In the movie *Pay It Forward* (2000), a somewhat cynical social studies teacher played by Kevin Spacey assigns his class the tasks of thinking of an idea that will change the world and then putting the idea into action. A 12-year-old student decides to pay back a good deed that was done for him by doing good deeds for three new, unknown people. The student’s action starts a revolution—it is Hollywood, after all, but is something like that really so hard to imagine?

Thoughtful teachers “pay it forward” all the time by accepting the challenge to teach academic and behavior strategies that facilitate and enhance student success in the next grade level. This issue of *Link Lines* is focused on strategies that students can use now and in the future to facilitate the transition process and to provide them with a “bag of tricks” for coping with the new pressures and demands of a different grade level.

Teachers are often excellent at teaching grade-level math and reading skills. The challenge is to provide students with the knowledge and strategies to recognize what they know, when to use what they know, and when they need assistance. The article on *Packing the Mathematical Strategy Suitcase for the Next Grade Level* focuses on teaching deeper conceptual strategies and procedural supports to help students prepare for the future. *Moving Students with Disabilities Forward to Graduation* highlights four critical areas necessary to help students with disabilities progress toward graduation: standards-based individualized education programs, comprehension strategies embedded within the Virginia English Standards of Learning, metacognitive strategies, and effective instruction in higher order comprehension strategies.

These articles will help you send your students to the next grade with strategy suitcases packed full of skills to support them as mathematical thinkers, capable problem solvers, and skillful readers!

Functional skills that address behaviors necessary to be successful in classrooms are also foundational for students’ future success. *Fulfilling the Purpose of IDEA Through Academic and Functional Skill Development* describes the powerful relationship between functional and academic skills needed to prepare students for a future filled with multiple options including both employment and education. This author also gives examples of annual goals designed to develop these skills.
Planning Ahead for Success: Goal Setting for Students With Emotional and Behavioral Challenges describes the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) and how this model facilitates students’ transition from middle school to high school.

One of the most pressing challenges for current and future educators is creating effective inclusive schools. Leading the Way to Effective Schools provides school leaders with examples of ways to inspire a shared vision and challenge the process to improve inclusive practices based on Kouzes and Posner’s (2007) five practices of highly effective leaders.

Lastly, fill your own educational suitcase with new knowledge about teaching and learning by exploring new books and library materials at T/TAC W &M highlighted in Check It Out!

References


Virginia Department of Education Updates

New VCU Autism Center for Excellence Website Launches!

The VCU Autism Center for Excellence (ACE), funded by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), has launched its comprehensive website. Click here to sign up for webcasts, access a wide range of print and online resources, and learn more about the training and technical assistance available.

Standard-Based Individualized Education Program

Click here to access comprehensive resources from the Virginia Department of Education regarding the Standards-Based Individualized Education Program (IEP). Resources include a Guidance Document for implementing the Standards-Based IEP, free online training, and worksheets to help teachers develop goals and determine the component of the standard in which the student will need specialized instruction to access and address the grade level content.

2010 – 2011 Special Education Parent Involvement Survey

All parents of school-aged children and youth who receive special education services in Virginia’s schools are encouraged to complete the Department of Education’s annual Parent Involvement Survey. This is a great opportunity for parents to provide input to help guide efforts to improve services and outcomes for their children. Your responses will be kept anonymous and never be personally linked to your child. The results of this survey will be made available to the public. Click here to read more and take the survey.
Packing the Mathematical Strategy Suitcase for the Next Grade Level
By Cathy Buyn, M.Ed.

As you start helping your students pack up their book bags and prepare to move on to the next grade, take some time to reflect on their mathematical skill journey over the past year. Where did they start? What did you discover about them when they arrived in your classroom? What skills did they have? What did you have to fill in? Where are they now? Are they good problem solvers? Can they reason mathematically? Can they use communication skills to articulate their understanding of mathematical concepts? Are they able to make connections between mathematical procedures and ideas? Do they use mathematical representations to interpret and solve problems?

Think about helping them pack their suitcases with versatile essentials that will support their transition to the next grade. While you hope that they take every content skill detailed by the curriculum standards, consider deeper process skills that will serve them well regardless of the grade or content on their mathematical journey. What will they be able to pull out of their strategy suitcases and use independently to move themselves forward? What will help them become mathematical thinkers prepared to attack new concepts?

