCESS 2000 7th Annual Job Fair and Conference

October 25, 2000
Seattle, WA
For more information: (206) 417-6287

National Rural Education Association

Gateway to the Millennium
October 25-28, 2000
Charleston, SC
For more information: (970) 491-7022

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Symposium

*Issues in Early Childhood Education:
Curriculum, Teacher Education, and
Dissemination of Information*
November 5-7, 2000
Champaign, IL
For more information: (800) 583-4135

Council for Exceptional Children Teacher Education Division

*The New Millennium: Issues, Concerns,
Solutions*
November 6-9, 2000
Las Vegas, NV
For more information: (702) 895-1103

International Dyslexia Association Annual Conference

November 8-11, 2000
Washington, DC
For more information: (410) 296-0232

National Association for the Educa- tion of Young Children Annual Conference

November 8-11, 2000
Atlanta, GA
For more information: (800) 424-2460

Council of Administrators of Special Education Annual Conference

November 16-18, 2000
Williamsburg, VA
For more information: (505) 848-8726

Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood Education International Conference on Children with Special Needs

December 7-10, 2000
Albuquerque, NM
For more information: (410) 269-6801

TASH 2000 Conference

Moving the Edge
December 7-9, 2000
Miami Beach, FL
For more information: (410) 828-8274

Tourette Syndrome Association 2000

November 3-5, 2000
Alexandria, VA
For more information: (718) 224-2999

ISEE Symposium

Improving Special Education
Experiences for Students with
Disabilities
Saturday September 23, 2000
Hotel Roanoke
Roanoke, VA

Keynote Speakers

Edward Hallowell author of
Driven to Distraction and *Answers
to Distraction* will stimulate,
amuse, inform and inspire you.
David Pitonyak will provide
positive approaches for dealing
with difficult behaviors.

Breakout sessions

- Person Centered Planning
- Positive Behavior Supports
- SOL and Special Education
- Collaborative Teaching
- Estate Planning
- Transition to College
- The "How To's" for Inclusion
- Legal Issues
- And Much More!

Registration Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Fax _____
Email _____
Affiliation/School system _____

Please Check only one

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Educator | Administrator |
| Parent | Student (age 16+) |
| Instructional Assistant | |
| Other | _____ |

Registration is \$50

Make check payable to

Roanoke County Schools
Return to:
Margaret Ferguson
Roanoke County Schools
5937 Cove Road, NW
Roanoke, VA 24019
(540) 562-3759 fax (540) 562-3984
mlfergusen@rcs.k12.va.us

2000-2001 T/TAC On-Site Workshops

Contact Deb Schwabe

- *Enhancing the School-to-Home Connection: Activity-Based Programs to Increase Family Involvement*
- *Finding the Way to Smoother Transitions in the Pre-K Classroom*
- *Fostering Emergent Literacy/ Emergent Math Skills in Young Children*

Contact Selina Flores

- *Going to Preschool!*
- *I Can Do it All by Myself*

Contact Glenna Gustafson

- *Assistive Technology: A New Journey*
- *Assistive Technology--Alternative Access*
- *The "How to" of IntelliKeys*

Contact Barbara Flanagan

- *Supporting Diverse Learners*
- *Adapting Instruction for Learners with High Incidence Disabilities*
- *The Keys to IEP Planning & Writing*

Contact Helen Barrier

- *University of Kansas Center Research on Learning, Content Enhancement Routines*

Contact Diann Eaton

- *Creating and Using Social Stories*

Contact Lora Kingma

- *Here's the Device-Now What do We Want it to Say?*
- *Getting Acquainted with Augmentative Communication*

Contact Patricia Bickley

- *Functional Behavior Assessments Positive Behavior Supports*

The T/TAC at Virginia Tech and Virginia TASH Welcome Lou Brown

Presenting

Serving Students with Disabilities in Regular Education Settings in Home Schools

Registration form on page 9

October 20, 2000

9:00-4:00

Clarion Hotel, Roanoke, Va

Lunch is provided

Are you unsure how to address functional life skills through the general education curriculum?

