



THE SCHARGEL CONSULTING GROUP

REACHING AT-PROMISE STUDENTS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**SAN DIEGO
MONDAY, JULY 9, 2007
9:15 -11:45
1 P.M -3:30**

**TURNING AT-RISK LEARNERS INTO
SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES**

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BUILDING WORLD CLASS SCHOOLS

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**SCHOOL SUCCESS
NETWORK**

DROPOUT QUIZ

EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ABOUT SCHOOL DROPOUTS

1. Fifteen states produce almost 80% of all school dropouts, is your state one of those states?
2. What percent of prisoners are school dropouts? _____.
3. Most dropouts come from what geographic area? _____.
4. The state with the largest number of dropouts (per capita) is _____.
5. What percentage of our dropouts leave from the middle school? ____.
6. What is the cost to our nation for school dropouts? _____.
7. What is the # 1 reason why dropouts say they left school? _____.
8. What percentage of dropouts leave as seniors in high school? _____.
9. How many students dropout of school on a daily basis? _____.
10. Retaining a student once increases the likelihood of their dropping out by ____%. Retaining a student TWICE increases the likelihood of their dropping out by ____%.
11. **EXTRA CREDIT** - What school incident was the most violent in the United States?

(Data supplied by US Department of Education, Bureau of Census, Department of Labor, Department of Corrections, Government Accounting Office)

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DEVELOPING WORLD CLASS SCHOOLS AND GRADUATES

EFFECTIVE DROPOUT PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The following strategies, developed in conjunction with the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University, have been recognized by the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP Monthly, August 2001) and the United States Department of Education (www.ed.gov/dropoutprevention.html) as effective in reducing school dropouts.

★ **Systemic Renewal**—Systemic renewal calls for a continuing process of evaluating goals and objectives related to school policies, practices, and organizational structures as they impact a diverse group of learners.

★ **School-Community Collaboration**—When all groups in a community provide collective support to the school, a strong infrastructure sustains a caring environment where youth can thrive and achieve.

★ **Safe Learning Environments**—A comprehensive violence prevention plan, including conflict resolution, must deal with potential violence as well as crisis management. A safe learning environment provides daily experiences, at all grade levels, that enhance positive social attitudes and effective interpersonal skills in all students.

★ **Family Engagement**—Research consistently finds that family engagement has a direct, positive effect on children's achievement and is one of the most accurate predictors of a student's success in school.

★ **Early Childhood Education**—Birth-to-five interventions demonstrate that providing a child additional enrichment can enhance brain development. The most effective way to reduce the number of children who will ultimately drop out is to provide the best possible classroom instruction from the beginning of their school experience through the primary grades.

★ **Early Literacy Development**—Early interventions to help low-achieving students improve their reading and writing skills establish the necessary foundation for effective learning in all subjects.

★ **Mentoring/Tutoring**—Mentoring is a one-to-one caring, supportive relationship between a mentor and a mentee that is based on trust. Tutoring, also a one-to-one activity, focuses on academics and is an effective practice when addressing specific needs such as reading, writing, or math competencies.

★ **Service-Learning**—Service-learning connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning. This teaching/learning method promotes personal and social growth, career development, and civic responsibility and can be a powerful vehicle for effective school reform at all grade levels.

★ **Alternative Schooling**—Alternative schooling provides potential dropouts a variety of options that can lead to graduation, with programs paying special attention to the student's individual social needs and academic requirements for a high school diploma.

★ **After-School Opportunities**—Many schools provide after-school and summer enhancement programs that eliminate information loss and inspire interest in a variety of areas. Such experiences are especially important for students at risk of school failure because they fill the afternoon "gap time" with constructive and engaging activities.

★ **Professional Development**—Teachers who work with youth at high risk of academic failure need to feel supported and have an avenue by which they can continue to develop skills, techniques, and learn about innovative strategies.

★ **Active Learning**—Active learning embraces teaching and learning strategies that engage and involve students in the learning process. Students find new and creative ways to solve problems, achieve success, and become lifelong learners when educators show them that there are different ways to learn.

★ **Educational Technology**—Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction to engage students in authentic learning, addressing multiple intelligences, and adapting to students' learning styles.

★ **Individualized Instruction**—Each student has unique interests and past learning experiences. An individualized instructional program for each student allows for flexibility in teaching methods and motivational strategies to consider these individual differences.

