IV. Rethinking Infrastructure

A. Overview

B. A School-Based Resource Coordinating Team

C. Refining the School Infrastructure

D. Infrastructure for a Family of Schools

>>Group Activity

*How does the school’s infrastructure address barriers to learning?*

>>>Brief follow-up reading –

*Establishing a Resource-Oriented Team*

If we replace anonymity with community, sorting with support, and bureaucracy with autonomy, we can create systems of schools that truly help all students achieve.

Tom Vander Ark (2002)

It is not enough to say that all children can learn or that no child will be left behind; the work involves . . . “achieving the vision of an American education system that enables all children to succeed in school, work, and life.”

From the 2002 mission statement of the Council for Chief State School Officers – CCSSO
IV. Rethinking Infrastructure

A. Overview

Orienting question:
What is meant by the phrase structure follows function?

Schools increasingly are recognizing that leaving no student behind requires a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated system of learning supports. A key facet of all this involves establishing potent mechanisms that focus on how learning support resources are and should be used. This involves:

C clarify the role of a potent set of resource-oriented mechanisms in pursuing learning support functions

C showing how these mechanisms can be woven into an effective and efficient infrastructure that is conceived from the school site outward.

More specifically, it involves:

Building a school-site infrastructure – Working on resource-oriented functions requires establishing and sustaining organizational and operational mechanisms that are linked into an effective and efficient infrastructure at the school site.

Building a feeder pattern infrastructure – After a school site infrastructure is functioning appropriately, it needs to be connected to other schools in a complex or feeder pattern (e.g., a family of schools) in order to maximize use of available resources and achieve economies of scale.

Rethinking the central office infrastructure – Then, infrastructure connections with a district’s central office can be reworked to ensure that site-based and school cluster efforts are effectively nurtured.

School-community collaboratives – Ultimately, the emphasis on enhancing school and community connections leads to considerations of how school infrastructure mechanisms braid with community infrastructure mechanisms to establish effective, function-oriented school-community collaboratives.
As more and more emphasis is placed on committees, teams, collaborative bodies, and other groups that come together, there has been increasing concern about just going to meetings and not making any progress. One problem is that a fundamental organizational principle often is neglected. That principle states simply: *structure follows function*.

*We are unlikely to create an effective infrastructure if we are not clear about the functions we want to accomplish.*

Efforts to effectively address barriers to learning involve (a) intervention-oriented functions and (b) resource-oriented functions. Moving in new directions adds functions specifically related to (c) systemic change.

For example:

C in responding to the needs of individuals students and families, the emphasis is on such *case-oriented intervention functions* as determining who needs what and how soon (triage), referrals to appropriate interventions, coordinating and managing interventions, monitoring progress and reassessing needs, and related activity;

C *resource-oriented functions* include mapping and analyzing how resources are being used and establishing priorities for how to deploy and redeploy resources to improve school outcomes;

C *systemic change functions* include how to create readiness for change, how to build stakeholder capacity for change, how to phase in changes, and how to sustain them.

An effective infrastructure must be designed with all these functions in mind. Our focus here is on a key resource-oriented mechanism for school sites. By starting with a designated group that is responsible for resources, a school can develop a flexible and fluid infrastructure with the capacity to carry out functions and that can be sustained over time.

At schools, obviously administrative leadership is key to ending the marginalization of efforts to address learning, behavior, and emotional problems. The other key is establishment of a mechanism that focuses on how resources are used at the school to address barriers to learning.
In some schools as much as 30 percent of the budget may be going to problem prevention and correction. Every school is expending resources to enable learning; few have a mechanism to ensure appropriate use of existing resources. Such a mechanism contributes to cost-efficacy of learning support activity by ensuring all such activity is planned, implemented, and evaluated in a coordinated and increasingly integrated manner. It also provides another means for reducing marginalization.

Creating resource-oriented mechanisms is essential for braiding together school and community resources and encouraging intervention activity to function in an increasingly cohesive way. When such mechanisms are created in the form of a "team," they also are a vehicle for building working relationships and can play a role in solving turf and operational problems.

One primary and essential function undertaken by a resource-oriented mechanism is identifying existing school and community programs and services that provide supports for students, families, and staff. This early stage of resource mapping provides a basis for a "gap" assessment. (Given surveys of the unmet needs of and desired outcomes for students, their families, and school staff, what’s missing?). Analyses of what is available, effective, and needed provide an essential basis for formulating priorities. Clear priorities allow for strategic development of ways to fill critical gaps and enhancing cost-effectiveness (e.g., by enhanced use of existing resources through linkages with other schools and district sites and with the community).

In a similar fashion, a resource-oriented team for a cluster or family of schools (e.g., a high school and its feeder schools) and a team at the district level provide mechanisms for analyses on a larger scale. This can lead to strategies for cross-school, community-wide, and district-wide cooperation and integration to enhance intervention effectiveness and garner economies of scale.

For those concerned with school reform, resource-oriented mechanisms are a key facet of efforts to transform and restructure school support programs and services to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.
IV. Rethinking Infrastructure

B. A School-Site Resource Coordinating Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orienting questions:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are major resource-oriented functions relevant to a school-based component to address barriers to learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do resource-oriented and case-oriented teams differ?</td>
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One form of school level resource-oriented mechanism has been called a Resource Coordinating Team.

Properly constituted, such a team provides on-site leadership for efforts to address barriers comprehensively and ensures the maintenance and improvement of a multifaceted and integrated approach.

Creation of a school-site Resource Coordinating Team provides a starting point in efforts to reform and restructure education support programs. Such a team not only can begin the process of transforming what already is available, it can help reach out to District and community resources to enhance education support activity. As discussed below, such a resource-oriented team differs from case-oriented teams. The focus of this team is not on individual students. Rather, it is oriented to clarifying resources and how they are best used school-wide and for the many, not just the few.

Resource-oriented teams are to help

- improve coordination and efficacy by ensuring
  - basic systems are in place and effective
    (not only for referral, triage, case management, but for ensuring learning support is enhanced in classrooms and for addressing school-wide problems)
  - programs are profiled, written up, and circulated to enhance visibility and access
  - resources are shared equitably for expanded impact

- enhance resources through staff development and by facilitating creation of new resources via redeployment and outreach

- evolve a site's education support activity infrastructure by assisting in the creation of program work groups as hubs for such activities.
Among its first functions, the Resource Coordinating Team can help clarify

(a) the resources available (who? what? when?) – For example, the team can map out and then circulate to staff, students, and parents a handout describing "Available Programs and Resources."

(b) how someone gains access to available resources – The team can circulate a description of procedures to the school staff and parents.

(c) how resources are coordinated – To ensure systems are in place and to enhance effectiveness, the team can help weave together resources, make analyses, coordinate activity, and so forth.

(d) what other resources the school needs and what steps should be taken to acquire them – The team can identify additional resources that might be acquired from the District or by establishing community linkages.

When we mention a Resource Coordinating Team, some school staff quickly respond: We already have one! When we explore this with them, we usually find what they have is a case-oriented team – that is, a team that focuses on individual students who are having problems. Such a team may be called a student study team, student success team, student assistance team, teacher assistance team, and so forth.

To help clarify the difference between resource and case-oriented teams, we contrast the functions of each as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A Case-Oriented Team</strong></th>
<th><strong>A Resource-Oriented Team</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on specific <strong>individuals</strong> and discrete <strong>services</strong> to address barriers to learning</td>
<td>Focuses on all students and the <strong>resources, programs, and systems</strong> to address barriers to learning &amp; promote healthy development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes called:</td>
<td>Possibly called:</td>
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<tr>
<td>CChild or Student Study Team</td>
<td>CResource Coordinating Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CStudent Success Team</td>
<td>CResource Coordinating Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CStudent Assistance Team</td>
<td>CSchool Support Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTeacher Assistance Team</td>
<td>CLearning Support Team</td>
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<td>CIEP Team</td>
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**EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:**

**A Case-Oriented Team**
- triage
- referral
- case monitoring/management
- case progress review
- case reassessment

**A Resource-Oriented Team**
- mapping resources
- analyzing resources
- enhancing resources
- program and system planning/development – including emphasis on establishing a full continuum of intervention
- redeploying resources
- coordinating-integrating resources
- social "marketing"
Two parables help differentiate the two types of mechanisms and the importance of both sets of functions.

