

## Saint Paul Public Schools, St. Paul, MN

In recent years, the schools in Saint Paul have explored new directions for providing learning supports through special projects. With support from the Wilder Foundation, they focused on three schools designated as Achievement Plus schools. Then, with a federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, they expanded from a narrow focus on mental health to an emphasis on addressing barriers to learning by adopting a comprehensive learning supports approach. As part of this work, a plan was developed to scale up to 13 schools using specially trained consultants to assist in coordinating, integrating and expanding comprehensive approaches to addressing barriers to learning. Plans call for further scale-up.

### **Achievement Plus Schools**

Achievement Plus is designed to guide the education reform efforts of the Saint Paul Public School District, as well as school districts throughout Minnesota and across the country. The focus on learning supports at these schools was implemented to provide a demonstration for eventual district-wide scale-up. The approach to Learning Supports focuses on six areas of prevention and intervention:

- C Classroom-focused supports
- C Crisis assistance and prevention
- C Support for student transitions
- C Home involvement in schooling
- C Community outreach and volunteering in schools
- C Direct student and family assistance such as mental health counseling, dental clinic, nurse practitioners, and health education classes

### **Sites Established by the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative**

At these sites, interventions were conceived in terms of the following six areas:

- >coordinating and providing services to students and families
- >responding to and preventing crises
- >classroom teacher support and consultation
- >supporting transitions
- >increasing home involvement in schooling
- >developing greater community involvement and support for the school.

The work of the specially trained consultants involved a combination of building infrastructure, facilitating systemic changes, and helping establish procedures to coordinate and develop interventions. Initial efforts focused on integrating school support interventions and developing a broad-based preventive emphasis to address the needs of urban learners. To these ends, resource-oriented mechanisms were used to map resources and ensure interventions match the assessed needs of the school staff, parents, and students.

### **District Changes**

Based on this work and related initiatives (including the MN State Summit for New Directions for Student Support), reports from the District's Office of Student Services indicate that discussions are underway about setting new directions that recognizes student support and learning supports are as important as instruction at the school level.

A core feature of Achievement Plus is that the schools are a hub for the community and an access point for educational and social services. These services strive to remove the barriers to learning for students and parents. A model from UCLA Center for Mental Health in the Schools guides our approach to Learning Supports and focuses on these six areas of prevention and intervention:

- Classroom-focused supports
- Crisis assistance and prevention
- Support for student transitions
- Home involvement in schooling
- Community outreach and volunteering in schools
- Direct student and family assistance such as mental health counseling, dental clinic, nurse practitioners, and health education classes

Each Achievement Plus school has a Family Resource Center that offers a welcoming place for parents to meet; parenting classes; drop-in child care; family literacy nights; referrals for housing, jobs, and health insurance; and access to telephones and computers.

© Achievement Plus. All rights reserved.  
E-mail: [judy.neece@spps.org](mailto:judy.neece@spps.org).  
740 York Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106  
(651) 793-7367

<http://www.achievementplus.org/supports/index.php>

# Saint Paul Public Schools

## Office of Student Services

The **Office of Student Services** is responsible for the coordination and development of crucial support services for children.

The focus of the work centers on the integration of eight components of Coordinated School Health. This includes: *school environment, health education, nutrition services, physical education, health services, mental health services, staff wellness and family/community involvement*. Saint Paul Public Schools is proud to be one of six urban school districts participating in a National Urban School Health Leadership Institute, sponsored by the American Cancer Society and the Center for Disease Control, which promotes the Coordinated School Health framework.

The Office of Student Services includes departments that directly serve students and families. This includes the Student Placement Center, Student Wellness and the Guidance, Counseling and Related Services Department.

The **Student Placement Center** conducts an intake process for enrollment of students new to the school district or returning students. Student record data management is another key reporting function of the center.

The **Student Wellness** program provides nursing services to students, enhancing educational achievement by the modification or removal of health-related barriers to learning.

The **Guidance, Counseling and Related Services Department** provides a wide array of prevention, intervention and referral services to students and families; it's designed to enable schools to teach and students to learn by addressing factors that interfere with learning and performance.

The Office of Student Services is committed to developing students who live up to their individual potential by fostering learning environments, which are safe, healthy, and equitable for our diverse community of learners.