★ **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**—A quality CTE program and a related guidance program are essential for all students. School-to-work programs recognize that youth need specific skills to prepare them to measure up to the increased demands of today's workplace.

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DEVELOPING WORLD CLASS SCHOOLS AND GRADUATES

VIOLENCE PREVENTION QUIZ EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ABOUT SCHOOL VIOLENCE

1. In the 1960's there was a film about school violence. What was its name?
.....
2. The "weapon of choice" in schools is
3. The "drug of choice" in schools is
4. The most violence school incident in American history took place in
.....
5. Schools are safer or more dangerous than they have been in the past?
True/False
6. Does your school have a School Safety Plan? When was the last time
you read it? Does it have a variable response to a
variety of scenarios? Do you know what your role is?
Was the School Safety Plan made up by the faculty as well as the
administration?
7. According to the FBI's School Shooter's Report, what is the number of
students who are afraid to come to school every day?
8. According to the FBI's School Shooter's Report and the Secret Service's
Threat Assessment Report, what do the latest group of school shooter's have
in common?
9. Does your school/district have a "zero tolerance" rule?
10. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, what percentage of violence
against young people takes place in schools? A) Less than 1% B) 5%
C) 25% D) 50%

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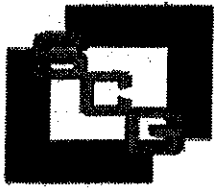
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<p>EXAMPLE:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">SAND</div> <p>Sandbox</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MAN</u> BOARD</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>STAND</u> I</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">R E A D I N G</p>
<p>5.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>WEAR</u> LONG</p>	<p>6.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">R ROADS A D S</p>	<p>7.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T O W N</p>	<p>8.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CYCLE CYCLE CYCLE</p>
<p>9.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">L E V E L</p>	<p>10.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">O <u>M.D.</u> Ph.D. B.S.</p>	<p>11.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">K N E E</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">L I G H T S</div>	<p>12.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I I I I I I <u>OO</u></p>
<p>13.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">C H A I R</p>	<p>14.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D I C E D I C E</p>	<p>15.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T O U C H</p>	<p>16.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>G R O U N D</u> F E E T F E E T F E E T F E E T F E E T F E E T</p>
<p>17.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>M I N D</u> M A T T E R</p>	<p>18.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">H E ' S / H I M S E L F</p>	<p>19.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E C N A L G</p>	<p>20.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D E A T H / L I F E</p>
<p>21.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>G . I .</u> C C C C C</p>	<p>22.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PROGRAM</p>	<p>23.</p>	<p>24.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Y O U J U S M E T</p>

BRAIN TEASERS III

<p>WIRE JUST</p>	<p>W D D D D T</p>	<p>PEP PEP</p>	<p>C O U N T R Y C O U N T R Y</p>
<p>TIMING TIM/ING</p>	<p>HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY</p>	<p>YOU JUST ME</p>	<p>FALL ALOHA SUMMER HI WINTER HELLO SPRING SHALOM</p>
<p>BONBNET</p>	<p>H^I JKLMNOP^Q R</p>	<p>PLOT</p>	<p>NO P NO NO A NO NO Y NO</p>
<p>POLMOMICE</p>	<p>ARREST YOU'RE</p>	<p>E N I L</p>	<p>HIGH THE CLOUDS THE CLOUDS THE CLOUDS</p>
<p>BILLED</p>	<p>THE BRIDGE H₂O</p>	<p>LATE N_{EVER}</p>	<p>SITTING THE WORLD</p>

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DEVELOPING WORLD CLASS SCHOOLS AND GRADUATES

Family Involvement
Professional Development

All grade levels

How To Make Your School Family-Friendly By Franklin Schargel

1. Open Lines of Communication

Meet with representatives of the community including church leaders, and community-based organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, etc. Have them announce school events like parent meetings, sporting events, student performances. Give them tickets to sporting events and student performances.

2. Have Student translators available for parents who prefer speaking in a language other than English.

3. Have staff make positive phone calls to parents

Most phone calls made to homes tend to be negative. Parents who get positive phone calls appreciate it. Call parents and complement them for having their child come on time, well prepared, or that their child did well on an examination or at a sporting or school event.

4. Have school cleaned before parent meetings.

Parents notice.