A *case-orientation* fits the *starfish* parable.

The day after a great storm had washed up all sorts of sea life far up onto the beach, a youngster set out to throw back as many of the still-living starfish as he could. After watching him toss one after the other into the ocean, an old man approached him and said: *It’s no use your doing that, there are too many, You're not going to make any difference.*

The boy looked at him in surprise, then bent over, picked up another starfish, threw it in, and then replied: *It made a difference to that one!*

This metaphor, of course, reflects all the important efforts to assist specific students.

The *resource-oriented* focus is captured by a different parable.

In a small town, one weekend a group of school staff went fishing together down at the river. Not long after they got there, a child came floating down the rapids calling for help. One of the group on the shore quickly dived in and pulled the child out. Minutes later another, then another, and then many more children were coming down the river. Soon every one was diving in and dragging children to the shore and then jumping back in to save as many as they could. In the midst of all this frenzy, one of the group was seen walking away. Her colleagues were irate. How could she leave when there were so many children to save? After long hours, to everyone’s relief, the flow of children stopped, and the group could finally catch their breath.

At that moment, their colleague came back. They turned on her and angrily shouted: *How could you walk off when we needed everyone here to save the children?*

She replied: *It occurred to me that someone ought to go upstream and find out why so many kids were falling into the river. What I found is that the old bridge had several planks missing, and when children tried to jump over the gap, they couldn’t make it and fell through into the river. So I got some folks to help fix the bridge.*

Fixing and building better bridges is a good way to think about prevention, and it helps underscore the importance of taking time to improve and enhance resources, programs, and systems.
Recapping: What a resource-oriented mechanism does

A resource-oriented team exemplifies the type of mechanism needed for overall cohesion of school support programs and systems. As indicated, its focus is not on specific individuals, but on how resources are used.

In pursuing its functions, the team provides what often is a missing link for managing and enhancing programs and systems in ways that integrate and strengthen interventions. For example, such a mechanism can be used to (a) map and analyze activity and resources to improve their use in preventing and ameliorating problems, (b) build effective referral, case management, and quality assurance systems, (c) enhance procedures for management of programs and information and for communication among school staff and with the home, and (d) explore ways to redeploy and enhance resources – such as clarifying which activities are nonproductive and suggesting better uses for resources, as well as reaching out to connect with additional resources in the school district and community.

Minimally, a resource-oriented team can reduce fragmentation and enhance cost-efficacy by assisting in ways that encourage programs to function in a coordinated and increasingly integrated way. For example, the team can coordinate resources, enhance communication among school staff and with the home about available assistance and referral processes, and monitor programs to be certain they are functioning effectively and efficiently. More generally, this group can provide leadership in guiding school personnel in evolving the school’s vision for learning support.

Where creation of "another team" is seen as a burden, existing teams, such as student or teacher assistance teams and school crisis teams, have demonstrated the ability to do resource-oriented functions. In adding the resource-oriented functions to another team’s work, great care must be taken to structure the agenda so sufficient time is devoted to the new tasks. For small schools, a large team often is not feasible, but a two person team can still do the job.

It is conceivable that one person could start the process of understanding the fundamental resource-oriented functions and delineating an infrastructure to carry them out. It is better, however, if several stakeholders put their heads together.
Who Should be Included?

A resource-oriented mechanism is meant to focus on resources related to all major learning support programs. It brings together representatives of all these programs. This might include school counselors, psychologists, nurses, social workers, attendance and dropout counselors, health educators, special education staff, after school program staff, bilingual and Title I program coordinators, health educators, safe and drug free school staff, and union reps. It also should include representatives of any community agency that is significantly involved with schools. Beyond these "service" providers, such a team is well-advised to add the energies and expertise of administrators, regular classroom teachers, non-certificated staff, parents, and older students.

Properly constituted, trained, and supported, a resource-oriented team complements the work of the site's governance body through providing on-site overview, leadership, and advocacy for all activity aimed at addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Having at least one representative from the resource team on the school's governing and planning bodies ensures the type of infrastructure connections that are essential if programs and services are to be maintained, improved, and increasingly integrated with classroom instruction. And, of course, having an administrator on the team provides the necessary link with the school’s administrative decision making related to allocation of budget, space, staff development time, and other resources.

See Exhibit 5 on the following page for a one-page fact sheet describing a Resource Coordinating Team.


**WHAT IS A RESOURCE COORDINATING TEAM?**

Every school that wants to improve its systems for providing student support needs a mechanism that focuses specifically on improving resource use and enhancement. A Resource Coordinating Team is a vital form of such a mechanism.

Most schools have teams that focus on individual student/family problems (e.g., a student support team, an IEP team). These teams focus on such functions as referral, triage, and care monitoring or management. In contrast to this case-by-case focus, a school’s Resource Coordinating Team can take responsibility for enhancing use of all resources available to the school for addressing barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development. This includes analyzing how existing resources are deployed and clarifying how they can be used to build a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach. It also integrally involves the community with a view to integrating human and financial resources from public and private sectors to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

### What are its functions?

A Resource Coordinating Team performs essential functions related to the implementation and ongoing development of a comprehensive, multifaceted, and cohesive approach for addressing barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development.

Examples of key functions are:

- Mapping resources at school and in the community
- Analyzing resources
- Identifying the most pressing program development needs at the school
- Coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- Establishing priorities for strengthening programs and developing new ones
- Planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and systems
- Recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- Developing strategies for enhancing resources
- “Social marketing”

Related to the concept of an Enabling (Learning Support) Component, these functions are pursued within frameworks that outline six curriculum content areas and the comprehensive continuum of interventions needed to develop a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to student support that is integrated fully into the fabric of the school.

### Who’s on a Resource Coordinating Team?

A Resource Coordinating Team might begin with only two people. Where feasible, it should expand into an inclusive group of informed stakeholders who are able and willing. This would include the following:

- Principal or assistant principal
- School Psychologist
- Counselor
- School Nurse
- School Social Worker
- Behavioral Specialist
- Special education teacher
- Representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
- Student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
- Others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

It is important to integrate the RCT with the infrastructure mechanisms at the school focused on instruction and management/governance. For example, the school administrator on the team must represent the team at administrative meetings; there also should be a representative at governance meetings; and another should represent the team at a Resource Coordinating Council formed for the feeder pattern of schools.

### References:


Center for Mental Health in Schools (2002). *Creating the Infrastructure for an Enabling (Learning Support) Component to Address Barriers to Student Learning*. Los Angeles: Author at UCLA.

C. Refining the School Infrastructure

Orienting questions:

Why is a steering body important for a learning supports (enabling) component?

Why should the component be fully integrated into the school infrastructure?

Why should a Resource Coordinating Team establish standing and ad hoc work groups?

Just as change at the District level cannot be effective without a strong supportive structure, substantial support is necessary for systemic change at every level.

At the school level, it is important not only to have a Resource-oriented team but also to establish a school advisory/steering body for the overall development of the component to address barriers to learning and to guide and monitor the resource team. All initiatives need a team of “champions” who agree to steer the process. These advocates must also be competent with respect to the work to be done and highly motivated not just to help get things underway but to ensure they are sustained over time.

The steering group should be fully connected with teams guiding the instructional and management components at the school. And, it should be formally linked to the district steering mechanism.

Over time, this is the group that must ensure that all staff facilitating change

• maintain a big picture perspective and appropriate movement toward long-term goals

• have sufficient support and guidance

• are interfacing with those whose ongoing buy-in is essential

The group should not be too large. Membership includes key change agents, 1-2 other key school leaders, perhaps someone from local institution of higher education, perhaps a key agency person, a few people who can connect to other institutions.

Such a group can meet monthly (more often if major problems arise) to review progress, problem solve, decide on mid-course corrections.

The group's first focus is on ensuring that capacity is built to accomplish the desired system changes. This includes ensuring an adequate policy and leadership base; if one is not already in place, they need to work on putting one in place. Capacity building, of course, also includes special training for change agents.
The group can work against the perception that it is a closed, elite group by hosting "focus groups" to keep others informed and to elicit input and feedback.