**Raymond Yu, Director**  
(651) 767-8133

**Student Placement Center**  
Jill Cacy  
Assistant Director  
2102 University Ave. W.  
(651) 632-3700

**School Guidance and Counseling**  
Kevin Hogan  
Assistant Director  
1930 Como Ave.  
(651) 523-6339

**Student Wellness**  
Ann Hoxie  
Administrator  
360 Colborne St.  
(651) 767-8385

**School Guidance and Counseling  
Special Programs**  
Joann Goodman  
Administrator  
1930 Como Ave.  
(651) 603-4946

**Saint Paul Public Schools - #625**  
360 Colborne Street -- Saint Paul, MN 55102 -- (651) 767-8100

[http://www.stpaul.k12.mn.us/student\\_services.html](http://www.stpaul.k12.mn.us/student_services.html)

## **Safe Schools/Healthy Students 2001-02 Summary**

### **Wilder Mental Health Consultants**

Safe Schools/Healthy Students works to reduce school violence and alcohol and drug abuse through the collaborative efforts of school and community organizations. Under the federal initiative, a three-year grant was awarded to the Saint Paul Public School District in June 2000. Three middle schools and two elementary schools are the initiative's primary sites.

#### **Who are the Wilder Mental Health Consultants?**

The local initiative's efforts include the placement of a Wilder Mental Health Consultant in each of the five schools. Based out of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation's Child Guidance Clinic, Wilder Mental Health Consultants coordinate mental health and intervention services. They base their work on an approach to student development created by Dr. Howard Adelman and Dr. Linda Taylor, directors of the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools. Adelman and Taylor identified six key areas of intervention:

1. coordinating and providing services to students and families,
2. responding to and preventing crises,
3. consulting and supporting classroom teachers,
4. supporting new and transitioning students,
5. increasing home involvement in schooling, and
6. developing greater community involvement and support for the school.

#### **Services**

Consultants' 2001-02 services in the six areas of intervention included providing direct service to an estimated 1,850 students, training to an estimated 1,570 school staff and students, and 650 hours of consultation to school staff.

#### **Evaluation results**

The local initiative contracts with Wilder Research Center for an independent evaluation. Research findings from 2001-02 include the following. More comprehensive data will be available for 2002-03, covering a wider range of consultants' activities.

**Student feedback.** Wilder Mental Health Consultants offer psycho-educational groups on such topics as social skills, grief and loss, anger management, friendship, and transitions. All 75 students responding to surveys following 2001-02 groups indicated the consultant had good ideas that helped them. Most also indicated the group gave them hope that things can be better for them (92%) and that they learned skills to help them get alone, better with other kids (97%).

**Student behavior.** Consultants' ratings of group participants indicated that 61 percent had a net decrease in aggressive behaviors over the course of the group, and that most participants showed improvements in their ability to share, cooperate, label emotions, and interact with peers in appropriate ways.

**School staff satisfaction.** Eighty-nine percent of school staff reported familiarity with the consultants in spring 2002. Consultants received some of the highest satisfaction ratings of all staff in the initiative, with 70 percent of school staff reporting satisfaction and 27 percent that they were neutral or did not know.

Written comments included:

*[The Wilder Mental Health Consultant] is a real part of the school. She knows most if not all of the students and they know her. She offers to help when she sees a situation that might be difficult for [a] particular student to handle. "*

#### **For more information**

This summary presents highlights of the *Safe Schools/Healthy Students second-year evaluation*. For more information, contact Kevin Hogan at the Saint Paul Public School District, 651-523-6339 or kevin.hogan@spps.org.

Authors - Caryn Mohr and Terri Mazurek  
DEC/FMBFR 2002

Communities Working Together to Support Student Success  
Comprehensive Mental Health in the Schools  
March 4,2003

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

- Peg Hayes, Wilder Child Guidance Clinic, Director of Clinical Services

**II. Overview of Wilder Mental Health Consultants and Project Assist**

- Peg Hayes, Wilder Child Guidance Clinic, Director of Clinical Services
- Leslie Lucas, Thad Wilderson & Associates, SS/HS Project Assist

**III. Comprehensive Learning Supports: Case Example**

- Nadia Phelps, Wilder Child Guidance, Mental Health Consultant

**IV. Needs Assessment and Resource Mapping**

- Lynn Craig, Wilder Child Guidance, Mental Health Consultant

**V. Resource Coordinating/Team Student Assistance Team**

- Leslie Lucas, Thad Wilderson & Associates, SS/HS Project Assist
- Emily Wells, Wilder Child Guidance, Mental Health Consultant

