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# A Motivational Strategy That Accommodates Middle School Special Education Students: Achieving Academic Success

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A MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY THAT  
ACCOMMODATES MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS:  
ACHIEVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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A Project Report  
Presented to  
The Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education  
Master Teacher

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by  
Susan. J. Koempel

August 2005

## ABSTRACT

### MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES THAT ACCOMMODATE MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: ACHIEVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

By

Susan J. Koempel

May 2005

The project provides middle school teachers with a handbook for clarifying academic targets in the general education U. S. history classroom. This strategy clearly defines, in a pictorial manner, the interconnectedness that exists between report cards, progress reports, and quarterly curriculum assignments. The intervention of this organizational strategy will assist students in decisions, regarding the timely completion and turn in of assignments, by creating an overall awareness of the progress of time and assignment due dates during the quarter. Originally, the production of the intervention was done by the special education staff so that there would be minimal time energy investment by the general education staff. A successful outcome will rely on the collaboration efforts between special education and general education staff as an overall awareness of quarterly requirements for success is created for the student.

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# CHAPTER I

## BACKGROUND OF PROJECT

### *Introduction*

“All teachers should see that, as they prepare young people to perform larger and more worthy parts in life, they are really giving shape and character to the society of the future—that education of today is to determine the history of tomorrow. Others may be working for the present, but teachers are working for the future” (Warnick & Straquadine, 2005, p. 3).

Since the 1997 passage of amendments to the federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with disability have received consideration for academic accommodations and modifications, which allow them to succeed in the general education classrooms, while using general education curriculum (Palmer, Wehmeyer, Gipson & Agran, 2004). The design of these accommodations and modifications that function as success supports for students of disability enrolled in general education courses is developed in the Individual Education Programs (IEP) as it is written by the IEP team and Professional Evaluation Group (PEG) within this district. Some of the interventions used with the accommodations and modifications, will be specific to a particular student’s needs as a consequence of the disability, yet there are those organization interventions that can benefit all students. The delivery of general education curriculum can be structured to aid students with special needs during their learning activities in the general education classroom. Clearly delineating daily classroom expectations can help in keeping these students focused on their academic

targets. A daily classroom routine is a basic requirement for assisting students with special needs in being successful when developing their organization skills. Once many of the students have access to an organizational intervention tool they can become more independent in pursuing their individual academic goals. Teacher assistance in organizing individual effort toward a specific academic goal is a basic need of these students (Bausch & Becker, 2001). Many students with disabilities need organizational interventions to motivate them in being successful students.

#### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a motivational and organizational strategy that will assist middle school special education students, in increasing their academic success when enrolled in general education United States History classes. Special education students are required by the PEG to take (among other tests), the Weschsler Individual Achievement Test (2002) which is a national standardized psychological test used as a part of entrancing and exiting special education programs in this district.

As noted by test administrators, students with disability will often miss test questions requiring the big picture responses on oral expression test items regarding visual passage retell and giving directions. The students are good on details, but they fail to state the overall theme as is required in the test rubric. If this lack of complete overall awareness is the missing concept for motivation and organization for these students in completing their academic targets, there needs to be a strategy that will counter this hindrance in achieving academic success by the end of a grading period. A method of



intervention that will more clearly define required academic targets, and therefore assist these students with disabilities into a higher rate of passing grades needs to be used. As Alberto and Troutman (1999) state in their discourse on behavioral objectives, "...a clearly stated target for instruction facilitates effective programming by the teacher and ancillary personnel" (Alberto & Troutman, 1999, p. 61). They also infer that clearly defined instructional targets will make it easier for the teacher when developing lesson delivery and strategies for teaching students.

This research in Chapter Two examined various existing strategies that are used to accommodate middle school special education students in increasing their academic success; what interventions assist this population in turning in required assignments on time, and therefore allowing them to earn passing grades. An intervention was constructed that visually presents to these students the daily, weekly, and quarterly expectations in their middle school United States History general education class for the academic year. This intervention will clarify the quarterly goal and the specific daily and weekly objectives that they must complete in the course for a passing grade. The organizational strategy will enable middle school special educational students to become motivated to increase their academic success by visually presenting in the classroom every day a clearly defined academic target. This broad picture organizational tool will help students, who have experienced course failure, to organize and sustain their effort in assignment completion and thereby increase their turn in rate until the end of a quarter grading period. This timely task completion of assignments, and increased turn in rate,

will allow these students to experience academic success, which will be reflected by passing grades in progress reports and on report cards.