Do you question the efficacy of inclusive education for your students?

Are you including students with disabilities in the regular classroom, but want to know more?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then come hear Lou Brown, professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education at the University of Wisconsin, share information about his years of effort, research and publishing focused on the development of service delivery models that prepare individuals with disabilities to live in an integrated society. Dr. Brown's dream is that some day soon all such persons will live in decent family style settings that contain no more than 2 unrelated persons with disabilities, will perform real work next to nondisabled coworkers, will enjoy rich lives with nondisabled friends and neighbors, and will have access to and use all community environments.

Slides will be used to communicate information about why and how to serve students with disabilities in regular education settings in their home schools. Factors to consider when determining how much time should be spent in general education settings and how much time should be spent elsewhere will be addressed.

Particular attention will be given to subject selection, activities, generating meaningful objectives and performance criteria, instructional materials, transfer-generalization difficulties, instructional groupings and evaluation strategies. In addition, how to build a variety of social relationships between students with and without disabilities will be addressed.

If time allows, strategies for generating exemplary high school services for students with disabilities and how they are distributed in schools will be addressed.

Registration fee for this workshop is \$25 to cover the cost of lunch, materials, and registration.

Overnight accommodations are available at the Clarion at a special rate of \$54. To reserve a room, call the Clarion at (540) 362-4500 before September 19, 2000. Mention the workshop to obtain the special rate. (Participants are responsible for overnight accommodations.)



T/TAC workshop registration form

How to Register

The registration fee for the LouBrown workshop is \$25. Paraprofessionals may attend any T/TAC workshop free of charge. To register, check the workshop(s) you wish to attend, complete the attached form, one for each person, and return with a check made payable to the Treasurer, Virginia Tech CE to cover the cost of registration, refreshments and materials to the address indicated. You may also register using your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express by fax: (540) 231-3306. We must receive your registration two weeks prior to the start of the workshop in order to confirm your space and forward to you a confirmation letter, parking pass (if applicable), materials (if applicable), and directions. Receipt of the previously mentioned items cannot be guaranteed if registration is not received in time.

Please register early!

On-site check in is 8:30–9:00 a.m.; workshops begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 4:00 p.m.—unless otherwise noted.

Cancellations

Requests for refunds are honored if received four full working days before the start of the workshop. However, substitutions are accepted at any time. In case of questionable weather, please call: (800) 848-2714 (or 231-5167) at any time for information regarding cancellation and rescheduling.

*Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, sex, handicap, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, political affiliation, or sexual orientation. Anyone having questions concerning discrimination should contact the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office. If you are a person with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this conference, please discuss your accommodation needs with **Jane Todd** at (540) 231-2014 or TDD (800) 828-1120 at your earliest convenience.*



T/TAC Registration Form—copy as needed

Lou Brown *Serving students with disabilities in regular education settings in home schools* October 20, 2000, Roanoke, VA

Please print or type—complete a separate form for each participant. The registration fee is \$25 for this workshop, with the exception that paraprofessionals may attend any T/TAC workshop free of charge..

Name _____ Social Security No. _____

Position/Title _____ School/Center/Site _____

School Division _____

Address to which we should send your confirmation and materials:

_____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime phone _____ Fax _____

Should we need to contact you, how would you like to be contacted? (Please choose only one):

_____ Phone _____ (work or home)

_____ Fax _____

_____ Email _____

Signature _____

Method of payment: Check enclosed Make payable to: Treasurer, Virginia Tech CE

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard American express Exp.Date _____

Card No _____ Name on Card _____

Return with payment no later than **two weeks prior to the date of the workshop** (*no staples, tape, or paper clips, please*) to: Conference Registrar, Division of Continuing Education, Virginia Tech, 810 University City Blvd., Suite D, Mail Code 0272, Blacksburg, VA 24061, phone (540) 231-5182, fax (540) 231-3306 (for credit card registrations only).