Math Strategy Packing List

Problem Solving

Many problem-solving strategies involve acronyms that provide students with a list of steps to follow when working through problems. While these strategies can be effective for many students, consider teaching students to develop their own list of individualized steps when learning how to work through specific types of problems. Students can generate lists “from scratch” or alter the steps of existing lists. Transitioning students from dependence on memorizing predetermined steps to being able to develop their own list helps develop metacognition (Uberti, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym Strategy Example</th>
<th>Student-Generated Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPV-HECC</td>
<td>1. Read it two times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read for understanding</td>
<td>2. What do I need to figure out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase--in your own words</td>
<td>3. Try to say it in a different way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visualize--draw a picture or a diagram</td>
<td>4. Organize the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesize--make a plan</td>
<td>5. Think about what to do with the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate--predict the answer</td>
<td>6. Try it out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compute--do the arithmetic</td>
<td>7. Test the answer to see if it fits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check--make sure everything is right</td>
<td>(Montague, 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Packing the Mathematical Strategy Suitcase for the Next Grade Level, By Cathy Buyn, M.Ed., Link Lines, T/TAC W&M)
Reasoning

Develop student reasoning by introducing open-ended math questions. Open-ended math questions do not have one path to a single solution but force students to consider the information presented in a variety of ways. Teachers can explore students’ ability to reason mathematically by observing their responses to open-ended math problems. As students develop reasoning skills, they will be better able to attack traditional types of math problems. Open-ended math problems are available from a variety of online sources, such as those listed below, or teachers can turn traditional math problems into open-ended items by removing information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open-Ended Math Problem Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="http://books.heinemann.com/math/about_site.cfm" alt="Open-Ended Assessment in Math" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="http://www.jamesrahn.com/workshops/pdf/Writing%20Open-Ended%20Question%20in%20Math.pdf" alt="Writing and Scoring Open-Ended Question in Math" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="http://www.fi.edu/school/math2/index.html" alt="Open-Ended Math Problems" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication

Encourage students to engage in mathematical discussions. Let their questions and ideas drive the direction of lessons. Support them as they explain their own thinking and paraphrase others’ explanations. Build in opportunities for students to engage in math talk in pairs or groups instead of teacher-directed whole-group structures. Rubrics, such as the one below, can be used to assess students’ ability to communicate and help them develop an awareness of high-quality math communication skills.
Math Communication Rubric
Adapted from http://www.exemplars.com/resources/rubrics/nctm.php

EXPERT
- A sense of audience and purpose is communicated.
- Communication at the practitioner level is achieved, and communication of arguments is supported by mathematical properties used.
- Precise math language and symbolic notation are used to consolidate math thinking and to communicate ideas.

PRACTITIONER
- A sense of audience or purpose is communicated.
- Communication of an approach is evident through a methodical, organized, coherent, sequenced, and labeled response.
- Formal math language is used throughout the solution to share and clarify ideas.

APPRENTICE
- Some awareness of audience or purpose is communicated, and may take place in the form of paraphrasing of the task.
- Some communication of an approach is evident through verbal/written accounts and explanations, use of diagrams or objects, writing, and mathematical symbols.
- Some formal math language is used, and examples are provided to communicate ideas.

NOVICE
- No awareness of audience or purpose is communicated.
- Little or no communication of an approach is evident.
- Everyday, familiar language is used to communicate ideas.

Connections

Students need to make connections between math concepts and processes and should be able to see how they can be useful in meaningful contexts. Consider helping pull it altogether for your students by starting with real-life situations and having them discover what types of concepts and processes they will need to solve problems. For example, in the video below, see how Dan Meyer illustrates a learning environment where “the math serves the conversation. The conversation doesn’t serve the math” (Meyer, 2010).

Click the image to link to the Ted Talk Video Clip
Representation

Students need to be able to create and interpret representations of mathematical problems and processes. They encounter graphic representations on math assessments and in their daily lives. A powerful method for building their skills with graphic representations is using Question-Answer Relationships (QARs) in math. While the four types of QAR questions were designed as a reading strategy, they can also be applied to math problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QAR Question Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think and search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author and you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On my own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To apply this strategy, teachers must first provide explicit instruction on the different kinds of math graphics. Once students are familiar with the different kinds of graphics, they must begin to explore the different types of information in those graphics. After students can identify the different graphics and information, teachers can start to help them make connections with the four types of QAR questions (Wright, n.d.). A detailed process for implementing this strategy with students may be found at the link below.