5. Have student work hanging in classrooms.

Parents and students need a replicable model of what "quality work" looks like. Create a template by having student work hanging in classrooms and halls.

6. "We Don't Want To Brag" bulletin board.

Put positive news on a bulletin board that parents can notice when they enter the school. The work can include positive news about faculty like their participation in out-of school events or their achieving degrees. Newspaper articles about the success of students in contests, sports, or achievements should be included. Include information or letters from graduates who are in college, the workforce or the military.

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7. Hang graphs of student achievements.

Graphs showing improvements in testing, attendance can be placed in visible locations in the building. The graph lines should be going up not down. Graphs should emphasize the positive, not the negative. (For example, you want to show the number of students who graduate, not those who dropout.)

8. Celebrate Student Success

Find occasions to celebrate the success of students whether in academics or sports or student activities. Make sure to invite parents. Take "instant" pictures of parents celebrating with their children. The success should not create "winners" and "losers". Insure that every student can be a winner.

9. Hold a Contest Thru Your Parent Organization.

Prizes can be for the parent who brings the most parents to a parent meeting or the one who attends the most frequently, or simply to a parent who shows up. Prizes can include free meals at a fast-food restaurant. (They are generally willing to give away meals.) "No cost" prizes can also include tickets to school sporting events or school performances.

10. Organize a Family/Faculty event.

Have parents and faculty sit down to "break bread" together. Have everyone bring something to eat (even if it store bought cookies.) The meeting might be held off-site at a community center or church. This provides an opportunity for people to engage in conversation, which need not be about what takes place in school.

11. "Everyone, bring one."

Encourage parents who attend a meeting bring one of the parents of one of their child's friends.

Excerpted from *Dropout Prevention Tools Volume II* by Franklin Schargel, to be published by Eye on Education, 2005. © Franklin Schargel

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How To Encourage A Student To Think About Staying In School

Developed By The Chicago Public Schools

At-risk children frequently take the easy way out and drop out of school. The Chicago Public Schools developed a contract that all students and their parents must sign in order to drop out of school.

Consent to Withdraw from School

I _____ acknowledge that by dropping out of school, I
Student Name
am voluntarily giving away my educational rights, privileges and opportunities.

1. I will be less likely to find good jobs that pay well, bad jobs that don't pay well, or maybe any jobs.
2. I will not be able to afford many things that I will see others acquiring.
3. I will be more likely to get caught up in criminal activity and illegal behaviors.
4. I will be more likely to spend time in jail or prison.
5. I will be more likely to rely on the state welfare system for my livelihood.
6. I will not have many choices about where to live.
7. I will be considerably less able to properly care for and educate my children.

I _____ confirm that I am over the age of 16. I also
Student Name
Have read and fully understand the consequences of my dropping out of school. Yet I choose to withdraw from school.

Student signature

I _____ confirm that my child is over the age of 16. I
(Parent/guardian name)
and fully understand the consequences of my child dropping out of school. Yet, I will allow my child to withdraw from school.

Parent Guardian signature

The above named individuals have been fully informed of the consequences of dropping out of school. I have also informed them of alternative and adult educational services that are available in the community.

Principal signature

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO STAY IN SCHOOL

Look at 4 key factors to identify potential dropouts, target intervention

Dropout expert **Franklin Shargel** is the author of the new book, *From At-Risk to Academic Excellence*. He says four key factors influence dropouts.

There are four root causes of dropping out that administrators can address. They include:

- **Community.** Involve the business community in establishing mentoring programs.
- **Student.** Connect students to resources in the community to address their needs.
- **Family.** Use creative strategies to reach out to students' families.
- **School.** Encourage teachers to use more creative teaching approaches.

Use this checklist to identify challenges so you can target prevention strategies:

1. Community

- Lack of community financial support for schools
- Lack of community support services
- High crime rate
- Few links between the community and schools

2. Student

- Poor attitude toward school
- Low self-esteem
- Low ability level
- Attendance/truancy problems
- Behavior/discipline problems
- Pregnancy
- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Poor peer relationships
- Nonparticipation at school
- Friends have dropped out
- Illness
- Unidentified disability

3. Family

- Lack of parental involvement in school
- Low parental expectations
- Non-English speaking home
- Ineffective parenting
- Dysfunctional home life
- Abuse
- High mobility family