### Significance of the Project

A well designed, preformatted, organizational tool will be used by middle school special education students as a guide toward a clearly defined academic target, for the purpose of increasing the completion and turn in rate of required assignments, with the final result being a passing quarter grade. A carefully designed progress report aligned with this organization tool, will act as a preventive intervention against failing quarter grades in middle school United States History general education class (past performance has indicated an 11% failure rate during a quarter). This intervention will result in more assignments being turned in, in a timely fashion. Often these students with disability in the middle school United States History class will have completed assignments, sometimes more than once, and then have failed to turn them in to the respective teacher. Once again these students are not aware of how the small pieces of the picture add up to form the whole academic picture at the end of the quarter. The design concept of the intervention tool, as represented in the Motivational Strategy Handbook, should transcend particular teachers, academic courses, and be adaptable to all of the mainstreamed special education students regardless of disability. It will not supplant the use of best practice accommodations and modifications presently implemented to assist students with disability in the middle school United States History class in this district. The organization tool should be of benefit for all students and teachers as an intervention supporting academic success. Most important, the organization tool should save time

and effort, because students will have a clearly defined academic target directing their activity. As suggested by Palmer, Wehmeyer, Gipson, and Agran (2004) the intervention needs to support students in independent decision making and problem solving, so that they become self directed learners completing a quarterly academic target.

### Limitations of the Project

This organization intervention is designed specifically for teachers of eighth grade middle school United States History students with disability for use during that general education class by the general education teacher in this district. The intent of the strategy is to enable these students to enhance their overall awareness of the interconnectedness that exists between assignments, progress reports and report cards. The special education teacher will continue to serve as facilitator for the students during intervention application. This tool does not supplant the need for these students to access the resource room as needed.

### Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to assist the reader in clarifying understanding of the references particular to this project. The definitions are specific to the educational experience of middle school students of disability in the inclusive setting of general education United States History classroom in this district.

Grading period: four divisions of a school year consisting of forty five school days each in the middle school of this district.

Homework: those assignments required for earning a passing grade and not for the sole purpose of 'skill drill practice' in the middle school's United States History class.

Mainstreaming: students of disability enrolled in general education middle school United States History class in this district.

Middle school: public school setting of less than 300 students, involving sixth, seventh and eighth grade students in a rural school district in eastern Washington

Motivational strategies: an intervention tool with the purpose of guiding and sustaining student activity until they have successfully performed academic tasks in the middle school United States History class.

Organizational strategies: a tool with the purpose of assisting students in maintaining focus on an academic task until it is successfully completed in the middle school United States History class.

Para educator: adults with at least a high school education hired with the specific purpose of acting under the direction of the certified teacher in supporting the educational program of students with disability in this district.

Progress reports: bi-weekly reports indicating past performance of assignment completion, the grade earned and the total amount of points accumulated to date in the middle school United States History class.

Resource room: the classroom maintained for the purpose of teaching students of disability in the middle school in this district.

Self-determination: empowering special education students in goal attainment in the middle school United States History class.

Special education students: those students with disability qualifying for special education services according to the requirements of the Individuals with Disability Education Act in the middle school in this district.

Weschler Individual Achievement Test : (WIAT II) a nationally standardized testing instrument used for determining qualification of student entrance and exit of special education services in this district.

### Project Overview

In Chapter One, the impetus for this organizational project that clarifies academic targets in the middle school United States History class in this district is described. Due to the protections for special education students in the IDEA federal law, students with disability are now included in the general education population academic courses. Inclusionary education presents a frustration for general education teachers when teaching students with disability in this district; this is their seeming inability to turn in required course work in a timely fashion. Often these missing assignments can be found in student binders, and sometimes that required task has been duplicated by their effort more than once. This misplaced effort and wasted time causes anxiety and dismay for student, parent, and professional educators. All members of the PEG would experience relief from a student's failure if an organizational strategy could be developed to help motivate these students to complete quarterly academic targets and be successful students. The lesson objective must be clarified as indicated by Alberto & Troutman (1999), because when objectives are well defined, then teachers are facilitating student success.

Chapter Two contains a review of literature of what other professionals use for successful best practice intervention strategies for students with disability. These curriculum interventions range from pull-out direction instruction, to as needed accommodations and modification delivered in the general education classroom. Homework interventions that assist students with disability in completing and turning in assignments include: attention to time management, considering students present level of performance, parent support, and teacher monitoring. The physical organizational tools like: color coding dividers, organizational diagrams, binders, and planners that assist to organize learning, are also incorporated in helping students to manage their efforts for success. The research that pertains to how teacher organization influences student success is also mentioned.