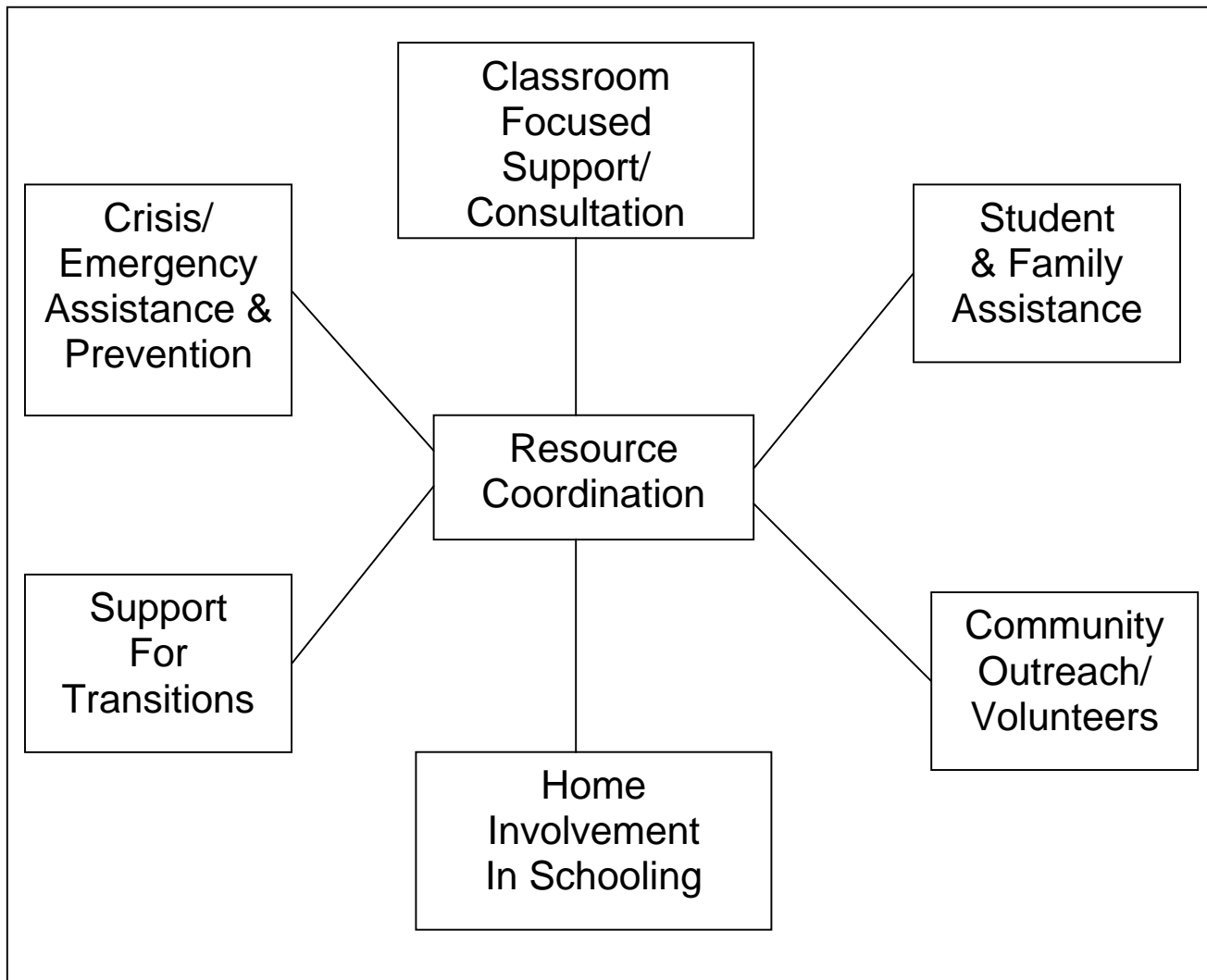
**VI. Highlights of Learning Supports Developed by Wilder Mental Health Consultants at the Safe Schools/Healthy Student Sites**

- Cyndee Daughtry, Wilder Child Guidance Clinic, Mental Health Consultant

**VII. Questions and Evaluation**

- Marsha Chung Schauer, Wilder Child Guidance Clinic, Mental Health Consultant

Learning Supports:  
A Comprehensive, Multifaceted  
Approach for  
Addressing Barriers to Learning