Developing Ad Hoc and Standing Work Groups for a Resource Team

Work groups are formed as needed by the Resource Coordinating Team to address specific concerns (e.g., mapping resources, planning for capacity building and social marketing, addressing problems related to the referral systems), develop new programs (e.g., welcoming and social support strategies for newcomers to the school), implement special initiatives (e.g., positive behavior support), and so forth. Such groups usually are facilitated by a member of the Resource Coordinating Team who recruits a small group of others from the school and community who are willing and able to help. The group facilitator provides regular updates to the Resource Coordinating Team on the group’s progress and provides the group with feedback from the Team.

Ad hoc work groups take on tasks that can be done over a relatively short time period, and the group disbands once the work is accomplished. Standing work groups focus on defined program areas and pursue current priorities for enhancing intervention in the area. For example, in pursuing intervention development related to the six arenas of intervention we use to define the programmatic focus of an Enabling Component, we recommend establishing standing work groups for each area (see figure below).

Component to Enable Learning: A Comprehensive, Multifaceted Approach for Addressing Barriers to Learning

Such an approach weaves six clusters of enabling activity (i.e., an enabling component curriculum) into the fabric of the school to address barriers to learning and promote healthy development for all students.


Emergent impact = Enhanced school climate/culture/sense of community
Integrating the Component into the School Infrastructure

Figure 10 illustrates the type of infrastructure that needs to emerge at the school if it is to effectively develop a comprehensive component to address barriers to learning.

**Figure 10. An example of an integrated infrastructure at a school site.**

*Advisory/Steering Committee* for Component

**Resource Coordinating**

- Case-Oriented Teams
  - Moderate Problems
- Severe problems

**Advisory/Steering Committee** for Component

**Leadership for instruction**

(Various teams focused on improving instruction)

**Management/Governance Component**

*Management/Governance Team*

Ad hoc and standing work groups***

*A Learning Support or Enabling Component Advisory/Steering Committee at a school site consists of a leadership group whose responsibility is to ensure the vision for the component is not lost. It meets as needed to monitor and provide input to the Resource Coordinating Team.*

**A Resource Coordinating Team is the key to ensuring component cohesion and integrated implementation. It meets weekly to guide and monitor daily implementation and development of all programs, services, initiatives, and systems at a school that are concerned with providing student support and specialized assistance.*

***Ad hoc and standing work groups are formed as needed by the Resource Coordinating Team to address specific concerns. These groups are essential for accomplishing the many tasks associated with the Resource Coordinating Team’s functions.*
It is clear that building a learning supports (enabling) component requires strong leadership and new positions to help steer systemic changes and construct the necessary infrastructure. Establishment and maintenance of the component requires continuous, proactive, effective teaming, organization, and accountability.

Administrative leadership at every level is key to the success of any initiative in schools that involves systemic change (see Exhibit 6).

Everyone at the school site should be aware of who in the District provides leadership, promotes, and is accountable for the development of the component. It is imperative that such leadership be at a high enough level to be at key decision making tables when budget and other fundamental decisions are discussed.

Given that a learning supports component is one of the primary and essential components of school improvement, it is imperative to have a designated administrative and staff leadership. An administrative school leader for the component may be created by redefining a percentage (e.g., 50% of an assistant principal’s day). Or, in schools that only have one administrator, the principal might delegate some administrative responsibilities to a coordinator (e.g., Title I coordinator or a Center coordinator at schools with a Family or Parent Center). The designated administrative leader must sit on the resource team (discussed in the next module) and represent and advocate team recommendations at administrative and governance body meetings.

Besides facilitating initial development of a potent component to address barriers to learning, the administrative lead must guide and be accountable for daily implementation, monitoring, and problem solving. Such administrative leadership is vital.

There is also the need for a staff lead to address daily operational matters. This may be one of the student support staff (e.g., a school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse) or a Title I coordinator, or a teacher with special interest in learning supports.

In general, these leaders, along with other key staff, embody the vision for the component. Their job descriptions should delineate specific functions related to their roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

The exhibit on the following page outlines the type of functions that have been found useful in clarifying the importance of the site administrative role. Following that is an example of one school's Learning Supports infrastructure.
Site Administrative Lead for a Component to Address Barriers to Learning

The person assuming this role must be able to devote at least 50% time to the Component. For a site administrator who already has a job description that requires 100% time involvement in other duties, the first task is to transfer enough of these other duties to free up the needed time.

In essence, the job involves providing on a daily basis leadership and facilitation related to

1. Component administration and governance concerns (e.g., policy, budget, organizational and operational planning, interface with instruction)
   Represents the Component as a member of the site's administrative team and interfaces with the governance body, budget committee, etc. as necessary and appropriate.

2. Development, operation, maintenance, and evolution of the infrastructure and programmatic activity
   A day-in and day-out focus on enhancing program availability, access, and efficacy by maintaining a high level of interest, involvement, and collaboration among staff and other stakeholders (including community resources).

3. Staff and other stakeholder development
   Ensures that Component personnel receive appropriate development and that an appropriate share of the development time is devoted to Enabling concerns.

4. Communication (including public relations) and information management
   Ensures there is an effective communication system (e.g., memos, bulletins, newsletter, suggestion box, meetings) and an information system that contributes to case management and program evaluation.

5. Coordination and integration of all enabling activity and personnel (on and off-site)

6. Rapid problem solving

7. Ongoing support (including a focus on morale)
   Ensuring that those involved in planning and implementing enabling activity have appropriate support and appreciation.

8. Evaluation
   Ensuring there is data about accomplishments and for quality improvement.

9. Some direct involvement in program activity and in providing specific services
   This can help enhance understanding and maintain skills and allows for a sense of immediate contribution.

Example of Infrastructure for a Learning Supports Component at One School

To ensure all the functions related to learning supports were properly addressed, the school improvement design called for development of the following organizational, administrative, and operational structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Administrative Structures</th>
<th>Recommends policy and priorities related to this Component. Participants are representatives from all stakeholder groups who, by role or interest, want to help evolve a comprehensive,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Supports School-Wide Committee</td>
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multifaceted, and integrated approach for addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development.

Learning Supports Administrative Leads
Asst. Principal role as delineated in daily job description

Learning Supports Staff Lead
Has daily responsibilities to advance the agenda for the component as delineated in job description (and also has had responsibilities as Family Center Director).

Learning Supports Steering Committee
Meets periodically to review, guide, and monitor progress and long-range plans, problem-solve, and act as a catalyst to keep the component linked to the total design (other components, committees). Participants are component site leaders and key staff, reps. from the community and families, and several leaders from off-site who are highly committed and knowledgeable about the component.

Operational Structures

Resource Coordinating Team
Maps, analyzes, and recommends resource allocation & redeployment in the six areas that make up the component’s curriculum; clarifies priorities for program development; monitors, guides, and enhances systems to coordinate, integrate, and strengthen the Component programs and services; and more. Participants are leaders of each of the components’ six areas, administrative and staff leads for the Component, reps. of community agencies that are significantly involved at the site.

Work groups for the six areas
Classroom Focused Enabling
(e.g., enhancing classroom ability to address student problems)

Crisis Response and Prevention
(e.g., School Crisis Team; bullying prevention)

Transitions
(e.g., welcoming and social support for newcomers; programs to reduce tardies, improve attendance, facilitate grade to grade changes, college counseling, school to work programs)

Home Involvement in Schooling
(e.g., Adult Ed, Family Center, Comm. reps, and parent volunteers)

Student and Family Assistance using the Consultation and Case Review Panel
(e.g., health and social support services, psychological counseling, Health Center)

Community Outreach/Volunteers
(e.g., volunteers, business connections, etc.)

Administrative leads
Provide daily leadership and problem solving, support and accountability, advocacy at administrative table and at shared decision making tables.

Staff Lead
Carries out daily tasks involved in enhancing the component; ensures that system and program activity is operating effectively; provides daily problem-solving related to systems and programs.
D. Infrastructure for a Family of Schools

Orienting questions:
Why is it worthwhile to establish a Resource Coordinating Council?
Who should participate?