4. School

- Negative school climate, such as lack of positive behavioral programs
- Ineffective or inconsistent discipline enforcement
- Lack of adequate counseling, such as failure to identify students' needs
- Lack of relevant curriculum; students fail to see how they will use academics
- Passive instructional strategies, such as failure to involve students in discussions
- Poor use of technology; students lack access to computers
- Disregard of individual learning styles, one-size-fits-all approach
- High retentions/suspension rates
- Low expectations for students
- Lack of language instruction for students from a non-English speaking home

Visit Franklin Schargel's Web site at www.schargel.com. ■

Engage disruptive students with nontraditional teaching methods

Fine-tuning your curriculum to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act won't necessarily stop disruptive students from impeding academic learning. Students who have difficulty learning via traditional methods persistently interrupt instruction and can stymie achievement for their entire class. Eventually, students may even drop out of school.

Franklin Schargel, author of the book *From At-Risk to Academic Excellence*, suggests you also look at whether your staff members match their teaching approaches to nontraditional learners. His book explores the challenge of getting at-risk students to achieve academically. Schargel worked with the **National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University** to develop dropout prevention strategies recognized by the **U.S. Education Department**. In his new book, Schargel recommends that administrators urge teachers to "use nontraditional approaches to intrigue students who have different learning styles."

The main reason students tune out academically and eventually drop out of school is boredom, Schargel says. He cites *The Silent Epidemic*, a report released last March by the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**. Researchers polled nearly 500 former students who had attended schools in 25 different areas of the country and found:

- 47 percent said classes weren't interesting.
- 81 percent called for more real-world learning opportunities.

Schargel suggests you investigate these nontraditional teaching approaches to help your staff engage nontraditional learners in academics so they are less apt to disrupt class.

Use active learning. Have teachers get students actively involved so they assume ownership of their learning. Involve them in creative team projects. Students can learn grammar by writing about topics they are interested in and compile copies of the articles in class magazines or small books. Distribute them to students in other classes so the authors receive recognition.

Try individualized learning. Ask instructors to use flexible teaching methods and motivational strategies to tap into each student's unique learning style. Teachers should take into consideration the needs of:

- **Visual learners.** These students need to see the teachers' body language and facial expressions to

Inventive teaching may reduce dropouts

Author **Franklin Schargel** developed dropout prevention strategies recognized by the **U.S. Education Department**. He notes that students psychologically tune out before they physically drop out of school. Schargel, who conducts workshops at schools nationwide, says some students are "pushed out of school." He's seeing No Child Left Behind's testing emphasis on academics change the reasons students are disciplined. Schargel says since "AYP are the three letters educators fear most," students who have failed to pass annual yearly progress tests are being suspended and "encouraged not to take the exams."

Instead, Schargel says administrators should ask teachers to creatively engage students in academics at earlier ages. He notes that an "alert third-grade teacher can predict which students will drop out before graduating high school." High school is too late to start repairing the dropout problem, he says, pointing to ED data that says 8.6 percent of students dropout in middle school. ■

fully grasp what they're being told. They should sit at the front of the classroom and can benefit from overhead transparencies and videos.

- **Auditory learners.** These students like to talk in class discussions and hear what others have to say. They benefit when written material that supplements a lecture is read aloud or is played on a tape recorder.

- **Kinesthetic learners.** These students learn through a hands-on approach. They can find it hard to sit still for long periods of time. They're attracted to lesson activities that let them get up and move around to touch and explore educational displays.

Schargel also suggests you:

Provide educational technology. Technology offers some of the best opportunities for delivering instruction that can engage students in authentic learning and be adapted to students' individualized learning styles.

Plan professional development. Don't forget that teachers who work regularly with youth at high risk of academic failure need to attend staff training or conferences where they can learn about innovative teaching strategies.

Learn more about Franklin Schargel's new book at www.schargel.com. Learn about active learning at <http://learnweb.harvard.edu/ALPS/home/index.cfm> and individualized learning at www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/active_learning/resources.htm. ■

How to Help Students Evaluate Their Performance



It is important that students know how to evaluate their performance in classrooms. They need to be taught what to look for and how to evaluate what they find.

Student Performance Self-Evaluation Form

Name Date

- Seldom*
 Sometimes
 Often
 Rate the following six items as "seldom," "sometimes," or "often."
- I contributed ideas to the classroom discussion.
 - I encouraged others as we worked.
 - I helped give direction to the work.
 - I followed the direction of others.
 - I helped make decisions and solve problems.
 - I took risks by exploring things that were new to me.