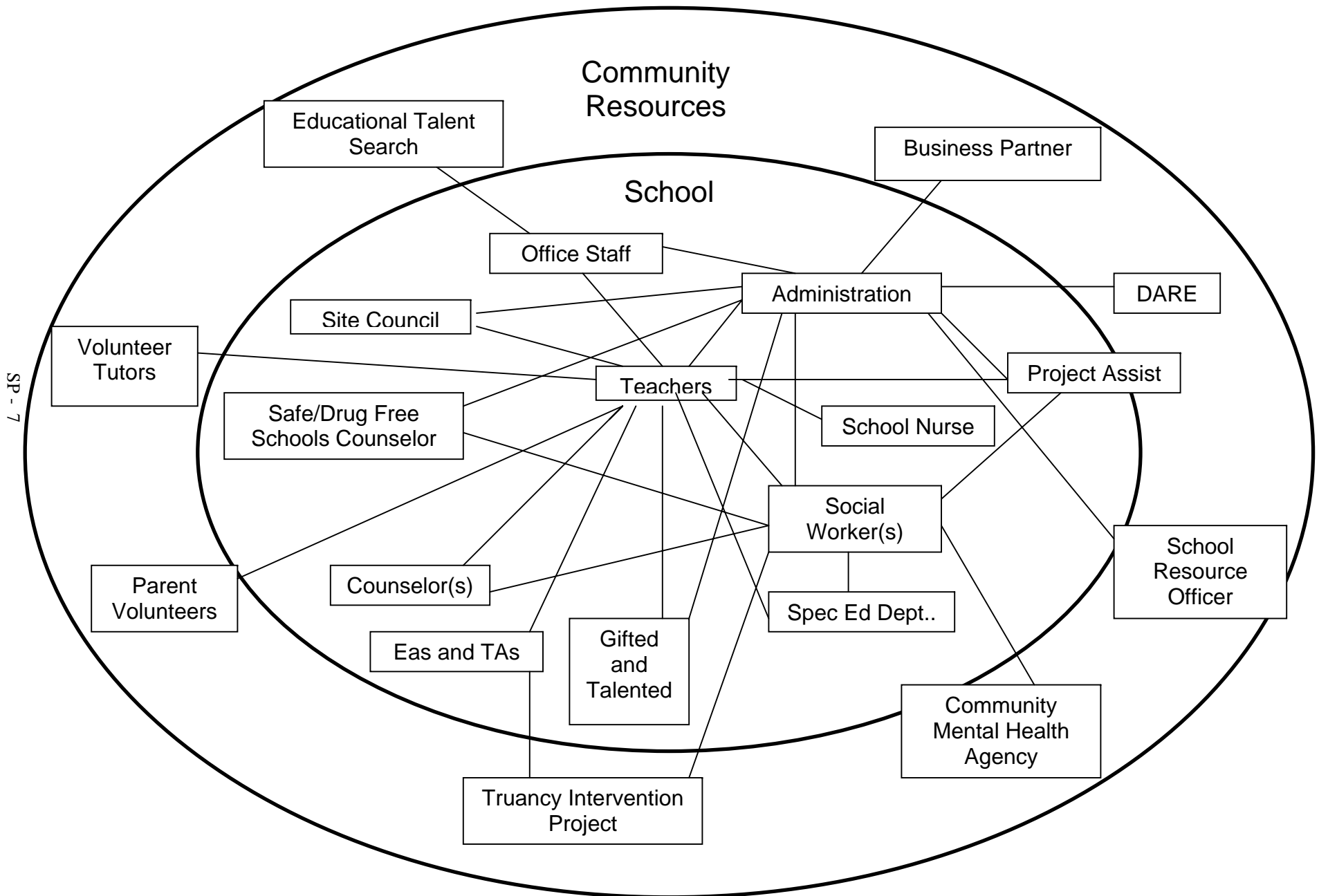


Adapted from:  
H.S. Adelman & L Taylor  
Comprehensive Mental Health in the Schools  
March 4, 2003