In Chapter Three, this project develops a strategy for organization that assists students in clarifying academic targets by drawing attention to the interconnectedness existing between class assignments, progress reports, and report cards, is originally designed for a middle school U. S. History class. However, the intervention could also be applicable and adaptable to other academic courses. The project is defined in Chapter Three as being a system that uses one by six inch magnetic strips of three contrasting colors, one color of which is duplicated for each of the four quarters in an academic school year. Further targeting course assignments being worked on and classroom progress, will be a magnetic strip arrow. The first two quarters are mounted on the left of the classroom white board, and the second two on the right end. The colors are arranged on the left top white and then bottom red, on the right of the whiteboard, blue is on the

top and white on the bottom. This is important because when the students are referencing the white board for quarter assignments, and if both quarters at the top of the board are white there will be visual confusion. Brackets constructed from tape lead from the daily assignments to a progress report and then from the progress report to the report card. Thus, the interconnectedness between product and document is visually and explicitly represented for the students, every day they are in the classroom. Creating this pictorial awareness of how a student is successful will enable students in independent decision making while focusing on their own academic achievement.

Chapter Four further describes the project by addressing the individual roles of the participants implementing the organizational strategy; special education teachers, general education teachers, and the students. The special education teacher is responsible for physically constructing the intervention and the general education teacher is accountable for referencing and updating the tool during instruction. After being presented every day with this organizational intervention, the students are encouraged to access the tool for time management in assisting them to turn in assignments in a timely fashion.

Chapter Five reiterates the necessity of implementing clearly defined academic targets in lesson planning, teaching, and ease of learning. This intervention is specifically developed for use in an eighth grade classroom; however, it has the potential to be adapted into other academic areas. The possibility of further research, as a comparative case study between classrooms, one using the intervention and the other not using the

intervention, would provide evidence for determining validity of using the this particular tool to increase the turn in rate of assignments.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter pertains to organization interventions that support students with disability when making decisions to increase the turn in rate of their assignments and thereby positively affecting their grades. In the literature review only full text peer reviewed literature found by using the terms organizational motivational strategies, organization for special education students, motivating special education students, autism school accommodations, ADHD interventions, middle school inclusion problems. Related forms of these key words were used in defining the search for literature. Research was done on ProQuest and Eric accessed from the Central Washington University databases library webpage with the exception of two articles in which the authorship was found by using the Google search engine. None of the articles used were before 1991 and most were published after 2000. The chapter is generally divided into sections covering interventions used by general education teachers in the classroom, specifically for homework in United States History and other academic areas.

#### General Education Curriculum Interventions

Pull-out direct instruction for reading, math, and writing is a common method for supporting students with disability, and research verifies that this model supports increasing skill levels (Mac Iver, 1991). According to Mac Iver, these pull-out interventions do help students develop academic skills; however, the increase is not as great as it is for students who attended an extra subject period during the school day. The author also stresses, that instead of enrolling these students in elective courses during the

regular school day, they should use that time developing skills in their area of educational need. Mac Iver reports that the intervention that most significantly helps these students achieve higher in mathematics is Saturday school.

Regardless, of the intervention that is constructed for these students by special education staff, it will be valueless unless collaboration exists between the professionals involved in educating that student. Recognizing that teaching a student with a disability is a professional team effort is fundamental to inclusive education (Villa & Thousand 2003). Both general education and special education educators must collaborate and use best practices for successful interventions to occur for special education students. According to the authors Villa and Thousand, the best practice used to facilitate special education students is merely an extension of strategies already in use for educating all students. The authors use this idea to explain to parents that inclusionary education for students with disability is an extension of already existing educational practices that are in use for all students.

Teachers who give careful consideration to student needs during lesson planning and delivery will be paid back in motivated students who are centered on their learning targets (White, 2004). White encourages teachers to become aware of individual students learning styles, multiple intelligences, and to personally relate to the students when teaching. Knowing when and how often to use these techniques is paramount in successfully teaching students and in inspiring a learner to become motivated. Planning lessons are broken down into a mnemonic: Context, State, Result (CSR). As White presents CSR, it is a reflection of cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of learning.

Knowing that students will need a physical stress release break by simply standing up and stretching can also help the students be more alert and ready to learn. Teachers are responsible for creating the learning environment in their classrooms and keeping the students focused on the intended academic target. As stated by the author, "One of the biggest traps is teaching in a style that is compatible to only our preferred intelligence style" (White, 2004, p.15). Teachers can also better instruct students by being aware of their individual differences.

A case study by DuPaul and White (2004) focused on interventions specific to students with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), enrolled in general education classrooms. These authors favored a program that first diagnosed ADHD and then designed interventions for student success with periodic review of these interventions to determine if change was necessary. The most successful strategies identified for ADHD students are teaching organizational skills, using self-monitoring for organization, providing practice for these skills, and self evaluating daily for organizational success. DuPaul and White noted that ADHD students have to be taught the connection and relevance of school success to post graduate goals.