Virginia's State Improvement Plan for Special Education Partners Achieving Success for Students (Project PASS)

Virginia Department of Education

Summary

The Virginia Department of education has established a dynamic, strategically designed plan to enable children and youth with disabilities to meet performance goals. This is a five-year plan to improve educational opportunities that will produce better results for students with disabilities at all age levels. Under this plan, based on the use of a variety of data, Virginia's leadership and technical assistance will be focused on the improvement of student learning. The plan has three strategic directions to focus statewide goals on student achievement; the knowledge, skills and abilities of personnel serving children with disabilities; and parent and student involvement. Each strategic direction has indicators to measure performance toward achieving the goals. The plan is grounded in the Virginia Board of Education's vision, mission, and goals. The three strategic directions are as follows:

Strategic Direction I—

to facilitate, in cooperation with local school divisions, an increase in the graduation rate of students with disabilities and school completion rate of students with disabilities in the context of higher academic expectations.

Strategic Direction II—

to improve the performance of children and youth with disabilities by enhancing the knowledge, skills, abilities, and performance of all personnel who work with children and youth with disabilities.

Strategic Direction III—

to improve meaningful parent and student involvement with special education services.

The Virginia Department of Education is fortunate to be one of 18 state education agencies whose grant to design and implement programs to achieve the goals specified by Virginia's Improvement Plan was funded by the United States Department of Education. Partners Achieving Success for Students (Project PASS) will receive \$5 million in funding over a five-year period. In addition to implementing Project PASS, the Virginia Department of Education will focus its on-going training and technical assistance on efforts to assist in meeting these three strategic directions of the State Improvement Plan.

Reporting

Beginning this year, Virginia will also report annually on the state's progress toward meeting these three strategic directions. The State Improvement Plan reports are intended to provide parents, teachers, related services personnel, administrators, faculty and administrators in higher education, and state and local policy makers with information regarding the state's progress on achieving the goals in the plan.

Thank you

The Virginia Department of Education thanks the many people who provided input into the development of the plan, strategic directions, goals, and performance indicators. More than 100 persons, including parents, students who had received special education, public and private school administrators, teachers, related services personnel, early intervention staff, university faculty, state education agency staff, and other agency representatives assisted the agency in this initiative. The participation of these persons has

been invaluable in the development of a vital plan for improving Virginia's special education programs and services.

Information

More information about the State Improvement Plan, or copies of the reports (when completed), can be obtained from the Virginia Department of Education Website <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/> or by calling the Office of Special Education and Student Services: voice phone 804-225-2402 TDD phone 804-371-2822 voice toll-free 800-422-2083 TDD toll-free 800-422-1098

Community in the Classroom Network

The name of this network comes from a phrase in Alfie Kohn's book, *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance To Community*. In it Kohn challenges educators to work alongside their students to replace competition with a sense of community, teamwork, and collegiality in classrooms. The Community in the Classroom Network (CITC), composed of educators and parents, is a response to this challenge. The CITC Newsletter, *Strategies*, is published tri-annually; November, March and July. Membership is free.

For membership and access to the newsletter contact this group at citcnet@aol.com.

Topics in Autism Spectrum Disorders: A One-Day Conference

Roanoke, Virginia

Roanoke County Schools Administration Building
5937 Cove Road NW
Tuesday, October 3, 2000
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Autism Society of America, Greater Roanoke Valley Chapter, The Autism Program of Virginia (TAP-VA), the Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC) at Virginia Tech and the Virginia Autism Resource Center (VARC). It is intended for parents, educators, therapists, administrators, and other providers. The conference will provide increased knowledge about individuals with autism spectrum disorders across the lifespan, to develop and enhance participant skills in interaction, support, communication and education.

Topics include:

- The Autism Spectrum presented by the Parent/Family Clearinghouse, sponsored by TAP-VA.
- The Autism Spectrum--Innovations in Communication (including Facilitated Communication - the past, present and future) presented by Mickey VanDerWerker.
- Keynote Speaker - Insights into Autism presented by David Hamrick, college junior at Christopher Newport University, self-advocate, and person with autism.
- Communication Comments from the Experts presented by a panel of adolescents and young adults with autism, who successfully and effectively use facilitated communication.
- The Autism Spectrum - Transitions in Adolescence and Adulthood presented by Betty Thompson and Bradford Hulcher, parents, and professionals.