## Comprehensive Learning Supports: Case Example

<b>Traditional Case-Oriented Models</b>	<b>Comprehensive Resource-Oriented Model</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Disciplinary measures</li> <li>– Parent contact/conference</li> <li>– School counselor/social worker involvement</li> <li>– Behavior improvement plan</li> <li>– Social skills group</li> <li>– Tutoring support</li> <li>– Student Assistance Team</li> <li>– Special Education referral</li> <li>– Referral to community social service/counseling agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– School-wide transition support</li> <li>– Family Resource Center</li> <li>– Parent and teacher resource library</li> <li>– School-wide violence prevention social skills curriculum</li> <li>– Non-violent school climate</li> <li>– Before and after school programs through community partnerships</li> <li>– Tutoring support</li> <li>– Staff training on social, emotional and mental health topics</li> <li>– Parent workshops on specific topics</li> <li>– School-based mentoring programs</li> <li>– Targeted classroom presentations</li> <li>– Hand-outs for parents and teachers on specific topics</li> <li>– Student Assistance Team</li> <li>– Resource Coordination team</li> <li>– Targeted psychoeducational groups</li> <li>– Access to individual and group counseling at school through community partnerships</li> <li>– Special Education referral</li> </ul>

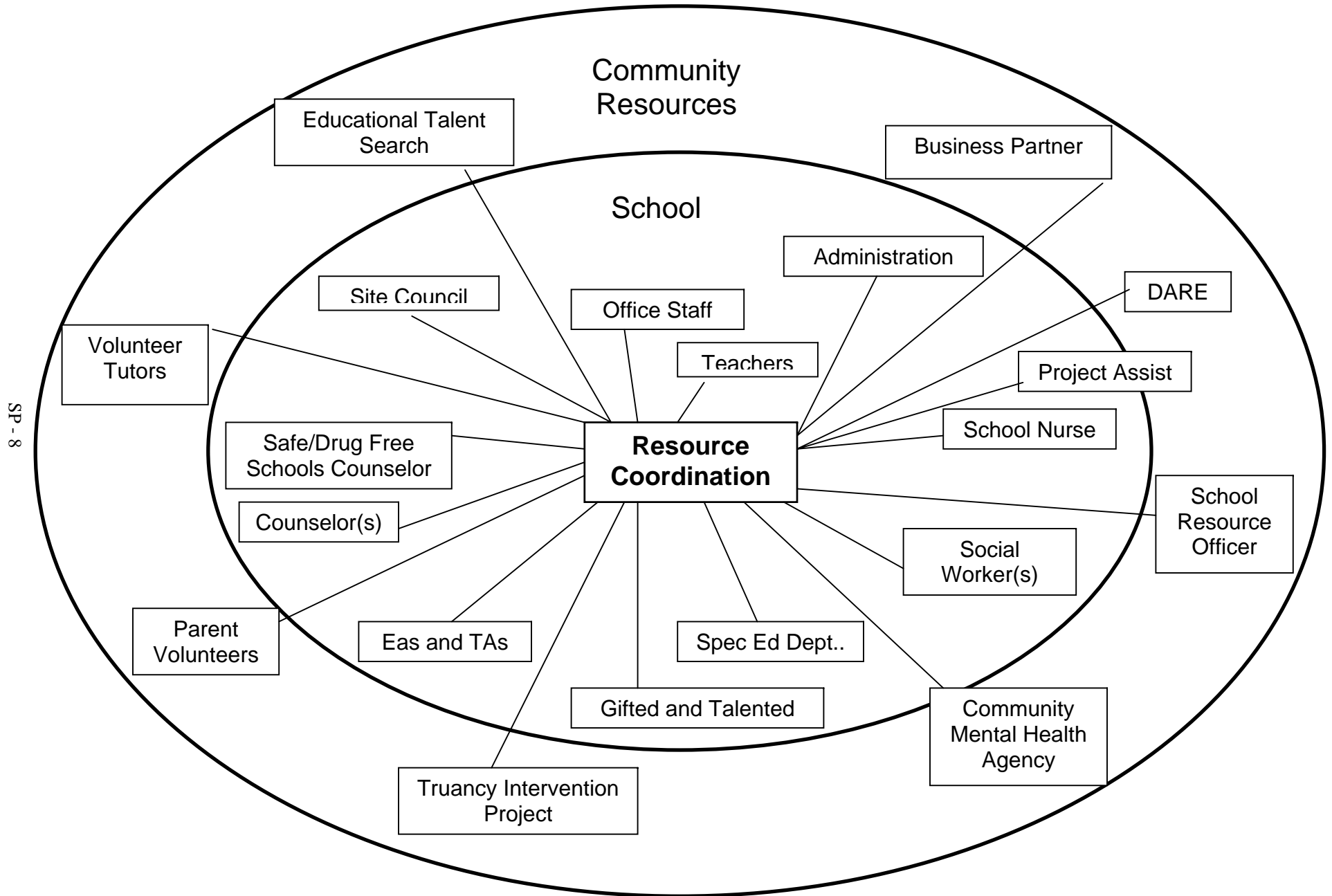
# School Resource Map



SP - 7



# School Resource Map with Coordination



## **Examples of Activities for the Six Components of A & T Framework**

### **I. Crisis and Prevention**

1. School staff training on Crisis De-escalation to help staff defuse conflict situations in school.  
Example-How to intervene when 2 students are yelling at each other and appear to be on the verge of physically fighting.
2. Organize School Safety Team to meet routinely to review the school safety plan and the procedures to be followed during a crisis.
3. Provide a Crisis Guide to be placed beside each phone in the school with directions to be followed during an emergency.
4. Provide training to school staff focused on recognizing signs that indicate a potential for violence by a student and how to seek a professional opinion about the risk.

### **II. Classroom Focused Enabling**

1. Increase classroom resources to address student behaviors and barriers to learning  
Example-Classroom groups on social skills or anger management.
2. Increase teacher capacity to address student behaviors and barriers to learning. Example-In-service training to school staff on depression and children/adolescents.
3. Develop a tutoring program in the school which involves older students being paired with younger students to help them with reading or tutoring.
4. Offer a classroom management workshop to teaching staff.
5. Institute a school climate initiative which establishes how everyone in the school can expect to be treated.

### **III. Support for Transition**

1. Create a welcoming environment at the school for students/parents and staff. Example-Welcome folders for new students and families to be distributed at the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year as new students enter the school.
2. Develop a Who's Who Guide with staff names, job title and pictures for students, parents and staff at the school.