Coffey and Obringer (2004) discuss interventions gathered during interviews with parents in a case study for students with autism in inclusive settings and recommendations for parents in selecting an appropriate school. Successful strategies were: modified testing, homework assignments, extended time and preferential seating. In this case study tutors from a university provided support for academic and self-help skills. Parents were encouraged to find a small school campus with smaller

student/teacher ratios and teachers who demonstrated a willingness to be flexible when implementing school policy concerning scheduling, homework, and testing. Another beneficial accommodation is the frequent communication between parent and teacher regarding social and academic goals for the student.

### Homework Interventions

As already related in the literature review, students with disability benefit from extra extensions of best practices used in teaching. Among these considerations for academic success are special attention paid to increase learning time during an extra period day or Saturday school, to collaboration between general and special education staff. Whatever successful intervention is used, it is sensitive to the individual needs of the student with disability.

The organizational study skill, time management, offers a method of refining and clarifying academic targeting (Bausch & Becker, 2001). The authors suggest having the students keep calendars of activities and making lists for checking off completed activities as a method for increasing student awareness of the passage of time, and therefore, the need to get assignments completed. Object organization is also another component of being a successful student that Bausch and Becker (2001) discusses in length. Successful students must be taught how to maintaining organization of their learning tools: text books, binders, pencils, and other requirements for working in class. Extensive use of color coding also aides the organization process. It was mentioned that this organization strategy would be especially beneficial for students with visual/spatial learning styles. Another insight offered by Bausch and Becker (2001) is that students can

take better notes if they are explicitly informed of the expectations; students are expected to write down this information. So, for good note taking from students, which will assist them in completing assignments, keep the academic target clear and simply stated.

A student being assigned homework varies from district to district, as it does from teacher to teacher. There is even a difference in the types of homework assignments due to teacher preference, subject area, or grade level (Bryan & Burstein, 2004). In “Improving Homework” (2004) using reinforcements, graphing, and planners are suggested as homework monitoring interventions. Color graphing homework completion was reported to be the most successful intervention for communicating performance awareness to students. However, the authors also admit that there is little research to validate the success of these interventions in actually increasing the turn in rate of homework. According to Bryan and Burstein (2004) monitoring homework completion by teachers can cause time and energy displacement for teaching necessary academic skills. Teachers can be of assistance, to students in the completion of homework, by assigning work that the student is capable of performing while away from the support resources found in the classroom. If the homework is too difficult for the student to perform independently, then the best homework turn in strategy will not help that work get completed. Any possible parent support these students receive at home will be within the ability of their academic performance level. Some parents will admit that they do not have the skills necessary to help their children complete their homework due to academic changes, their own achievement, or their child’s disability. Other homework strategies

mentioned by Bryan and Burstein (2004) are real life assignments and cooperative study teams.

Bausch and Becker (2001) give considerable attention to the parent dynamic when students are trying to complete homework. Due to single parent households, both parents working and other factors there is seldom parental support for these students to do homework assignments or increase academic skills. These students need to be successful during their academic school day or have an intervention tool that will be strong enough to motivate them to work outside of the classroom without the intervention of a supervising adult. The students who have the skills to complete homework often do not because of the lack of parental successful academic experience or academic success simply is not a priority in that household.

Students who are fortunate enough to have supporting parents have the advantage of advocacy intervention in the school system. The benefit of parents partnering with middle schools is referred to in four specifically recognized interventions for students (Henderson & Wilcox 1998). It is profitable for these students to have parental monitoring of their academic choices because it can have an affect on their high school course offerings. Some academics will have prerequisite skill development that must be accomplished during middle school. Another asset for these students, because of parental guidance, is that these students will have mentally enriching opportunities beyond the school day. Parental involvement in schools also communicates to students the importance of the schools relationship to the community. The most basic valuable evidence of parental support is that these fortunate students will simply do better in

school. According to Henderson and Wilcox (1998) the fundamental importance of a parent participation force in schools is that their presence will impel the schools to continually improve the school systems delivery of services.

#### General Education History Curriculum Interventions

Wehmeyer, Lattin, Lapp-Rincke, and Agran (2003) presented a study specifically involving students with disability who were diagnosed with mental retardation and were enrolled in inclusive general education courses, including social studies and history at the middle school level. An observed intervention of how successful these students were was the delivery of instruction or curriculum modifications that supported student understanding of content, and therefore achievement. Among the interventions listed was the use of visuals: flowcharts, diagrams, outlines, and hierarchical graphic organizers. These interventions and others allowed the students with disability to be in the general education classroom and participate in the general education curriculum. The authors also consider that the individual needs of these students must be accounted for in lesson planning for them to have a successful academic experience. If a student with disability requires an outline of the days course work to enhance academic success, then it should be provided for that student during instruction so that they can be academically successful.