Schools in the same geographic or catchment area have a number of shared concerns, and schools in the feeder pattern often interact with the same family because each level has a youngster from that family who is having difficulties. Furthermore, some programs and personnel already are or can be shared by several neighboring schools, thereby minimizing redundancy and reducing costs. A multi-site team can provide a mechanism to help ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of resources and also can enhance the pooling of resources to reduce costs. Such a mechanism can be particularly useful for integrating the efforts of high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools. This clearly is important in addressing barriers with those families who have youngsters attending more than one level of schooling in the same cluster. It is neither cost-effective nor good intervention for each school to contact a family separately in instances where several children from a family are in need of special attention.

A Resource-Oriented Mechanism for a Family of Schools

In general, a group of schools can benefit from a multi-site resource-oriented mechanism designed to provide leadership, facilitate communication and connection, and ensure quality improvement across sites. For example, a multi-site team, or what we call a Complex Resource Coordinating Council, might consist of a high school and its feeder middle and elementary schools. It brings together one to two representatives from each school's resource team (see figure below).

Figure 11. Infrastructure Linking a Family of Schools Together and with the District and Community
A mechanism such as a Resource Coordinating Council helps (a) coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools, (b) identify and meet common needs with respect to guidelines and staff development, and (c) create linkages and collaborations among schools and with community agencies. In this last regard, it can play a special role in community outreach both to create formal working relationships and ensure that all participating schools have access to such resources.

Natural starting points for councils are the sharing of need assessments, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations for reform and restructuring. An initial focus may be on local, high priority concerns such as developing prevention programs and safe school plans to address community-school violence.

With respect to linking with community resources, multi-school teams are especially attractive to community agencies who often don't have the time or personnel to link with individual schools. In general, then, a group of sites can benefit from having an ongoing, multi-site, resource-oriented mechanism that provides leadership, facilities communication, coordination, integration, and quality improvement of all activity the sites have for addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development.

Some specific functions for a Council are:

- **C** to share info about resource availability (at participating schools and in the immediate community and in geographically related schools and district-wide) with a view to enhancing coordination and integration.

- **C** to identify specific needs and problems and explore ways to address them (e.g., Can some needs be met by pooling certain resources? Can improved linkages and collaborations be created with community agencies? Can additional resources be acquired? Can some staff and other stakeholder development activity be combined?)

- **C** to discuss and formulate longer-term plans and advocate for appropriate resource allocation related to enabling activities.
Council Membership

Each school might be represented on the Council by two members of its Resource Team. To assure a broad perspective, one of the two might be the site administrator responsible for enabling activity; the other would represent line staff. To ensure a broad spectrum of stakeholder input, the council also should include representatives of classroom teachers, non-certificated staff, parents, and students, as well as a range of community resources that should be involved in schools.

Council facilitation involves responsibility for convening regular monthly (and other ad hoc) meetings, building the agenda, assuring that meetings stay task focused and that between meeting assignments will be carried out, and ensuring meeting summaries are circulated. With a view to shared leadership and effective advocacy, an administrative leader and a council member elected by the group can co-facilitate meetings. Meetings can be rotated among schools to enhance understanding of each site in the council.

For examples of Resource Coordination Council’s Initial and Ongoing Tasks, general meeting format, and a checklist for establishing councils, see the accompanying reading and adapt the material in the relevant exhibits.

Notes: System-wide Mechanisms and School-Community Collaboratives

School and multi-site mechanisms are not sufficient. A system-wide mechanism must be in place to support school and cluster level activity. A system-wide resource coordinating body can provide guidance for operational coordination and integration across groups of schools. Functions might encompass (a) ensuring there is a district-wide vision and strategic planning for addressing barriers to student learning and promoting healthy development, (b) ensuring coordination and integration among groups of schools and system-wide, (c) establishing linkages and integrated collaboration among system-wide programs and with those operated by community, city, and county agencies, (d) ensuring complete and comprehensive integration with the district’s education reforms, and (e) ensuring evaluation, including determination of equity in program delivery, quality improvement reviews of all mechanisms and procedures, and ascertaining results for accountability purposes.

The system-wide group should include (a) representatives of multi-school councils, (b) key district administrative and line staff with relevant expertise and vision (including unit heads, coordinators, union reps), and (c) various other stakeholders such as nondistrict members whose job and expertise (e.g., public health, mental health, social services, recreation, juvenile justice, post secondary institutions) make them invaluable contributors to the tasks at hand.

Also note that the Center for Mental Health in Schools has developed a major guide for those who are ready to move on to developing full scale school-community partnerships (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2003).

See Exhibit 7 for a review of key points covered above.
Exhibit 7
Phasing in Teams and Councils

This Exhibit provides a review of points covered about Resource Coordinating Teams and Councils and how to phase them in their efforts to organize a learning support component.

Phase 1. Organizing Resource Coordinating Teams at a School Site

Creation of a school-site Resource Coordinating Team provides a starting point in efforts to reform and restructure education support programs. Such a team not only can begin the process of transforming what already is available, it can help reach out to District and community resources to enhance education support activity. Such a resource-oriented team differs from case-oriented teams (e.g., Student Assistance/Guidance Teams). The focus of this team is not on individual students. Rather, it is oriented to clarifying resources and how they are best used.

Such a team can help

- improve coordination and efficacy by ensuring
  - basic systems (for referral, triage, case management) are in place and effective
  - programs/services are profiled, written up, and circulated
  - resources are shared equitably
- enhance resources through staff development and by facilitating creation of new resources via redeployment and outreach
- evolve a site's education support activity infrastructure by assisting in the creation of program teams and Family/Parent Centers as hubs for such activities.

Among its first functions, the Resource Coordinating Team can help clarify

(a) the resources available to the school (who? what? when?) – For example, the team can map out and then circulate a handout describing Available Special Services, Programs, and Other Resources.

(b) how someone gains access to available resources – The team can clarify processes for referral, triage, follow-through, and case management, and circulate a description of procedures to the school staff and parents.

(c) how resources are coordinated – To ensure systems are in place and to enhance effectiveness, the team can help weave together resources, make analyses, coordinate activity, and so forth.

(d) what other resources the school needs and what steps should be taken to acquire them – The team can identify additional resources that might be acquired from the District or by establishing community linkages.

Toward the end of Phase 1, a Complex Resource Coordinating Council (a multi-locality council) can be organized. This group is designed to ensure sharing and enhancement of resources across schools in a given neighborhood. Of particular interest are ways to address common concerns related to crisis response and prevention, as well as dealing with the reality that community resources that might be linked to schools are extremely limited in many geographic areas and thus must be shared. (cont.)
**Phase II. Organizing a Programmatic Focus and Infrastructure for Learning Supports**

All sites that indicate readiness for moving toward reconceptualizing education support (enabling) activity into a delimited set of program areas are assisted in organizing program teams and restructuring the site's Resource Coordinating Team.

This involves facilitating

- development of program teams
- analyses of education support activity (programs/services) by program area teams to determine
  - how well the various activities are coordinated/integrated (with a special emphasis on minimizing redundancy)
  - whether any activities need to be improved (or eliminated)
  - what is missing -- especially any activity that seems as important or even more important than those in operation.

- efforts by program area teams related to
  - profiling, writing up, circulating, and publicizing program/service information
  - setting priorities to improve activity in a programmatic area
  - setting steps into motion to accomplish their first priority for improvement
  - moving on to their next priorities.

**Phase III. Facilitating the Maintenance and Evolution of Appropriate Changes**

In general, this involves evaluating how well the infrastructure and related changes are working, including whether the changes are highly visible and understood. If there are problems, the focus is on clarifying what is structurally and systemically wrong and taking remedial steps. (It is important to avoid the trap of dealing with a symptom and ignoring ongoing factors that are producing problems; that is, the focus should be on addressing systemic flaws in ways that can prevent future problems.)

Examples of activity:

- Checking on maintenance of Program Teams (keeping membership broad based and with a working core through processes for identifying, recruiting, and training new members when teams need bolstering).

- Holding individual meetings with school site leadership responsible for restructuring in this area and with team leaders to identify whether everyone is receiving adequate assistance and staff development.

- Determining if teams periodically make a new listing (mapping) of the current activity at the site and whether they update their analyses of the activity.

- Checking on efficacy of referral, triage, and case management systems.