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/FranklinCountyGA/FranklinCountyGA/SubDepartments/Forms/QARs%20to%20Interpret%20Math%20Graphics.pdf

References and Resources


A nation-wide effort is underway to improve the graduation rate of students with disabilities. Four areas of focus have been found to help move students with disabilities forward to graduation: Standards-based Individualized Education Programs, comprehension strategies embedded within the Virginia English Standards of Learning, metacognitive competencies, and effective instruction in comprehension and metacognitive strategies.

**Standards-based Individualized Education Programs**

Use of Standards-based Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) is considered best practice in Virginia. Standards-based IEPs focus the work of teachers to help more students with disabilities to graduate on time with advanced or standard diplomas. As goals within the Standards-based IEPs are based upon grade-level standards, both general and special educators must be more knowledgeable of:

- a) A continuum of grade-level standards,
- b) The instructional strategies that will successfully assist struggling students toward mastery of their goals, and
- c) Accommodations to address accessibility to grade-level content.

The more closely student goals address grade-level content and strategy mastery, the better positioned students with disabilities are to graduate with advanced and standard diplomas. The following sections address what students with disabilities need to master grade-level content, as well as acquire comprehension strategies and monitor their own learning.

**Comprehension Strategies Across Grade Levels**

Instruction for students with disabilities within general education English classrooms must focus on the Virginia English Standards of Learning (SOL) higher-order thinking skills and metacognition (thinking about one’s thinking) to move them forward. Instruction within classrooms must also build on the skills acquired in the prior grade and the background knowledge created within the previous school year. Successful acquisition and integration of higher-order thinking and comprehension strategies such as comparing and contrasting, inferring meaning, synthesizing, and analyzing are critical to moving students toward graduation, as well as economic and social well-being (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2010). What higher-order thinking and comprehension strategies must students take with them from grade to grade?
Examination of a vertical articulation of the Virginia English SOL indicates a continuum of such strategies. The SOL comprehension strategies include comparing and contrasting (introduced at Grade 5 and carried through the standards to Grade 12), inferencing (introduced at Grade 4 and carried through the standards to Grade 10), and analyzing, critiquing, synthesizing, and interpreting (introduced at Grade 4 and carried through the standards to Grade 12).

Teaching these strategies, in combination with creating an understanding of metacognition, will lead students to successful generalization and application from grade to grade and from simple to more complex activities.

Metacognition

Students must know themselves as learners, know what various tasks demand, and have a working knowledge of applicable strategies (Ehren, 2008). When constructing meaning from text, students must have knowledge of the type of text being read, the strategies that are recommended for a given type of text, and which of the recommended strategies works best for them. Metacognition relates to students’ ability to monitor their learning, which involves:

a) Evaluating whether they are learning,
   b) Implementing strategies when needed,
   c) Knowing whether a strategy is successful, and
   d) Making changes when needed. (Allsopp, Kyger, & Lovin, 2007).

Teachers’ understanding of metacognition is critical to their ability to effectively teach comprehension strategies to struggling students. Specifically, both general and special educators must have working knowledge of metacognition and strategy use to help struggling readers successfully comprehend text. Strategy use requires the development of metacognition and assists in creating more in-depth learning for struggling readers (Ehren, 2008). The PISA Report (OECD, 2010) clearly notes that metacognitive competencies or abilities are critical to the growth of students’ knowledge and future academic success.

Instructional Strategies

Struggling students need to be explicitly taught comprehension strategies and the use of metacognitive competencies. Modeling, one step of explicit instruction, with the use of think-alouds is a fundamental and effective method for teaching these skills. Modeling involves demonstrating the use of a strategy by thinking aloud and gradually involving students in the demonstration (Schumaker, 1989).

Students who struggle with reading often do not understand the thinking processes involved with reading and must be explicitly taught. Modeling through think-alouds allows students to create a picture of what they are to be doing while reading in order to anchor their learning.