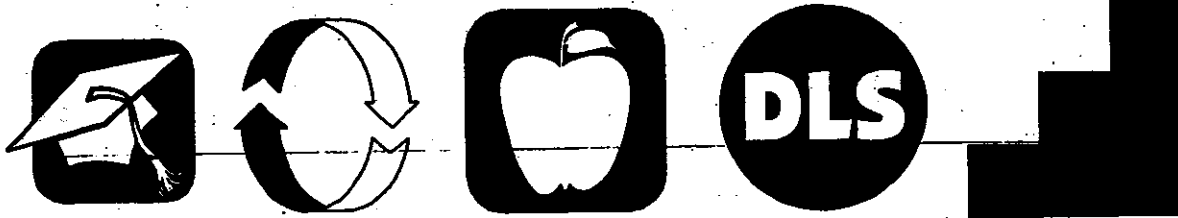
What do I contribute to the learning process?

What is the most interesting thing about what I did today?

What decisions did I have to make while we were working, and how did I try to solve the problems I faced?

What have I learned from this particular experience, and how can I apply what I have learned to other classes and everyday life?

What To Look for When Observing a Student's Learning Environment



When counselors and other support personnel go into classrooms to observe students. What should they be looking for?

Student name Date(s)

Observation within classroom

As it specifically relates to this student, indicate instructional strategies, modifications, and adaptations and their success; curricular materials used; academic and social performance; ability to work independently; verbal capabilities; motor skills; etc.

Were any of the instructional strategies, modifications and adaptations attempted during this observation successful?

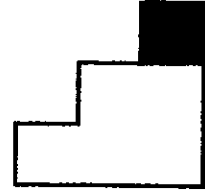
Observations outside classroom

Comment on motor skills, social interactions, inclusion or exclusion by peers, interaction with adults, activity level, passive or aggressive behavior, etc.

Name/title of observer

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How to Develop a Business Partnership Agreement



Many schools are involved with the business community, yet few have developed business partnership plans to help their business partners know what they need and want. What follows is one school's one business plan.

Dear business partner:

We would like you to consider helping us in the following ways:

◆ **Curriculum**

Reviewing, revising, and developing curriculum so that graduating students will be trained to current standards.

◆ **Equipment**

New, used, or broken but repairable and able to fit existing programs.

◆ **Jobs for Students**

Co-op, after school, summer, and after graduation.

◆ **Paid Externships**

For teachers to upgrade skills and create an awareness in students of what skills and qualities are needed in the business world.

◆ **Business Training Workshops**

Workshops for teachers and students to learn techniques necessary for teaching employment skills (i.e., management, resume writing, computer programs).

◆ **Funds**

Contributions to maintain and further develop existing programs and to provide college scholarships for graduating students.

◆ **Business People on Loan**

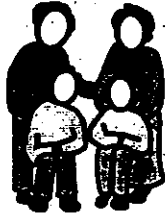
Your people with expertise to speak to classes, to provide mock interviews, and to help with resume preparation.

Please return this form to:

Name: _____ School phone number: _____

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What Are the Predictors of Truancy?



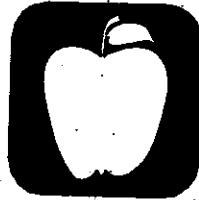
Certain factors correlate with truancy, which correlates with dropping out. The Kane County School System of Geneva, Illinois, has identified 27 such factors.

Predictors of Future Truancy

- ◆ Attendance patterns: frequent absences, suspicious excuses from school, frequent tardiness
- ◆ Poor classroom performance
- ◆ Peer relationships: loner, fights, not chosen for games, shy
- ◆ Limited participation in extracurricular activities and physical education
- ◆ Physical appearance: dress, personal hygiene, size, health
- ◆ Eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, obesity
- ◆ Sibling performance in school was negative, or sibling dropout out is or was truant
- ◆ Family environment reveals problems (e.g., overprotected)
- ◆ Two or more years behind in reading and/or mathematics
- ◆ Failure of one or more school years in elementary school
- ◆ Friends not school oriented or dropouts/truants
- ◆ Friends much older and/or substance abusers
- ◆ Behavior problems requiring disciplinary measures
- ◆ Recent divorce in the home or single-parent home
- ◆ Alcohol and/or drug abuse and/or child of alcoholic family system
- ◆ Emotional problems/psychosomatic illness, asthma, colitis, ulcers, eczema, enuresis, encopresis
- ◆ Absent from home without parental consent
- ◆ Recent death in the home or terminally ill parent
- ◆ Lack of parental supervision before and/or after school
- ◆ Abused and/or neglected (spouse and/or child)
- ◆ Disconnected or no phone during the last school year
- ◆ Behavior disorder or learning disorder placement
- ◆ Moved four or more times during elementary school period
- ◆ Twenty or more absences in kindergarten or first grade
- ◆ Separation issue of parent and/or child
- ◆ Frequent change of schools
- ◆ Feelings of not belonging and social isolation