The use of conceptual organization in text books can benefit ease of learning for special education students in U. S. History general education classes. Crawford and Carnine (2000) found that textbooks that incorporated the use of content study guides, concept maps, and other supporting graphics enhanced student learning by increasing

opportunities for students to develop connections with history. Mnemonic strategies written into text books also assist students in remembering and understanding historical concepts. These authors stressed the importance of using conceptually organized textbooks that were built around sound teaching practices, because text books are the tool of choice in 75% to 90% of classroom instruction.

Accepting that low achieving readers will be among the enrollees in general education United States History, Wilson and Memory (2001), developed a teaching strategy to accommodate low readers. They used carefully selected films as the basis for small group research projects, where strong readers were working with low achieving readers. A basic premise, for choosing this film instructional strategy, was that students are usually more enthusiastic about history if it is orally presented. The anticipation was that once interest was garnered in the low level readers, they then would self-motivate in reading about history at their own reading level, from pre selected lower grade level books. By executing care in choosing historically accurate material with regard to reading level, and with paring low readers with strong readers, these students were able to effectively work on United States History research projects in small groups.

Another alternative intervention strategy that supports students with disability in general education United States History is, for the PEG involved in developing the student's IEP, to adapt the course grading scale into a personal grading plan. Personal grading plans place the greatest percentage of points in the student's greatest area of need. Munk and Bursuck (2001) commented that although this was not a common intervention, general education teachers were familiar with the strategy, and according to



Munk and Bursuck (2001) past research indicated that 50% of general education teachers had used the process at some time in grading students. Although this modified grading scale did take staff time to create and implement, it did have the desired result of motivating the student to work on completing and turning in their assignments. Personal grading plans also have inherent flexibility to place the greatest percentage of points in the student's greatest area of need. Hence, if a student needs encouragement to turn in assignments, then their grading plan is written to reflect support in that particular area of need. Therefore, the grading system itself is assisting special education students to become stronger academically. Using this intervention does require an investment of time from all PEG members: parents, teachers, and the student, however, this investment of time resulted in more personal effort from the students to achieve academically. In the final analysis, Munk and Bursuck (2001) attributed the student's success partly to the refreshed focus of everyone in supporting the student's efforts. Everyone in the PEG contributed encouragement to that student's success and the student was very aware of their involvement.

Van Hover and Yeager (2003) are a fitting overview to this section on strategies. They observed interventions for special education students as they were implemented by five middle school general education United States History teachers. The authors examined the use of curriculum adaptations and found mnemonics, reading the textbook aloud, copies of lecture notes, lecture outlines, lecture, worksheets, group work, extra time for test taking, and projects that were being used by these general education teachers. Among the strategies was the use of multiple sources of information that

considered students of disability. Some of the teachers used ability grouping, peer tutoring, and cooperative groups to enhance student learning. The emphasis was that the strategy actually supported student learning in the general education classroom. Even if the student with disability received individual consideration in grading and performance, the targeted effort was that they were still learning the subject matter not merely receiving passing grades based on time served in class. When interviewed most teachers in this study by Van Hover and Yeager (2003) felt that these students were appropriately placed in the general education classroom but that students with disability did require "...extra assistance with reading, writing, organization, and staying on task" (Van Hover & Yeager, 2003, p. 6). Some difficulties referred to in the study by general education history teachers that prevented them from individualizing instruction for students with disability were the lack of preparation training for inclusion and miscommunication between general and special education departments.

#### Teacher Organization Affecting Student Success

According to Warnick and Straquadine (2005) for a student with disability to become organized and practice organization of their work habits in the classroom, they must visually and practically experience this in their teacher. Teachers setting the classroom atmosphere by being an example, and by demonstrating the importance of organization, are a valuable teaching tool for these students. Organization development in students is supported by teachers who use organizational patterns and structure in their teaching and in their curriculum (Warnick & Straquadine, 2005). The authors premise is that if students are to be purposeful life long thinkers, then the thoroughly planned

delivery of carefully selected curriculum should reflect that target. For students to be organized, the teaching and curriculum should also be organized.

Characteristics of good teaching that affect student success are evident in a learner centered classroom (Kohn, 1996). One type of evidence is the type of information that covers the walls of this classroom. It will be student centered and support student learning. There will also be educational noise that substantiates student learning: students sharing, asking, and demonstrating ideas learned in class. The teacher, instead of always being in position up front as a font of information, will be working with and among the students, as they facilitate student learning. A healthy atmosphere for learning will also be evident in the teacher's voice; the students must hear genuine respect and warmth to be encouraged to interact with their learning. All of these characteristics reflect a well organized classroom that supports all students while they are learning.