- Checking on the effectiveness of mechanisms for daily coordination, communication, and problem solving.

- Evaluating progress in refining and enhancing program activity.

**Phase IV. Facilitating the Institutionalization/Sustainability of Appropriate Changes**

A critical aspect of institutionalization involves ensuring that school staff responsible for restructuring education support activity formulate a proposal for the next fiscal year. Such a proposal encompasses resource requests (budget, personnel, space, staff development time). It must be submitted and approved by the site's governance authority. Institutionalization requires a plan that is appropriately endorsed and empowered through appropriation of adequate resources.

Institutionalization is further supported by evaluating functioning and outcomes of new mechanisms and fundamental activities. With a view to improving quality and efficacy, the findings from such evaluations are used to revise activities and mechanisms as necessary.
Group Reflection and Discussion

Based on what you’ve learned so far:

think about a school with which you are familiar.

Then, discuss

How does the school’s infrastructure address barriers to learning?

Group Process Guidelines:

C Start by identifying someone who will facilitate the group interchange

C Take a few minutes to make a few individual notes on a worksheet

C Be sure all major points are compiled so they can be shared with other groups.

C Ask someone else to watch the time so that the group doesn’t bog down.
Establishing a Resource-Oriented Team

Establishing a resource-oriented team in schools represents a major systemic change. The danger in creating new mechanisms is that they can become just another task, another meeting – busy work. Infrastructure must be designed in keeping with the major functions to be carried out, and all functions must be carried out in the service of a vital vision for improving outcomes for all students. Resource-oriented mechanisms are valuable only if they are driven by and help advance an important vision. Leaders and facilitators must be able to instill that vision in team members and help them sustain it.

Successful systemic change requires considerable attention to creating readiness and building the capacity for initial implementation. After introducing the concept of a learning support or enabling component, it is easy to get lost in a morass of details when caught up in the daily tasks of making major systemic changes. This module covers topics and contains some tools that have been found helpful in efforts to provide guidance and support for those involved in establishing innovations at schools. As you use the material, you may find it helpful periodically to review the points covered below so that you can keep the big picture in perspective and maintain a sense of some of the most basic considerations.

Who Will Facilitate the Process?

Someone needs to be designated to facilitate the process of establishing a resource-oriented team at a school. Because the process involves significant organizational change, the individual chosen has to have the full support of the administration and the skills of a change agent. We characterize such an individual as an organization facilitator.*

An organization facilitator is a catalyst and manager of change. As such, s/he strives to ensure that changes are true to the design for improvement and adapted to fit the local culture. The facilitator also must be an effective problem solver – responding quickly as problems arise and designing proactive strategies to counter anticipated barriers to change, such as negative reactions and dynamics, common factors interfering with working relationships, and system deficiencies. All this must be accomplished in ways that enhance readiness and commitment to change, empowerment, a sense of community.

Our discussion here focuses on organization facilitators as a change agent for one school. However, such an individual might rotate among a group of schools. And, in large school districts, a cadre of such professionals might be used to facilitate change across an entire district.

Regardless of the nature and scope of the work, an organization facilitator's core functions require an individual whose background and training have prepared her/him to understand

- the specific systemic changes (content and processes) to be accomplished (In this respect, a facilitator must have an assimilated understanding of the fundamental concerns underlying the need for change.)
- how to work with a site's stakeholders as they restructure their programs (e.g., how to be an effective agent of change).

The main work revolves around planning and facilitating:

- infrastructure development, maintenance, action, mechanism liaison and interface, and priority setting
- stakeholder development (coaching -- with an emphasis on creating readiness both in terms of motivation and skills; team building; providing technical assistance)
- communication (visibility), resource mapping, analyses, coordination, and integration
- formative evaluation and rapid problem solving
- ongoing support

Such personnel also can help organize basic "interdisciplinary and cross training" to create the trust, knowledge, skills, and the attitudes essential for the kind of working relationships required if the resource-oriented mechanism is to operate successfully.

For more see the Exhibit on the following pages.
Exhibit

Examples of Activity for an Organization Facilitator

1. Infrastructure tasks
   (a) Works with school governing bodies to further clarify and negotiate agreements about
       • policy changes
       • participating personnel (including administrators authorized to take the lead
         for the systemic changes)
       • time, space, and budget commitments
       (b) Helps leaders identify and prepare members for a group to steer the process
       (c) Helps leaders identify members for the resource-oriented team

2. Stakeholder development
   (a) Provides general orientations for governing and planning bodies
   (b) Provides basic capacity building for resource-oriented team
   (c) Ongoing coaching of team members (about purposes, processes)
       Examples: At a team's first meeting, the organization facilitator offers to
       provide a brief orientation presentation (including handouts) and helps teams
       establish processes for daily interaction and periodic meetings. During the
       next few meetings, coaching might help with mapping and analyzing
       resources.
       (d) Works with leaders to ensure presentations and written information about
           changes are provided to the entire staff and other stakeholders

3. Communication (visibility), coordination, and integration
   (a) Determines if info on new directions (including leadership and team functions and
       membership) and about resources has been written-up and circulated. If not,
       facilitator determines why and helps address systemic breakdowns; if necessary,
       effective processes are modeled.
   (b) Determines if leaders and team members are effectively handling priority tasks. If
       not, the facilitator determines why and helps address systemic breakdowns; if necessary,
       effective processes are modeled.
Examples of Activity for an Organization Facilitator

(c) Determines if the following have been accomplished (and if not, takes appropriate steps)

• mapping of current activity and resources related to learning supports

• analyses of activity and resources to determine
  > how well they are meeting needs and how well coordinated/integrated they are (with special emphasis on maximizing cost-effectiveness and minimizing redundancy)
  > what learning supports need to be improved (or eliminated)
  > what is missing, its level of priority, and how and when to develop it

• info has been written-up and circulated about all resources and plans for change

(d) Determines the adequacy of efforts made to enhance communication to and among stakeholders and, if more is needed, facilitates improvements

(e) Determines if systems are in place to identify problems related to functioning of the infrastructure and communication systems. If there are problems, determines why and helps address any systemic breakdowns

(f) Checks on visibility of reforms and if the efforts are not visible, determines why and helps rectify

4. Formative Evaluation and Rapid Problem Solving

(a) Works with leaders and team members to develop procedures for formative evaluation and processes that ensure rapid problem solving

(b) Checks regularly to be certain that learning supports are enabling student learning and that there is rapid problem solving. If the data are not promising, helps school leaders to make appropriate modifications.

5. Ongoing Support

(a) Offers ongoing coaching on an "on-call" basis

   For example: informs team members about ideas developed by others or provides expertise related to a specific topic they plan to discuss.

(b) At appropriate points in time, asks for part of a meeting to see how things are going and (if necessary) to explore ways to improve the process

(c) At appropriate times, asks whether participants have dealt with longer-range planning, and if they haven't, determines what help they need

(d) Helps participants identify sources for continuing development/education
Using an Organization Facilitator to Establish
and Coach a Resource Coordinating Team

The following example from one school may help clarify some of the above points.

At First Street School, the Organization Facilitator’s first step was to ensure the site leadership was sufficiently committed to restructuring learning support programs and services. The commitment was made public by the site’s governance body adopting the enabling component concept and by formally agreeing to the role the Organization Facilitator would play in helping staff implement reforms.

The process of restructuring began with assignment of an assistant principal to function as the component's administrative leader and establishment of a Resource Coordinating Team consisting of the school’s pupil service personnel, the administrative leader, a staff lead, and several teachers. With the Organization Facilitator acting as coach, the team began by mapping and analyzing all school resources being used to address barriers to student learning.

By clustering existing activities into the six arenas of intervention designated for an enabling component, the team was able to consider a new programmatic vision for the school's efforts to address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development. By analyzing activities from this perspective, the team identified essential activities, major programmatic gaps, redundant efforts, and several long-standing activities that were having little effect. Decisions were made to eliminate redundant and ineffective activity and redeploy the resources to strengthen essential programs and begin to fill learning support gaps.