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How to Help Students Evaluate Their Performance



It is important that students know how to evaluate their performance in classrooms. They need to be taught what to look for and how to evaluate what they find.

Student Performance Self-Evaluation Form

Name Date

- Seldom Sometimes Often *Rate the following six items as "seldom," "sometimes," or "often."*
- I contributed ideas to the classroom discussion.
- I encouraged others as we worked.
- I helped give direction to the work.
- I followed the direction of others.
- I helped make decisions and solve problems.
- I took risks by exploring things that were new to me.

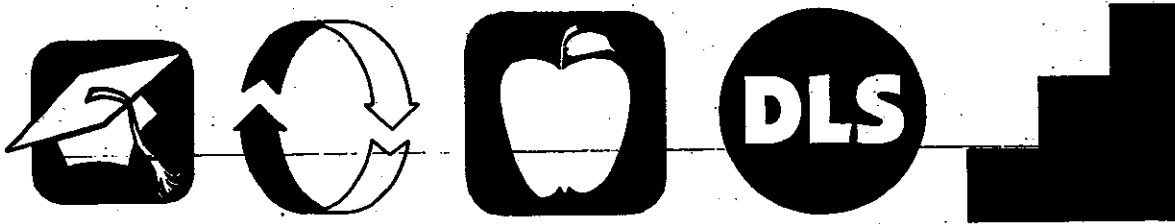
What do I contribute to the learning process?

What is the most interesting thing about what I did today?

What decisions did I have to make while we were working, and how did I try to solve the problems I faced?

What have I learned from this particular experience, and how can I apply what I have learned to other classes and everyday life?

What To Look for When Observing a Student's Learning Environment



When counselors and other support personnel go into classrooms to observe students. What should they be looking for?

Student name Date(s)

Observation within classroom

As it specifically relates to this student, indicate instructional strategies, modifications, and adaptations and their success; curricular materials used; academic and social performance; ability to work independently; verbal capabilities; motor skills; etc.

Were any of the instructional strategies, modifications and adaptations attempted during this observation successful?

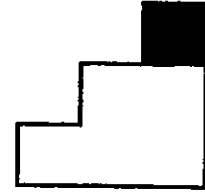
Observations outside classroom

Comment on motor skills, social interactions, inclusion or exclusion by peers, interaction with adults, activity level, passive or aggressive behavior, etc.

Name/title of observer

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How to Develop a Business Partnership Agreement



Many schools are involved with the business community, yet few have developed business partnership plans to help their business partners know what they need and want. What follows is one school's one business plan.

Dear business partner:

We would like you to consider helping us in the following ways:

◆ **Curriculum**

Reviewing, revising, and developing curriculum so that graduating students will be trained to current standards.

◆ **Equipment**

New, used, or broken but repairable and able to fit existing programs.

◆ **Jobs for Students**

Co-op, after school, summer, and after graduation.

◆ **Paid Externships**

For teachers to upgrade skills and create an awareness in students of what skills and qualities are needed in the business world.

◆ **Business Training Workshops**

Workshops for teachers and students to learn techniques necessary for teaching employment skills (i.e., management, resume writing, computer programs).

◆ **Funds**

Contributions to maintain and further develop existing programs and to provide college scholarships for graduating students.

◆ **Business People on Loan**

Your people with expertise to speak to classes, to provide mock interviews, and to help with resume preparation.

Please return this form to:

Name: _____ School phone number: _____

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What Are the Predictors of Truancy?



Certain factors correlate with truancy, which correlates with dropping out. The Kane County School System of Geneva, Illinois, has identified 27 such factors.