Harms and Knobloch (2003) place the responsibility for motivating students directly on how teachers organize their lesson presentations. They suggest that student motivation can be accomplished by using these strategies; after teaching, preview future learning during class closure, engaging student attention by using real life examples and bait learner attention by discussing learning targets. According to Harms and Knobloch (2003) the anticipated end result is that students will be motivated to carry their learning quest into real life situations, because the teacher through using these strategies has created a desire for knowledge in their students.

Teacher commitment in teaching an inclusive classroom requires an intensive dedication of time, flexibility, and competence in professional application of best practice

strategies. Consideration will have to be structured into lesson planning regarding those students who are struggling with literacy as well as those students who need more challenging material (Tomlinson & Eidson, 2003). The author described these exceptional needs students on the far ends of the learning scale as outliers. A remarkable perspective in lesson delivery to the students with an inclusive teacher is that they taught to student needs, instead of teaching the curriculum. Teacher activity was guided by determining what would be effective for student learning. Directing the teacher's determination of what was effective for students was the continual assessment of student activity. Teachers, who are committed to teach an inclusive classroom, means that they are willing and committed to teaching each individual student.

#### Collaboration in Inclusive Classrooms

As referred to in an earlier literature review by Villa and Thousand (2003) collaboration between general education and special education staff is a necessary component for planning an successful educational experiences for students with disability. Laframboise, Epanchin, Colucci, and Hocutt (2004) conducted a study of elementary and middle school teams in three school districts that examined the barriers to successful inclusion as perceived by general and special educators. During their research, classrooms experienced a reduction of teaching staff which left a high ratio of ten more students to one teacher. This shift in numbers created new challenges for delivering instruction. The increased student numbers reduced the possibility of small group work necessary for individualized instruction because of the reduction in space. Teachers no longer had the room to set up work stations, group desks, or move furniture to

accommodate individualized lesson delivery. The researchers discovered that teaching teams were more effective if they were allowed the opportunity to select members.

Communication and lesson delivery became difficult when one teachers time was divided among too many teachers. Laframboise, Epanchin, Colucci, and Hocutt also found that issues of inequity, perceived and real, existed about paper work and over all work loads.

A qualitative research study examined teacher perceptions on inclusive education with specific attention to teaching responsibilities when educating students of disability (Wood, 1998). The study occurred when a school district was in the process of placing special education students in age appropriate general education classroom settings.

According to Wood, those teachers who were adamantly against inclusion were not used in the study. Instead, teachers who were supportive and educated in the concepts of special education were used in an attempt to obtain useful information regarding successful implementation of inclusionary practices. The general education teachers were supportive of special education students being in their classrooms and even accepted the responsibility of social goals and increasing knowledge in content areas. A common complaint of the general education teachers was the difficulty in adjusting to the intermittent presence of adults and pull-out for specially designed instruction necessary for the delivery of services for the student. An insightful criticism by the study participants was that this pull out service was perceived by the general education teacher as not being "...detrimental to the children's learning but to the self-concepts of the teachers" (Wood, p. 10). According to Wood, another consideration of general education teachers that must be made for successful inclusion is that teachers have territoriality

instincts toward their students and classrooms. General education teachers want to be informed of their responsibilities and then trusted to implement them during the school year. Wood's final implication for practice was the recommendation that successful inclusion must be accompanied with pre-service and in-service training that establishes a foundation of language and philosophy of special education for all team participants.

Including special education students in the general education setting is not a professional choice it is a federal mandate delineated in the IDEA. Now that students with disability are enrolled in general education classes, the challenge is how can their needs be best served so that they can be successful with the general education curriculum in the general education setting. Mac Iver (1991) recommended adding an extra period to the school day or having Saturday school for increasing student achievement. The importance of collaboration between staff in developing and implementing best educational practice for students with disability was stressed by Villa and Thousand (2003). Assigning teachers the responsibility to carefully consider the individual learning needs of students with disability was covered by White (2004). Then DuPaul and White (2004) focus on interventions specifically for ADHD: self-monitoring organizational skills. Next Coffey and Obringer (2004) discuss interventions specifically for autism: modified testing, homework assignments, extended time and preferential seating. Wehmeyer, Lattin, Lapp-Rincke and Agran (2003) cover interventions specific to mental retardation. Having students organize time management as a successful homework intervention was covered by Bausch and Becker (2001). These authors also listed the necessity of organizing learning tools as a component to successfully