*Registration:

\$35.00 (lunch and snack included), payable by check or Visa/Mastercard (*Funds for registration may be available through the Conference Assistance Fund, VIDD, (804)-828-8243)

Mail payment, name, address, and phone # to:

Autism Conference
c/o Roxana Hartmann
600 Cambridge Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060

or for **credit card only** information may be faxed to 888-200-0776

Questions

Please call (540)-953-0776 or e-mail IROXPRODUCTS@aol.com

Staff Directory

Virginia Tech

College of Human Resources and
Education

222 Lane Hall, Mail Stop 0254
Blacksburg, VA 24061

(800) 848-2714 Locally (540) 231-5167

TDD (540) 231-3315 FAX: (540) 231-5672

Beverly Parkins, Secretary

Patricia Bickley, Ph.D., Co-Director

Barbara Flanagan, M.S., Co-Director

Helen Barrier, M.Ed.,

High-incidence Disabilities Coordinator

Leslie S. Daniel, M.S.,

Severe Disabilities Coordinator

Diann Eaton, M.S.,

Severe Disabilities Coordinator

Selina M. Flores, M.Ed., Early Childhood
Special Education Coordinator

Glenna Gustafson, M.Ed.,
Technology Coordinator

Lora Kingma, M.S., CCC-SLP
Communication Coordinator

Deb Schwabe, M.S., Early Childhood
Education Coordinator/Compensatory
Programs

Richard Snider, M.A.,

Technology Coordinator

Radford University

Department of Special Education

Box 7006, Radford, VA 24142

(877) 544-1918 Locally (540) 831-5333

FAX: (540) 831-5124

Katie Reed, Secretary

Alice Anderson, Ed.D., Co-Director

Rachel Janney, Ph.D., Co-Director

Kenna M. Colley, Ed.D.,

Lead Project Coordinator

Dale Matusevich, M.S.,

Transition Coordinator

L. Mac McArthur-Fox, M.Ed.,

Project Coordinator

Principal Investigator

Diane N. Gillespie, Ed.D.,

Associate Professor

College of Human Resources and
Education

206 East Eggleston Hall, Mail Stop 0302

Blacksburg, VA 24061

(540) 231-6960 FAX: (540) 231-7845



Training and Technical Assistance Center
 VPI & SU
 222 Lane Hall
 Mail Stop 0254
 Blacksburg, VA 24061

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The mission of Virginia’s Training and Technical Assistance Centers is to improve educational opportunities and contribute to the success of children and youth with disabilities (birth–22 years) and children who have disadvantages or are at-risk for school failure (birth–9 years). The Centers provide quality training and technical assistance in response to local, regional, and state needs. T/TAC services increase the capacity of schools, school personnel, service providers, and families to meet the needs of children and youth.

- ### T/TAC Services
- ✓ on-site consultation
 - ✓ T/TAC-based consultation
 - ✓ telephone consultation
 - ✓ team planning
 - ✓ library loans
 - ✓ assistive technology loans
 - ✓ information searches
 - ✓ regional workshops
 - ✓ long range planning
 - ✓ transition services
 - ✓ referral services
 - ✓ linking & networking resources

- ### School Divisions Served
- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------|
| <i>Region 6</i> | <i>Region 7</i> | |
| Alleghany Highlands | Bland | Pulaski |
| Botetourt | Bristol | Radford |
| Covington | Buchanan | Russell |
| Craig | Carroll | Scott |
| Danville | Dickenson | Smyth |
| Floyd | Galax | Tazewell |
| Franklin | Giles | Washington |
| Henry | Grayson | Wise |
| Martinsville | Lee | Wythe |
| Montgomery | Norton | |
| Patrick | | |
| Pittsylvania | | |
| Roanoke City | | |
| Roanoke County | | |
| Salem | | |