As one facet of the school's community outreach, the Organization Facilitator coached the Resource Coordinating Team on how to bring community resources to the site in ways that do not displace essential school resources. This focus was on integrating community resources into the enabling component. That is, the team outreached specifically to those community resources that could either fill a significant gap or enhance the school staffs' efforts by becoming part of an ongoing program. To ensure coordination and integration, all community agencies working at the site are asked to have a representative participate on the Resource Coordinating Team.
If efforts to restructure schools are to result in substantive and sustainable changes, particular attention must be paid to ensuring effective leadership and ongoing support. Talking about change has rarely been a problem for educational leaders and change agents. Problems arise when they try to introduce change into specific locales and settings. It is then that they encounter the difficulties inherent in building consensus and mobilizing others to develop and maintain the substance of new prototypes.

In effect, leaders and change agents have a triple burden as they attempt to improve schools.

- They must ensure that substantive change is on the policy agenda.
- They must build consensus for change.
- They must facilitate effective implementation (e.g., establish, maintain, and enhance productive changes).

Creating readiness for systemic changes involves strategic interventions to ensure:

- strong policy support
- administrative and stakeholder buy-in and support
- long-range strategic and immediate action planning
- daily formal leadership from highly motivated administrative and supervisory staff and key union representatives
- daily informal leadership from highly motivated line staff
- ongoing involvement of leadership from outside the system
- establishment of change agent mechanisms to facilitate systemic changes
- careful development of mechanisms for planning, implementation, and improvement of new approaches
- mobilization of a critical mass of stakeholders
- capacity building designed to ensure all involved can perform effectively
- protection for those who are assuming new roles and new ways of working
- using all supportive data that can be gathered (e.g., benchmarks for all progress)
A thread running through all this is the need to stimulate increasing interest or *motivational readiness* among stakeholders.

To clarify the point:

In education a new idea or practice almost always finds a receptive audience among a small group. Many more, however, are politely unresponsive and reluctant to change things, and some are actively resistant. Successful change at any level of education restructuring requires the committed involvement of a critical mass of stakeholders. Thus, leaders often are confronted with the task of enhancing the motivational readiness for change of a significant proportion of those who appear reluctant and resistant.

This raises the question: What mobilizes individual initiative?

The answer requires an understanding of what is likely to affect a person's positive and negative motivation related to intended changes in process, content, and outcomes. Particular attention to the following ideas seems warranted:

- **Optimal functioning requires motivational readiness.**
  
  Readiness is not viewed in the old sense of waiting until a person is interested. Rather, it is understood in the contemporary sense of designing interventions to maximize the likelihood that processes, content, and outcomes are perceived as vivid, valued, and attainable.

- **Good strategies not only aim at increasing motivation but also avoid practices that decrease motivation.**
  
  Care must be taken, for example, not to overrely on extrinsics to entice and reward because to do so may decrease intrinsic motivation; excessive monitoring or pressure can produce avoidance motivation.

- **Motivation is a process and an outcome concern.**
  
  In terms of outcomes, for example, strategies should be designed to maintain, enhance, and expand intrinsic motivation so that individuals will come to "own" new practices.

- **Increasing intrinsic motivation involves affecting a person's thoughts, feelings, and decisions.**
  
  The intent is to use procedures that can reduce negative feelings, thoughts, and coping strategies and increase positive ones related to relevant outcomes, processes, and content. With respect to negative attitudes, this means identifying and minimizing experiences that maintain or may increase avoidance motivation.
Readiness is about . . . *Matching Motivation and Capabilities*

Success of efforts to establish effective use of learning support resources depends on stakeholders’ motivation and capability. Substantive change is most likely when high levels of positive energy can be mobilized and appropriately directed over extended periods of time. Among the most fundamental errors related to systemic change is the tendency to set actions into motion without taking sufficient time to lay the foundation. Thus, one of the first concerns is how to mobilize and direct the energy of a critical mass of participants to ensure readiness and commitment. This calls for strategies that establish and maintain an effective match with their motivation and capability.

The initial focus is on communicating essential information to key stakeholders using strategies that help them understand that the benefits of change will outweigh the costs and are more worthwhile than the status quo. The strategies used must be personalized and accessible to the subgroups of stakeholders (e.g., must be “enticing,” emphasize that costs are reasonable, and engage them in processes that build consensus and commitment). Sufficient time *must* be spent creating motivational readiness of key stakeholders and building their capacity and skills.

And readiness is an everyday concern.

All changes require constant care and feeding. Those who steer the process must be motivated and competent, not just initially but over time. The complexity of systemic change requires close monitoring of mechanisms and immediate follow up to address problems. In particular, it means providing continuous, personalized guidance and support to enhance knowledge and skills and counter anxiety, frustration, and other stressors. To these ends, adequate resource support must be provided (time, space, materials, equipment) and opportunities must be available for increasing ability and generating a sense of renewed mission. Personnel turnover must be addressed by welcoming and orienting new members.

*A note of caution.* In marketing new ideas, it is tempting to accentuate their promising attributes and minimize complications. For instance, in negotiating agreements, school policy makers frequently are asked simply to sign a memorandum of understanding, rather than involving them in processes that lead to a comprehensive, informed commitment. Sometimes they agree mainly to obtain extra resources; sometimes they are motivated by a desire to be seen by constituents as doing *something* to improve the school. This can lead to premature implementation, resulting in the form rather than the substance of change.
For motivated persons, readiness interventions focus on ways to maintain and possibly enhance intrinsic motivation. This involves ensuring their involvement continues to produce mostly positive feelings and a minimum of negative side effects.

At times, all that may be necessary is to help clear the way of external hurdles. At other times, maintaining motivation requires leading, guiding, stimulating, clarifying, and supporting. Efforts to maintain motivation build on processes used initially for mobilization. In both instances, activity is conceived in terms of nine comprehensive process objectives. These underscore that strategies to facilitate change should be designed to

• establish and maintain an appropriate working relationship (e.g., through creating a sense of trust, open communication, providing support and direction as required)

• clarify the purpose of activities and procedures, especially those intended to help correct specific problems

• clarify why procedures should be effective

• clarify the nature and purpose of evaluative measures

C build on previous capabilities and interests

• present outcomes, processes, and content in ways that structure attending to the most relevant features (e.g., modeling, cueing)

• guide motivated practice (e.g., suggesting and providing opportunities for meaningful applications and clarifying ways to organize practice)

• provide continuous information to ensure awareness of accomplishments

C provide opportunities for continued application and generalization (e.g., ending the process by addressing ways in which individuals can pursue additional, self-directed accomplishments in the area and/or can arrange for additional support and direction).
Some Initial Steps in Establishing a Resource Coordinating Team

When the focus is on establishing teams throughout a district, it is wise to begin with sites that manifest the highest levels of motivational readiness.

After initial presentations have been made to potential school sites, elicit responses regarding possible interest (e.g., highly interested and ready to go, highly interested but with a few barriers that must be surmounted, moderately interested, not interested).

Follow-up on Initial Interest – Begin discussions with those sites that are highly interested in proceeding.

Clarify
• what process will be used to produce the desired changes
• what resources will be brought in to help make changes
• what the site must be willing to provide and do

At the end of the discussions, there should be a written mutual agreement covering matters such as

> long-term goals and immediate objectives (e.g., site policy commitment to developing and sustaining a comprehensive approach to addressing barriers to learning; willingness to assign an administrative leader; agreement to develop a resource coordinating team; readiness to map, analyze, and redeploy resources)

> times to be made available for working with the change agent and for staff to work together on the restructuring

> personnel who will assume leadership (e.g., site leader and key staff)

> access to other resources (e.g., space, phone, photocopier)

> access for staff development (e.g., agreement to devote a significant amount of staff development time to the process -- time with teachers, pupil personnel staff, program coordinators, noncredentialled staff)
Step 3

Meet with key individuals at the site to discuss their role and functions as leaders for the intended systemic changes (e.g., meet with the site administrative leader who has been designated for this role; meet with each person who will initially be part of a Resource Coordinating Team)

Clarify roles and functions – discuss plans, how to most effectively use time and other resources effectively.

Before having the first team meeting, work with individuals to clarify specific roles and functions for making the group effective (e.g., Who will be the meeting facilitator? time keeper? record keeper?). Provide whatever training is needed to ensure that these groups are ready and able to work productively.

Step 4

Arrange first group meetings

It may take several meetings before a group functions well. The change agent's job is to help them coalesce into a working group. After this, the task is to help them expand the group gradually.