Through a combination of direction provided by Standards-based IEPs and Virginia English SOL, explicit comprehension strategy instruction, and use of metacognitive competencies, students who struggle will progress toward on-time graduation with a standard or advanced diploma, a critical step toward lifelong success.
Resources

Think-Aloud Resources

Teaching sequence for teachers’ use of think-alouds to guide students:
http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka/strategies/think_aloud.pdf
http://www.tantasqua.org/superintendent/profdevelopment/etthinkalouds.html
Reading Rockets article: http://www.readingrockets.org/article/102
AdLit.Org article: http://www.adlit.org/strategies/22735
Teachervision article: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/skill-builder/problem-solving/48546.html

Students are encouraged to verbalize their own thoughts while reading to ensure comprehension of text:
http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/building-reading-comprehension-through-139.html

Teacher Tube - Teacher modeling for her students how to use a think-aloud:
http://www1.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=12456&title=Introduction_to_Think_Alouds

Standards-based Individualized Education Program information:

Technical Assistance Document for Reading in Grades 2 through 8:

References


http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264091450-
http://www.oecd.org/socument/61/0,3746,en_32252351_46584327_46567613_1_1_1_1,00.html

Fulfilling the Purpose of IDEA through Academic and Functional Skill Development
By Dale Pennell, C.A.S.

The first stated purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 is “to ensure that all students with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living” (300.1). To that end, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) must include statements describing students’ present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLoPs) (300.320(a)(1)). IDEA does not define academic achievement or functional performance; however, the Virginia Department of Education provides the following guidance to help IEP teams appreciate the scope of this requirement.

In Virginia, statements of academic achievement must include data summaries in the areas of (a) reading, (b) writing, (c) mathematics, (d) science, and (e) history/social science (Virginia Sample IEP, 2010). Indeed, it is prudent to summarize data from any academic discipline if such data have implications for further education, employment, and independent living. Similarly, statements of functional achievement must include data summaries of students’ strengths and needs in the areas of (a) social competence, (b) communication, (c) behavior, (d) personal management, and (e) self-determination (Virginia Sample IEP, 2010). Again, IEP teams must consider the significance of such data in relation to students’ preparation for further education, employment, and independent living.

IEPs must also include statements “of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to address needs … to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and meet each of the child’s other needs that result from the child’s disability” (300.320(a)(2)). The relationship between academic achievement data and academic goal development is obvious, as is the relationship between functional performance data and functional goal development. While the relationship between academic and functional skill development may be less apparent, potentially, it is just as powerful in preparing students for further education, employment, and independent living. Several examples that illustrate this relationship follow.

Example #1

**Skill Need**

Alzenia has difficulty resolving conflicts with peers that arise during cooperative learning activities in science and history/social science, and when she participates in physical education team activities.

**Annual Goal**

By June 2011, when presented scenarios of circumstances that typically result in conflicts with peers, Alzenia will (a) identify at least two strategies for resolving each conflict respectfully; (b) analyze the pros and cons of each strategy using a reflection log or blog; and (c) select the most respectful strategy to use for five out of five scenarios bi-monthly as measured by reviews of the log/blog.
Alzenia’s difficulty resolving conflicts with peers during group activities illustrates her need for skill development in the functional areas of communication, adaptive behavior, and social competence. Failure to address this need will negatively impact her ability to benefit from academic instruction provided through group activities, which in turn may impact further education. Failure to address development of skills to manage peer conflict may also impact future employment in a job that requires teamwork, as well as affect Alzenia’s ability to participate in independent living activities, such as team sports for leisure and fellowship.

Example #2

Skill Need
Conversion of liquid units of measure (e.g., conversion of quarts to pints)

Annual Goal
By June 2011, when presented with a conversion chart and a list of ingredients for making four servings of a recipe, David will convert ingredient quantities to two and eight servings with 100% accuracy in nine out of ten trials, as documented monthly on a teacher observation log.

David’s difficulty converting liquid measures illustrates his need for skill development in the academic area of mathematics. Failure to address this need will negatively impact achievement in mathematics, as well as other classes that require this competence, both presently and in the future. Failure to address this need will also impact future employment in a field that requires such measuring skills, as well as the ability to prepare meals, an independent living skill.

