

## *Exhibit*

### **Examples of Areas Schools Might Want to Designate as First Priorities in Developing an Enabling Component.**

#### **(1) *Classroom-Focused Enabling***

*Clearly the primary focus in addressing barriers to student learning is on ongoing inservice for teachers – as reflected in this set of continuing education modules.*

With respect to the other five programmatic areas, the efforts of a classroom teacher can be greatly enhanced by setting as priorities development of the following:

#### **(2) *Support for Transitions***

Many schools need to enhance their positive "climate" for everyone - students, staff, families, others in the community. In particular, they can significantly reduce learning, behavior, and emotional problems by ensuring the development of three types of transition programs:

##### **> *Welcoming and Social Support Programs for Everyone***

The greater the rate of student and staff mobility, the greater the priority for pursuing strategies to enhance welcoming and social support. A positive welcome is desirable at the various initial encounters school staff have with a new student and family, a new staff member, and all visitors. Each point of contact represents an opportunity and a challenge to positively assimilate newcomers into the school -- welcoming them, linking them with appropriate social supports, assisting them to make successful transitions, and identifying and providing additional assistance for those who are having difficulty adjusting. It is risky business for a school not to have programs that fully orient newcomers (students, family, staff), connect them with specific peers (e.g., peer buddies), orchestrate their entrance into ongoing groups and activities, and so forth (see the Center's introductory packet entitled: "at Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families).

##### **> *Articulation Programs***

Many students have difficulty making the transition from grade-to-grade and many more have difficulty n going from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school. Indeed, many "dropouts" occur during transitions to high school. Programs are needed that (a) provide all students with opportunities to prepare themselves psychologically for such changes and (b) identify and intervene on behalf of any student who is having difficulty during the actual period of transition. Comparable programs are useful for family members and new staff.

##### **> *Before, During, and After School Recreation, Academic Support, & Enrichment, Programs***

Many schools have significant problems with tardies, bullying, substance abuse, and other forms of behavior that contribute to poor student performance. Well-designed and structured recreation and enrichment are basic to encouraging proactive behavior. Offered before school they lure students to school early and thus reduce tardies. Offered at lunch, they can reduce the incidence of harassment and other negative interactions. After school, they provide alternatives to antisocial interactions in the community, and paired with positive opportunities for enriched and personalized academic support, they offer renewed hope for those who have learning problems.

(cont.)

### **(3) Home Involvement in Schooling**

Besides what the school already is doing to enhance home involvement, there should be an intensive, proactive, positive outreach program aimed at families housing students who are experiencing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. Such activity should be accompanied by a commitment to minimizing negative contacts with family members (blaming and fingerwaving).

#### **>Programs to strengthen the family**

It is rarely a mystery as to what family members need and would value from the school. In outreaching to attract family members to the school, the first priority should be development of programs and services related to the area of Student and Family Assistance (see below).

### **(4) Emergency/Crisis Response and Prevention**

#### **>Response Plan & Crisis Team**

Every school probably has a written crisis response plan. For such a plan to be viable and in order to pursue an enhanced focus on preventing crises, a strong priority should be to establish and build the capability of a Crisis Team.

### **(5) Student and Family Assistance**

While a wide range of assistance programs and services can be developed over the years, the first priorities in this area are:

**>Establishing access to emergency assistance for basic life needs** (e.g., food, clothes, shelter, safety, emergency health care and dentistry, legal aid)

This usually involves identifying appropriate referral agencies and establishing direct links to them to facilitate family access.

**>Literary and extra academic support program** (e.g., family literacy, tutors, GED preparation, ESL classes, related software for computers)

**>Social and emotional counseling** (support groups, individual and group counseling)

### **(6) Community Outreach**

**>Volunteer recruitment program** (e.g., parents, college students, senior citizens, mentors from the business community)