Predictors of Future Truancy

- ◆ Attendance patterns: frequent absences, suspicious excuses from school, frequent tardiness
- ◆ Poor classroom performance
- ◆ Peer relationships: loner, fights, not chosen for games, shy
- ◆ Limited participation in extracurricular activities and physical education
- ◆ Physical appearance: dress, personal hygiene, size, health
- ◆ Eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, obesity
- ◆ Sibling performance in school was negative, or sibling dropout out is or was truant
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The Schargel Consulting Group

Developing World Class Schools and Graduates

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This interview is reprinted with permission of Education World. It was published by Education World on March 11, 2002 as part of the site's Wire Side Chat series. You can see this and other Wire Side Chats at http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/archives/wireside.shtml

Stopping Dropping Out!

Efforts to prevent students from dropping out of school should begin when children start school, not when they're about to leave it, says Franklin P. Schargel, one of the authors of *Strategies to Help Solve Our School Dropout Problem*. According to Schargel and co-author Jay Smink, educators, parents, and the community need to work together to reduce the school dropout rate. Included: Fifteen effective strategies for reducing the number of school dropouts.



Education World: What are the biggest obstacles to implementing dropout prevention strategies in this country?

Franklin P. Schargel: A variety of obstacles prevent implementation of dropout prevention strategies -- and a number of ways exist to overcome them.

Educators -- and others -- believe that dropping out of school is a high school problem. In fact, there's no such thing as a high school dropout! Dropping out of school is not an event; it's a process -- and data indicates that that process begins as early as third grade. According to the United States Department of Education, 8.6 percent of school dropouts occur in middle school. Educators must start in elementary school to identify students who are having difficulty achieving success -- and build safety nets into the learning process for those students.

Parents need to be drawn early into the learning process, and schools need to make continuing efforts to involve parents in their children's learning. This can become a major challenge; many parents are working more than one job and the single-parent family is the norm in America.

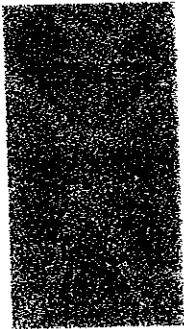
Many schools and school districts are reluctant to admit they have a dropout problem. Although inner-city school districts often have a horrendous problem, no school community is exempt. Accepting any number of school dropouts -- even small numbers -- is a mistake. In the 21st century, as our society becomes more complex and more dependent on information, knowledge, and technology, a school dropout will have a difficult -- if not an impossible -- time finding work.

We need to change the teacher-learning paradigm. Teachers must become "enablers," enabling children to obtain information and turn it into a usable

Tips from the Experts

Schargel and Smink say that schools should employ these 15 educational strategies to help prevent students from dropping out:

- * Mentor and tutor students.
- * Provide service learning: Connect community service projects with classroom learning.
- * Provide alternative programs.
- * Provide after-school and summer enhancement programs.



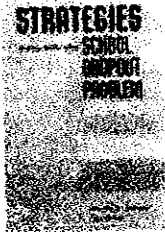
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Franklin P. Schargel

Franklin Schargel, a native of Brooklyn, New York now residing in Albuquerque, NM, is a graduate of the University of the City of New York. Franklin holds two Masters Degrees: one in Secondary Education from City University and a degree from Pace University in School Administration and Supervision. His career spans thirty-three years of classroom teaching and eight years of supervision and administration as Assistant Principal. In addition, Franklin taught a course in Dowling College's MBA Program.



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Management REVIEW

Salvaging Our Public Schools

America has gone through dramatic changes in the last century, but our education system has failed to keep up. One educator outlines eight steps we need to take to combat the crisis in our public school system.

BY FRANKLIN P. SCHARGEL

America has gone through dramatic changes in its 219 years. Our economy has moved from agriculture to mass production; and now we are in an information- and knowledge-based environment that requires greater educational levels for success.

Yet the school model has changed very little. Our school year is still based on the agrarian model that allows our students to leave school for the spring planting and the summer and fall harvesting. Our schools are organized on the industrial top-down management model that was created to train people for low-skilled jobs through rote learning and individual skill-building in a time-structured and tightly disciplined environment.

True, our school buildings have changed. Some are even air-conditioned. Green boards have replaced the black slate of old. Yet in many classrooms, students still sit in straight rows. Teachers stand in front of the room, giving the perception that they have all the answers, using

chalk-and-talk methods to pour knowledge into the seemingly empty heads of their students.