Example #3

Skill Need
Self-advocacy to seek help

Annual Goal
By May 2011, during periods of independent work time, Ravi will initiate requests for academic assistance on at least 80% of the occasions when he requires help over six consecutive data collection days, as measured by a teacher-made checklist.

Ravi’s reluctance to initiate requests for academic assistance illustrates his need for skill development in self-advocacy, a sub-skill of self-determination. Failure to address this functional skill will negatively impact Ravi’s current academic achievement, and it will negatively impact his plans for further education. If Ravi requires reasonable accommodations in order to be employed but fails to advocate for them, it also will negatively impact his job performance. Finally, in adulthood, Ravi will need to advocate for himself in order to successfully navigate independent life.

References
Children in the United States are dropping out of school at alarming rates, with the highest incidence occurring immediately following the ninth-grade year (Cohen & Smerdon, 2009). While this fact is alarming for all students, students with emotional and behavioral disorders have the highest dropout rates, show the poorest in-school and postsecondary outcomes, and are more likely to be disengaged from school than students in any other disability category (Stout & Christenson, 2009; Eisenman, 2007).

In order to keep students engaged in school and on the path to graduation, educators must help students make connections between what they do in school and their post-school options. To ensure that options are aligned with students’ interests, preferences, and strengths, students should be involved in setting goals and making decisions about their educational and postsecondary goals (Carter, 2010). In high school, educators expect students to take an active role in their educational planning, so it makes sense to begin teaching middle school students the skills they need to meet these expectations (Carter, 2010).

The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) is an evidence-based, student-directed learning strategy that teachers can use to guide students as they set goals, develop action plans, reflect on outcomes, and modify goals when necessary. Teachers give support and guidance throughout the process and provide students with opportunities to autonomously learn and practice the skills. Therefore, students remain engaged in the learning process while creating plans to achieve the outcomes they desire (Wehmeyer & Field, 2007).

The following chart illustrates how the teacher guides the students through the three phases of SDLMI.

**Phase 1**
- Students identify their educational, social, or behavioral goals.
- **Example:** Samantha sets a goal to earn at least a B on all fourth quarter Earth Science tests.

**Phase 2**
- Students develop a plan to achieve their self-identified goals.
- **Example:** Samantha plans to make flash cards from her daily class notes to use when studying for her tests.

**Phase 3**
- Students evaluate their goal attainment OR
- Students adjust their goals.
- **Example:** After her next test, Samantha will ask herself the following questions: "Am I on track to reaching my goal?" "Is my current plan helping me to earn B’s on my Earth Science Tests?" "Do I need to make any adjustments to my plan?"

(Wehmeyer & Field, 2007)
Individual student’s educational goals should be:

(a) Meaningful and reflect the student’s interests, abilities, and needs;
(b) Attainable, while still presenting a challenge to the student;
(c) Observable, allowing the student to recognize when he or she has reached the goal;
(d) Measureable, so the student can measure progress towards the goal; and
(e) Achievable during a specified period of time. (Wehmeyer & Field, 2007).

It takes time for students to develop the skills and knowledge they need to achieve their desired outcomes. By involving middle school students in setting academic, social, and behavioral goals related to their postsecondary goals, they become engaged in educational planning and in building the foundation for success in high school and in adult life.

Resources

For student goal books and other project materials based on the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction, visit the Kentucky Youth Advocacy Project website.

To read more about using the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction with your students, read Promoting Causal Agency: The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction

References


As the school year winds down, building administrators are encouraged to evaluate the year in light of the work of Kouzes and Posner. What were our successes? What were our struggles? What did we learn from an initiative? What can we do better? In this issue of Link Lines, “inspiring a shared vision” and “challenging the process” is explored. An example is given for improving inclusive practices through the lens of the five practices of exemplary leadership.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) have identified five practices of highly effective leaders. They found that exemplary leaders:

- model the way,
- inspire a shared vision,
- challenge the process,
- enable others to act, and
- encourage the heart. (p. 14)

The November/December 2010 issue of Link Lines explored how “modeling the way” and “encouraging the heart” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007) can help make your school a positive place in which to work and learn. In the February/March 2011 issue, we continued to explore the five practices of highly effective leaders by examining “enabling others to act” (p. 20).