completing homework. Bryan and Burstein (2004) offered color graphing as a method to keep students of disability targeted on homework completion. Both Bausch and Becker (2001) and Henderson and Wilcox (1998) covered the parent factor in students of disability completing homework. Using conceptual organization in text books to benefit ease of learning in United States History classes was mentioned by Crawford and Carnine (2000). Wilson and Memory (2001) developed a teaching strategy for low readers in United States History. Using a personal grading plan to support skill development in the student's greatest area of need was offered by Munk and Bursuck (2001). If a student needed encouragement in turning in assignments then the grading plan was written to support that skill development. Van Hover and Yeager (2003) covered interventions used by United States History middle school teachers: curriculum adaptations, mnemonics, oral reading, outlines and ability grouping were a few of the strategies supporting students with disability. Research that contributed directly to the development of this project were Warnick and Straquadine (2005), Khon (1996), Harms and Knhobloch (2003) and Tomlinson and Eidson (2003). Their research pertained to how teacher organization affected student success and that organization can affect student motivation. The literature review chapter ends with Laframboise, Epanchin, Colucci and Hocutt (2004) stressing the importance of collaboration between general and special educators in teaching students with disability. In Wood's (1998) study those general education teachers who were adamantly against inclusion were not used in gathering the best practice interventions used for students with disability to be successful in the completion of academic targeting. One outcome of Wood's (1998) research was that successful

inclusion must be accompanied with training that establishes common language and philosophy.



## CHAPTER III

### BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Due to past performances, students with disability have indicated the need for an organizational intervention that will assist them in achieving academic success. The quest was for an intervention that not only supplied this need, but that also required minimal time effort investment from the educators. This organizational strategy will not supplant accommodations and modifications already in affect; rather it will create a unifying factor which will clarify the quarterly academic target.

These students with a disability in this district, already receive a bi-weekly progress report that indicates the required assignments to that date, those that have been turned in and the amount of points earned. However, this progress report only provides the student with a picture of what they have or have not completed to date; it does not define the complete academic target they need to achieve for quarterly success. They also have at their convenience, and many are quite adept in the use of: binders, subject dividers, a required student planner, and preformatted daily assignments lists that are filled out by the students during class.

The general education teachers also post, day-by-day the weekly assignments for the course. Daily these are written down by a the para educator from the resource room and also posted in that room so the students and educators will have access to assignment information. Other interventions commonly used by the general education teachers to accommodate special education students are: extra time for task completion before or after school and during prep periods, reteaching concepts, one-on-one practice sessions, and reduced assignment length. Still, it is not unusual for the eighth grade special

education students enrolled in a six period day to have 11% failing grades at the end of the quarter due to work not turned in so that it can be graded by their teachers.

### Project Procedure

Student success will be facilitated by the special education constructing, and the general education United States History teacher presenting, the students with a course syllabus at the beginning of the quarter in a magnetic strip format on the classroom white board and in a handout format. Both forms of information will specifically list the required assignments in the same order for that quarter. The intention is that these interventions will increase the overall awareness of what constitutes a passing grade on the report card. The special education students already have an understanding of total winning points in their sports activities and video games, and they practice this concept quite well in extracurricular programs. Teachers assume that the students will transition this 'winning by accumulating points' concept from after school activities, over to completing individual course assignments that will result in accumulated points and therefore into a passing grade. However, this doesn't seem to happen. These students need to be empowered with a self-determination intervention tool that will clearly define academic targets, and enable them to independently organize their academic skills for quarterly passing grades. This intervention tool will present exactly what is needed to earn a passing grade, and it must be designed for these students to maintain performance, yet allow them the flexibility of choosing their own organizational strategy for assignment completion (Wehmeyer & Field, 2004).

### Project Development

The concern giving impetus to the designing of this organizational intervention is the students with disability who have difficulty with organization who are enrolled in general education United States History at the middle school in this district. Creating and using this intervention strategy has required the collaboration of special education and general education staff. It represents a collaborative attempt to be proactive in facilitating the success of these students without causing the general education teachers further investment of time. The PEG that designs the network of support for students with disability will monitor the success of the intervention for these individual eighth grade students. The students already receive necessary accommodations and modifications for academic success; this self-monitoring intervention tool, that increases student awareness, needs to be implemented so that effort will be sustained toward quarterly goal completion (Hughes, 2002). These students with disability need an intervention that facilitates decision making that will motivate their independent performance and self-evaluation necessary for goal attainment, and if they are not on target they will be able to use this intervention to make necessary adjustments (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2002). So, as attentively as these students self-evaluate goal attainment in their extracurricular activities, they need access to an intervention that will encourage them to be equally aware of academic goal attainment.