The group's first substantive tasks is to map learning support resources at the site (programs, services, "who's who," schedules – don't forget recreation and enrichment activities such as those brought to or linked with the school). The mapping should also clarify the systems used to ensure that staff, parents, and students learn about and gain access to these resources. The group should plan to update all of above as changes are made.

Mapping is followed by an analysis of what's worth maintaining and what should be shelved so that resources can be redeployed. Then, the focus shifts to planning to enhance and expand in ways that better address barriers to learning and promote healthy development. ("What don't we have that we need? Do we have people/programs that could be more effective if used in other ways? Do we have too much in one area, not enough in others? major gaps?")

(In doing mapping and analysis, the Center surveys focusing on six clusters of enabling activity can be a major aid -- see Addressing Barriers to Learning: A Set of Surveys to Map What a School Has and What it Needs – download at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu)
Initial Focus in Enhancing New Activity at a School Site

Step 5

In the first stages of restructuring, advise the site to begin by focusing on activities with a fast pay off.

As sites and their Resource Coordination Teams work to improve things, it helps if the focus initially is on doing some highly visible things that can payoff quickly. Such products generate a sense that system improvement is feasible and allows an early sense of accomplishment. It also can generate some excitement and increase the commitment and involvement of others.

Examples of such activities are:

- Establishment of a "Support for Transition" program for new students and families (e.g., welcoming and social support programs such as trained Student Peer Buddies to welcome and act as part of a social support system for new students in every classroom, trained Parent Peer Buddies to welcome and act as part of a social support system for new parents; training for volunteers who staff a welcoming table in the front office; training and support for office staff so that they can play a constructive role with newcomers; development of welcoming and orientation materials in all relevant languages)

- Development of a program for recruiting, screening, training, and nurturing volunteers to work with targeted students in classrooms or to become mentors and advocates for students in need

- Provide teachers with staff development not only with respect to requesting special services for a few but to enhance their capacity to use prereferral interventions effectively to address the needs of the many

Help publicize and encourage appreciation for new approaches at the site

Step 6

- Every means feasible (e.g., handouts, charts, newsletters, bulletin boards) should be used to make the activity visible and keep all stakeholders informed and involved. For example, as soon as resources are mapped, information about what is available and how to access it should be circulated to staff, parents, and students.

- Demonstrate Impact and Get Credit for All that is Accomplished – Specify process benchmarks and some outcome indicators
Don't forget to gather some baseline data on attendance, tardies, suspensions, and timeouts. Also, survey teachers regarding the school's efforts to address barriers to learning and enhance healthy development (e.g., ratings of knowledge and satisfaction with programs and services).

In the short run, the task is to help the site staff organize their record keeping to ensure they get credit for progress. These data are important when it comes time to make the case with site based decision makers that the restructuring is worth the time, effort, and money. (Minimally, someone needs to keep a "log" to show all the activities carried out, all the changes and improvements that have been made, and to have a record of a representative set of anecdotes describing teacher/family/student success stories.)

Refining the team’s infrastructure (e.g., creating work groups) and connecting it with the schools infrastructure for instruction and governance.

We will focus on all this in Module IV.

The nice part about developing sites sequentially is that those already developed can serve as mentor sites.

Enhance and Celebrate!

Make every accomplishment highly visible; show people the progress.

Build a strong public perception of changes and their benefits.

What's New! What's Coming!

And celebrate the accomplishments. People work hard to improve outcomes for students, and they need to know that what they did was appreciated for its importance and value.

The Exhibits on the following two pages list:

Examples of a Resource Coordinating Team’s Initial and Ongoing Tasks

A General Outline for the Team Meeting Format

A Checklist Related to Establishing Resource-Oriented Teams and Work Groups
General Outline for the Team Meeting Format

- Updating on and introduction of team members
- Reports from those who had between meeting assignments
- Current topic for discussion and planning
- Decision regarding between meeting assignments
- Ideas for next agenda
Checklist Related to Establishing Resource-Oriented Teams and Work Groups

1. ___ Job descriptions/evaluations reflect a policy for working in a coordinated and increasingly integrated way to maximize resource use and enhance effectiveness (this includes allocation of time and resources so that members can build capacity and work effectively together to maximize resource coordination and enhancement).

2. ___ Every staff member is encouraged to participate on some group to improve students' classroom functioning and can choose to work on matters of specific professional interest.

3. ___ Teams and work groups include key stakeholders (current resource staff, special project staff, teachers, site administrators, parents, older students, others from the community, including representatives of school-linked community services).

4. ___ The size of a team or work group reflects current needs, interests, and factors associated with efficient and effective functioning. (The larger the group, the harder it is to find a meeting time and the longer each meeting tends to run. Frequency of meetings depends on the group's functions, time availability, and ambitions. Properly designed and trained groups can accomplish a great deal through informal communication and short meetings).

5. ___ There is a core of members who have or will acquire the ability to carry out identified functions and make the mechanism work. All are committed to the group's mission. (Building team commitment and competence should be a major focus of school management policies and programs. Because several groups will require the expertise of the same personnel, some individuals necessarily will be part of more than one group.)

6. ___ Each team and work group has a dedicated leader/facilitator who is able to keep the group task-focused and productive.

7. ___ Each team and work group has someone who records decisions and plans and reminds members of planned activity and products.

8. ___ Teams and work groups should use advanced technology (management systems, electronic bulletin boards and E-mail, resource clearinghouses) to facilitate communication, networking, program planning and implementation, linking activity, and a variety of budgeting, scheduling, and other management concerns.
To be effective in working with another person (e.g., colleagues, students, parents), you need to build a positive relationship around the tasks at hand. Necessary ingredients in building a working relationship are:

- minimizing negative prejudgments about those with whom you work
- taking time to make connections
- identifying what will be gained from the collaboration in terms of mutually desired outcomes – to clarify the value of working together
- enhancing expectations that the working relationship will be productive – important here is establishing credibility with each other
- establishing a structure that provides support and guidance to aid task focus
- periodic reminders of the positive outcomes for students, staff, families, school, and community that have resulted from working together
- ensuring newcomers are welcomed into the process and are brought up-to-date in ways that don’t delay ongoing efforts (e.g., through use of orienting materials – including use of technology as feasible).

All of this, of course, assumes that adequate funds are allocated for capacity building related to both accomplishing desired systemic changes and enhancing intervention quality over time.

On the following pages are some points about planning and facilitating effective team meetings.
**Planning and Facilitating Effective Meetings**

**Forming a Working Group**
- There should be a clear statement about the group's mission.
- Be certain that members agree to pursue the stated mission and share a vision.
- Pick someone who the group will respect and who either already has good facilitation skills or will commit to learning those that are needed.
- Provide training for members so they understand their role in keeping a meeting on track and turning talk into effective action.
- Designate processes (a) for sending members information before a meeting regarding what is to be accomplished, specific agenda items, and individual assignments and (b) for maintaining and circulating record of decisions and planned actions (what, who, when).

**Meeting Format**
- Be certain there is a written agenda and that it clearly states the purpose of the meeting, specific topics, and desired outcomes for the session.
- Begin the meeting by reviewing purpose, topics, and desired outcomes. Until the group is functioning well, it may be necessary to review meeting ground rules.
- Facilitate the involvement of all members, and do so in ways that encourage them to focus specifically on the task. The facilitator remains neutral in discussion of issues.
- Try to maintain a comfortable pace (neither too rushed, nor too slow; try to start on time and end on time but don't be a slave to the clock).
- Periodically review what has been accomplished and move on the next item.
- Leave time to sum up and celebrate accomplishment of outcomes and end by enumerating specific follow-up activity (what, who, when). End with a plan for the next meeting (date, time, tentative agenda). For a series of meetings, set the dates well in advance so members can plan ahead.