Kouzes and Posner (2007) noted that “leaders make it possible for others to do good work … Leaders work to make people feel strong, capable, and committed. Leaders enable others to act not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away” (p. 21).

To read the previous TTAC Link Lines articles visit:
- http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/articles/consultcollaborate/unleashleadership/index.php
- http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/articles/challengebehav/doonething/index.php

This article addresses two more of Kouzes and Posner’s leadership practices—inspiring a shared vision and challenging the process.

**Inspiring a Shared Vision**

How does a principal inspire a shared vision? Kouzes and Posner (2007) suggest “imagining the possibilities and finding a common purpose” (p. 129) to create a vision. When imagining the possibilities, “reflect on your past to find the recurring themes in your work” (p. 108). Answering a series of questions can help you get to the heart of your school’s vision.

- Think back to a time when your work was exciting, energizing, and positive. What were you doing? What were you trying to accomplish? What went well? What made it a positive experience?
- How did this experience support your vision or core values for promoting the success of all children?
- What essential qualities of your vision were present?
- What positive qualities would you like to see more of?
- What are your wishes for your school?

It is important for leaders to clarify the vision so that they can enlist others to share in and contribute to it. To that end, Kouzes and Posner (2007) suggest three action steps:

- Record the shared vision by drawing it, adding pictures or symbols, and creating a short slogan. (p. 153)
- Breathe life into the vision by imaging various forms of expression that illustrate the vision such as a particular movie sound track, a poem, a short story, a memorable quotation, or metaphors. (p. 155)
- Expand your communication and expressiveness skills so you can articulate the shared vision. (p. 155)
Some may view visioning activities as “fluff” and inconsequential, but effective leaders spend time exploring a shared vision and then moving toward planning and implementation.

Challenging the Process

Jim Knight, in *Unmistakable Impact* (2011), reports that “numerous extensive and comprehensive studies of the U.S. school system make it clear that our schools are not preparing our students to graduate and succeed” (p. 4). Where do leaders begin when it comes to tackling school improvement efforts? Effective principals and their school leadership teams examine student data and take inventory of current teaching practices on a regular basis.

Kouzes and Posner suggest starting out by questioning the status quo. By making a list of all the practices that are carried out just because “we’ve always done it that way” (p. 185) and by examining outcome data, teams can decide if a given practice promotes student learning. If not, decisions can be made to improve or discard the practice.

Another way to “challenge the process” is to complete an Innovation Inventory (see below). Using this tool, school teams can reflect on the innovation’s purpose, benefits, and effectiveness before making a decision on continuing or improving the practice. For a comprehensive view of school leadership teams, leaders are encouraged to access the new Considerations Packet, *Strategies for Creating Effective School Leadership Teams* at [http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/considerations/index.php](http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/considerations/index.php).

### Innovation Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is it?</th>
<th>Teaching practice (T) or paperwork (P)?</th>
<th>Purpose?</th>
<th>Is it accomplishing its purpose? How do we know?</th>
<th>Can the practice be integrated with …? If not, can it be discarded?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


**References**


**Resources**


To access Considerations Packets, visit [http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/considerations/index.php](http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/considerations/index.php).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Improving Inclusive Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model the Way</td>
<td>Clarify values by finding your voice and affirming shared ideals.</td>
<td>Belief Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.</td>
<td>If you believe this …, what would it look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspire a Shared Vision</td>
<td>Envision the future by imagining exciting possibilities.</td>
<td>See visioning activities in this article and in the Considerations Packets Strategies for Creating Effective School Leadership Teams and Strategies for Creating Inclusive Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge the Process</td>
<td>Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve.</td>
<td>Take inventory of current practices and examine student data. Visit schools that are inclusive and adopt some of their strategies or successful practices. Read current research on effective practices. Start a pilot program before implementing school-wide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience.</td>
<td>Develop an action plan with manageable goals and with activities stepped out. Refer back to the plan on a regular basis to document progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable Others to Act</td>
<td>Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships.</td>
<td>Create a leadership team made up of key stakeholders, to include administrators, general and special education teachers, other support faculty and staff, parents, students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthen others by helping them increase self-determination and develop competence.</td>
<td>Provide job-embedded staff development and coaching based on teacher and student needs. Explore the new definition of Learning Forward (formally NSDC) at <a href="http://www.learningforward.org/standfor/definition.cfm#DefinitionResources">http://www.learningforward.org/standfor/definition.cfm#DefinitionResources</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the Heart</td>
<td>Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.</td>
<td>Start team meetings and faculty meetings with celebrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.</td>
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Adapted from Kouzes and Posner, 2007, Table 1.1, p.26.
Check It Out!