3. Form new student groups in order to orient them to the school and introduce them to other students. In elementary schools you can form a group of students to be "Welcome Buddies" to new students. They can spend the new student's first week there eating lunch together and orienting the student to the school.

4. Schedule a Transition Panel of students from middle schools to answer 6<sup>th</sup> grade students questions about what it is like to be in middle school. It is also good to include the parents of both the elementary and the middle school students to answer the parents' questions.

#### IV. Home Involvement in Schooling

1. Provide educational opportunities for parents at the school at night such as a class on parenting teens or how to help your elementary student establish good study habits.
2. Encourage parents to volunteer at the school such as being a school greeter to welcome and sign-in visitors to the school.
3. Involve parents in school through membership on committees and as participants in surveys.

#### V. Community Outreach

1. Develop a relationship with an area business that has employees who are willing to partner with the school with financial support. Example-Business willing to purchase a limited number of uniforms for students at a school requiring uniforms.
2. Partner with community business with employees interested in actively participating in a tutoring program or a "Reading Buddies" program.
3. Recruit students from local colleges and universities for after-school activities, mentoring and tutoring.

#### VI. Student and Family Assistance

1. Establish good working relationships with community agencies to facilitate access to services for students and families.
2. Ensure that all school support staff (social worker, guidance counselor, etc.) have an easily accessible resource guide for community services for the students and families in the community.
3. Create a system for identification of students in need of services, which includes a referral form and a process for providing feedback to the referral source.
4. Host "resource fairs" at your school for your students' parents to attend.

# Are You Worried?

Do you have a child in your class that you think has a mental health problem?

Maybe we can help.

Please complete the following information:

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ CIF# \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Referring Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

The student is currently in:     Regular Education                       ELL  
    Special Education

Areas of concern:                       Mental Health (sad, angry, anxious, withdrawn, etc.)  
    Behavior  
    Attendance  
    Academics (sudden decline in grades)  
    Socialization/ Friendships  
    Food/ Eating Problems  
    Chemical Use     Other

Please tell us more:

Please return this form to the  
STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM mailbox  
Thanks

# Response to "Are You Worried?"

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Staff responding to student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Results of Contact:

- Weekly sessions with \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_
- Group counseling with \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_
- Home visit by \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_
- Referral information given to parent/guardian
- Other \_\_\_\_\_