On the economic side, America cannot compete against low-wage, low-skill countries (see diagram on page 23). And if we are to compete against countries with advanced economies, we must do so with a highly skilled workforce. Unfortunately, our schools have failed to keep pace with the changing demands of the global marketplace and have become a drag on national productivity.

Some people believe that if we devote enough energy and resources to the problem, we will halt the decline of education. This assumes that pouring more money at a process that is faulty will somehow erase its faults. Experience suggests otherwise. After all, after 10 years of educational reform and \$60 billion in new expenditures, standardized test scores are stagnant and dropout rates are climbing. Clearly, the "more-longer-harder" strategy—lengthening the school year, extending the school day and making students and teachers



enter into closer consultation with schools, perhaps coupled with long-term hiring relationships that could aid both the school and the business.

In the future, hiring decisions could be based on school transcripts and business managers could provide real-world expertise in the classroom, such as critiquing resumes or presenting the world of work to young people.

5 We must change the way we educate educators. The classrooms of the future will demand new teaching skills. Deans of education can no longer accept the status quo. Yet the faculty in many schools of education have had little or no classroom experience; some have never been in a schoolroom in this country.

6 States should provide financial aid and promote those schools that are adding value to student performance. So often in the past we have thrown additional dollars at schools where the processes were not working, effectively rewarding failure instead of success. We must change that paradigm and, at the same time, recognize that when we provide money for effective change in our schools, we may be eliminating the need to spend more money on police protection and prisons. There is something wrong when a society can find the resources to incarcerate its young people, but not to educate them.

7 We must ensure that our schools are sanctuaries of safety as well as citadels of knowledge. Our children cannot learn if they are consumed by fear: We must develop strategies to dissolve the root causes of school violence.

8 We must overcome our complacency with our schools. Businesspeople, parents and educators must realize that our nation's economic and political well-being depends on how well our young people perform when they enter the workforce.

Our public school system is unique in the world: It is the only system available to all young people, regardless of social position, family background, or physical or mental ability. Statistically, our public school system can never compete with that of Germany or Japan, for example, where only the elite students are allowed to enter academic high school.

But since our students will be competing with workers from around the world, those American schools that are achieving success must benchmark with the best schools in

Singapore, Hong Kong, Israel, Sweden and the United Kingdom. If America's graduates cannot stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's best, they soon will have no place to stand at all.

The failure of America's public schools endangers the very fabric of American democracy and the foundations of America's industrial might. We cannot allow education in America to fail because education is the foundation of our democracy, the glue that holds our society together and the backbone of the American economy. ■■

Franklin P. Schargel has retired as assistant principal and quality coordinator of George Westinghouse Vocational-Technical High School in Brooklyn, N.Y., and is the author of "Transforming Education Through Total Quality Management: A Practitioner's Guide" (Eye on Education, Princeton Junction, 1994).

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TIME FOR CHANGE

Change takes time. That means high schools, with (at optimum) 25 percent per annum student turnover, are not the best incubators for change. Change also takes an investment in training, yet it is the unusual school system that has more than a few days or dollars per year to devote to this purpose.

Despite these issues, change is occurring in the classroom, propelled by corporate leaders who have proved willing to provide money and expertise to assist schools in their communities. Many of these programs have been successful, but few have been replicated on a large scale. Some of the hindrances to developing and duplicating successful business-education partnerships are as follows:

● School and business cultures are so different from each other that it is difficult for parties to communicate with one another or find ways to work in common toward their goals, even when those goals are complementary. Few teachers have personal experience in for-profit environments and few businesspeople have knowledge of

what goes on in the classroom beyond what they think they remember from their own school days.

● The school system is built on bureaucratic and political criteria, while businesses are self-contained entities that are most interested in helping to sponsor change in the local community where it will do them the most immediate good. Each business-education partnership has to be developed independently, and the work frequently gets done outside the normal channels of a top-down school bureaucracy.

● Public schools exist in a tenured, unionized, captive environment. Most businesses that are creating change are nonunion, or the change process is taking place with the full support of the union. Those circumstances do not exist in public school education. Additionally, a business can always fire a worker who doesn't "get it," but social and political pressures serve to keep malcontents in high school as long as possible, not the opposite.

—Martha H. Peak