The following materials are available to individuals in Superintendents Regions 2 and 3 on loan from the Training and Technical Assistance Center at the College of William and Mary (T/TAC W&M) lending library. To request materials via telephone, please call 757-221-2311 and leave a message. The requested materials will be sent to you along with a postage-paid return mailer.

A complete listing of professional resources available through the T/TAC W&M lending library may be viewed at http://education.wm.edu/centers/ttac/resources/index.php. Simply click on the Library link to view holdings, complete an online search, or order materials. The resources below are companions to the articles in this issue of Link Lines, providing more in-depth coverage on the topics in the newsletter.

Empowering Students With Technology
By Alan November

Learn how to energize the classroom with exciting ideas that will spark students’ interest and rekindle the thrill of teaching. Students and teachers will learn to connect content to real life through new resources and learning relationships that are available through technology. (IT11)

Words Their Way With Struggling Readers:
Word Study for Reading, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction, Grades 4-12
By Kevin Flanigan

Intended for the classroom teacher, this newest addition to the Words Their Way series provides specific guidance, strategies, and tools for helping struggling students, grades 4 through 12, catch up with their peers in literacy. The thrust is intervention – specifically, utilizing word study with a hands-on approach to aid students who struggle with the vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension load in middle and secondary classrooms. This book provides information on how to determine student needs, provides the strategies to guide each student toward success in content-area comprehension, and outlines ideas for fitting these strategies into a crowded classroom schedule. (IS5)

Practical Solutions for Serious Problems in Standards-Based Grading
By Thomas R. Guskey

This book discusses critical issues in implementing accurate, equitable grading policies for diverse student populations in a standards-based environment and offers research-based solutions. (TS101)

The Strategic Teacher: Selecting the Right Research-Based Strategy for Every Lesson
By Harvey F. Silver, Richard W. Strong, and Mathew J. Perini

This resource offers repertoires of strategies designed and proven to meet today’s high standards and to reach diverse learners. The authors have combined their years of research and practice to deliver reliable, high-impact, flexible teaching and learning strategies grounded in current research for teachers at all levels of experience. (IS6)

School Leadership That Works:
From Research to Results
By Robert Marzano, Timothy Waters, and Brian McNulty

This book presents what we have learned from research about the effects of school leadership on student achievement. Specific leadership practices that make a true difference in school effectiveness are profiled along with suggestions for how school leaders should use them in their day-to-day management of schools as well as during the stressful times that accompany major change initiatives. (AL146.1)
Students with disabilities who are interested in completing 2011 two- or four-year college degrees are invited to apply. Applicants must be current high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors pursuing Advanced Studies, Standard, or Modified Standard Diplomas, or students of high school age seeking GEDs. The conference fee of $150.00 includes lodging, conference materials, and five meals. Participation is limited to 40 students.

2011 Summer Institute for Inclusion Leadership Teams and Professionals in Regions 2 and 3

August 9, 2011
Structure Your Reading

August 10, 2011
Differentiating by Design: Using the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework to Build Flexible Instruction and Assessment

August 11, 2011
Inclusive Practices: Effective Co-Teaching and Co-Planning

Location:
William & Mary School of Education
Professional Development Center-Holly Room
301 Monticello Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185

Save the Date!
October 27-28, 2011

2011 W&M Symposium on Professional Collaboration and Inclusive Education

Location:
William & Mary School of Education
Professional Development Center
301 Monticello Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185
The College of William & Mary and Old Dominion University T/TACs provide support to educators and families in Regions 2 and 3 in Eastern Virginia. W&M T/TAC is responsible for training and technical assistance for education professionals who work with students with mild to moderate disabilities (ages 5-21). ODU T-TAC is responsible for training and technical assistance for early childhood special education/primary developmental delay (through age 9) and severe disabilities. You may contact T/TAC ODU at (757) 683-4333, or 1-888-249-5529, or visit their website at http://www.ttac.odu.edu.