**Some Group Dynamics to Anticipate**
- **Hidden Agendas** – All members should agree to help keep hidden agendas in check and, when such items cannot be avoided, facilitate the rapid presentation of a point and indicate where the concern needs to be redirected.
- **A Need for Validation** – When members make the same point over and over, it usually indicates they feel an important point is not being validated. To counter such disruptive repetition, account for the item in a visible way so that members feel their contributions have been acknowledged. When the item warrants discussion at a later time, assign it to a future agenda.
- **Members are at an Impasse** – Two major reasons groups get stuck are: (a) some new ideas are needed to "get out of a box" and (b) differences in perspective need to be aired and resolved. The former problem usually can be handled through brainstorming or by bringing in someone with new ideas. To deal with conflicts that arise over process, content, and power relationships, employ problem solving and conflict management strategies (e.g., accommodation, negotiation, mediation).
- **Interpersonal Conflict and Inappropriate Competition** – These problems may be corrected by repeatedly bringing the focus back to the goal – improving outcomes for students/families; when this doesn't work; restructuring group membership may be necessary.
- **Ain't It Awful!** – Daily frustrations experienced by staff often lead them to turn meetings into gripe sessions. Outside team members (parents, agency staff, business and/or university partners) can influence school staff to exhibit their best behavior.
Planning and Facilitating Effective Team Meetings (cont.)

Making Meetings Work

A good meeting is task focused and ensures that tasks are accomplished in ways that:

- are efficient and effective
- reflect common concerns and priorities
- are implemented in an open, noncritical, nonthreatening manner
- turn complaints into problems that are analyzed in ways that lead to plans for practical solutions
- feel productive (produces a sense of accomplishment and of appreciation)

About Building Relationships and Communicating Effectively

C convey empathy and warmth (e.g., this involves working to understand and appreciate what others are thinking and feeling and transmitting a sense of liking them)

C convey genuine regard and respect (e.g., this involves transmitting real interest and interacting in ways that enable others to maintain a feeling of integrity and personal control)

C talk with, not at, others – active listening and dialogue (e.g., this involves being a good listener, not being judgmental, not prying, and being willing to share experiences as appropriate)

“Another meeting? There goes the last lunch break I could have taken this school year”
Materials for use as Handouts/Overheads/Slides in Presenting Part IV
IV. Rethinking Infrastructure

A. Overview

B. A School-Based Resource Coordinating Team

C. Refining the School Infrastructure

D. Infrastructure for a Family of Schools

>>>Group Activity
   How does the school’s infrastructure address barriers to learning?

>>>Brief follow-up reading –
   Establishing a Resource-Oriented Team
A Few Key Infrastructure Considerations

Building Local Capacity

for Systemic Change and Ongoing Component Development
A Resource Coordinating Team?????

“We already have a team”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you probably have is</th>
<th>and the resources, programs, and systems to address barriers to learning &amp; promote healthy development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a Case-Oriented Team</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Focused on specific <em>individuals</em> and discrete <em>services</em>)</td>
<td>Possible called:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Resource Coordinating Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Resource Coordinating Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C School Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Learning Support Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sometimes called:**

- C Child/Student Study Team
- C Student Success Team
- C Student Assistance Team
- C Teacher Assistance Team
- C IEP Team

**EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:**

- triage
- referral
- case monitoring/management
- case progress review
- case reassessment

What you also need is a

**a Resource-Oriented Team**

(Focused on *all* students)
School-Based Resource-Oriented Mechanism  
(e.g., a Resource Coordinating Team)

What are it's functions?

- mapping resources
- analyzing resources
- enhancing resources
- program and system planning/development
- redeploying resources
- coordinating and integrating resources
- social "marketing"

If it is a team, how many are on it?

From 2 -- to as many as are willing and able.

Another team?

Not necessarily -- but definitely a different agenda and time to do it.

Who's on it?  (depends on what's feasible)

> School staff  
  (e.g., counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, attendance and dropout counselors, special education staff, health educators, bilingual program coordinators, teachers)  
> one of the school's administrators  
> 1-2 parents  
> 1-2 older students  
> Representatives of any community resources/agencies who are working closely with the school

Infrastructure Connections

- The administrator on the team represents the team at administrator meetings
- One member must be an official representative on the school's governance body
- One member represents the team on the Complex's Resource Coordinating Council
Some of the Special Resources
Connected to ____________ School

School Psychologist ______________
times at the school ________________
C Provides assessment and testing of students for special services. Counseling for students and parents. Support services for teachers. Prevention, crisis, conflict resolution, program modification for special learning and/or behavioral needs.

School Nurse ______________
times at the school ________________
C Provides immunizations, follow-up, communicable disease control, vision and hearing screening and follow-up, health assessments and referrals, health counseling and information for students and families.

Pupil Services & Attendance Counselor ______________
times at the school ________________
C Provides a liaison between school and home to maximize school attendance, transition counseling for returnees, enhancing attendance improvement activities.

Social Worker ______________
times at the school ________________
C Assists in identifying at-risk students and provides follow-up counseling for students and parents. Refers families for additional services if needed.

Counselors __________________________
times at the school ________________
C General and special counseling/guidance services. Consultation with parents and school staff.

Dropout Prevention Program Coordination ______________
times at the school ________________
C Coordinates activity designed to promote dropout prevention.

Title I and Bilingual Coordinators

C Coordinates categorical programs, provides services to identified Title I students, implements Bilingual Master Plan (supervising the curriculum, testing, and so forth)

Resource and Special Education Teachers

times at the school ________________
C Provides information on program modifications for students in regular classrooms as well as providing services for special education.

Other important resources:

School-based Crisis Team
(list by name/title)

School Improvement Program Planners

Community Resources
C Provides school-linked or school-based interventions and resources

Who What they do When

Who What they do When

Who What they do When

Who What they do When

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Who What they do When

Who What they do When
Integrating the Component into the School Infrastructure

Learning Support or Enabling Component

Advisory/Steering Committee* for Component

Resource Coordinating Team**

Case-Oriented Teams

moderate problems

severe problems

Ad hoc and standing work groups***

Instructional Component

Leadership for instruction

(Various teams focused on improving instruction)

Management/Governance Component

Management/Governance Team

*A Learning Support or Enabling Component Advisory/Steering Committee at a school site consists of a leadership group whose responsibility is to ensure the vision for the component is not lost. It meets as needed to monitor and provide input to the Resource Coordinating Team.

**A Resource Coordinating Team is the key to ensuring component cohesion and integrated implementation. It meets weekly to guide and monitor daily implementation and development of all programs, services, initiatives, and systems at a school that are concerned with providing student support and specialized assistance.

***Ad hoc and standing work groups are formed as needed by the Resource Coordinating Team to address specific concerns. These groups are essential for accomplishing the many tasks associated with the Resource Coordinating Team’s functions.
Developing and connecting key mechanisms at school sites, among families of schools, and district and community wide
School Leadership for a Component to Enable Learning by Addressing Barriers

C Administrative Leader
  (e.g., 50% FTE devoted to component)

C Staff Lead for Component

C Program Area Leads
Leadership Beyond the School for a Component to Enable Learning by Addressing Barriers

**At the Complex Level (family of schools)**

- C1-2 representatives from each School-Based Resource Team
- CFacilitator for Complex Resource Council

**At the District Level**

- C1-2 representatives from each Complex Resource Council
- CHigh Level District Administrator
- CSchool Board Subcommittee Chair

*(Comparable leadership at county, state, and federal levels)*
Organization Facilitator
A Temporary Change Agent Mechanism

At the School Level

C facilitates establishment of resource-oriented mechanism (e.g., School-Based Resource Team)

C facilitates initial capacity building (especially leadership training)

C provides support in implementing initial tasks (e.g., mapping and analyzing resources)

At the Complex Level

C facilitates establishment of resource-oriented mechanism (e.g., Complex Resource Council)

C facilitates initial capacity building

C provides support in implementing initial tasks
  >mapping
  >analyses
  >interface with neighborhood resources

Sequence

C focus first on establishing school infrastructure, then complex infrastructure

C focus first on complex, then each school

C focus simultaneously on establishing infrastructure at schools and complex
Group Reflection and Discussion

Based on what you’ve learned so far:

think about a school with which you are familiar.

Then, discuss

*How does the school’s infrastructure address barriers to learning?*

**Group Process Guidelines:**

C Start by identifying someone who will facilitate the group interchange

C Take a few minutes to make a few individual notes on a worksheet

C Be sure all major points are compiled so they can be shared with other groups.

C Ask someone else to watch the time so that the group doesn’t bog down.