### Project Implementation

Last year, academic targeting in the resource room was underscored by hanging

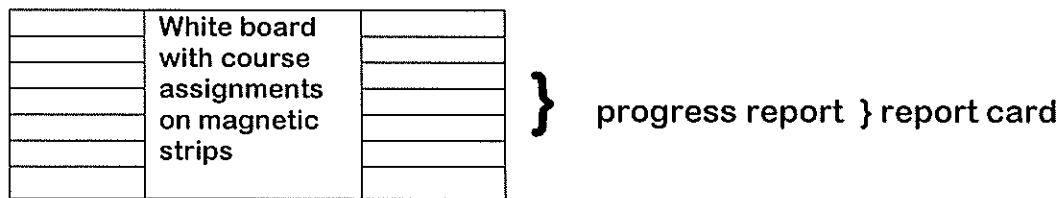
a discarded high school marching banner on the wall behind the teacher's desk. This served and still serves to remind these students of the purpose of all of their academic effort; students work their way to the high school. Yet, the course failure rate has remained unchanged as the eighth graders still receive approximately 11% failing grades in their general education courses. However, a serendipitous side affect was that this banner has eliminated the whining that used to precede beginning required academic tasks for the seventh and eighth graders. Obviously, the overall ending target must be even more clearly defined for these students so that they can self-direct and self-monitor toward that goal (Agran, 2005). Decreasing failing grades and increasing passing grades, even if the passing grade is a D, has been a continual concern of educators in this district at the middle school for students with disability. With the target being increased passing grades, the U. S. History classroom will be using the intervention of a color-coded, magnetic strip required assignment list representing all four quarters, which will be posted on both ends of the white board. Clarifying the academic requirements will be brackets leading from the magnetic strip assignment listing to a progress report, and then another leading to a report card. All students will know where they will need to be in relationship to completing the academic targets because a yellow magnetic strip arrow will show them the way. They will also understand the connection between assignments, progress reports and report cards as being a reflection of student effort.

## CHAPTER IV

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### Role of Special Education Teacher

The quest was for an organization intervention tool, which did not require more time investment from the general education teacher, and will assist special education students in turning in more completed assignments and thereby earning a passing grade in U. S. History. The students will be visually presented with a representation of the course assignment requirements on the white board in the form of color coded magnetic strips. The first quarter will use white magnetic strips mounted on the top left of the white board while the second quarter will be mounted below on red magnetic strips. Third quarter will be posted on the top right board in blue and the fourth quarter will be below in white. Students will be viewing the entire years work on the first day of school. The daily expectation will be highlighted by using a contrasting colored magnetic strip arrow. Further assisting these students will be a large bracket from the magnetic strips for the quarter's assignments leading to that quarter's progress report. This progress report will reflect the same information in the same order as the assignments on the magnetic strips. A second bracket will lead from the progress report to a facsimile of a report card so that the students' awareness of how final quarter grades are earned is heightened. Hopefully, this will increase the amount of turned in completed assignments. The quarterly academic targets, which will be worked on daily, will be posted and the relationship to the end target reflected in the report card will be visually represented in the classroom as indicated with the following illustration.



This intervention for homework completion was constructed by first gathering three differently colored (red, white, and blue) magnetic strips of one inch by six inch in size. A color was assigned to each academic quarter: white first-quarter, red second-quarter, blue third- quarter, and white again for fourth-quarter. These magnetic strips can be written on with erasable board pens or colored markers. Erasable pens will be used to accommodate change while developing the assignment labels. The amount of points each assignment is worth can also be added to the magnetic strips. This assignment listing is chronologically posted on each end of the classroom white board. There will be two quarters on each end of the white board. First quarter will be posted top left in white, second below in red and the third quarter top right in blue with the fourth quarter below that in white. Checker boarding the quarter blocks of color will eliminate confusion when students are accessing assignment information on the whiteboard.

There is even the potential of the quarterly handouts matching the color of the magnetic strips for that quarter. This will act as an organization intervention for the students when cleaning out previously assigned work and getting their binder ready for the next quarter. When the assignment handouts change color from quarter to quarter, then the handouts pertaining to the present quarter's work will not be mistakenly discarded by the students.

As the quarter progresses, a yellow arrow shaped magnetic strip will mark the targeted assignment for that class session. At teacher discretion, there is room to write explanations of the targeted assignment between the magnetic strips.

A bracket constructed of tape will mark the magnetic strips for a quarter and point to a progress report reflecting those same assignments. A second bracket will mark the progress report and point to a report card. Thus, the student can see the progressive connection from assignment, to progress report, and then to report card. This connection will be further heightened if the grade is highlighted on the progress report and then on the report card. By using this organization intervention, report card grades will be visually represented as a reflection of assignments completed for the class during that quarter.

#### Role of the General Education Teacher

Using the organizational intervention will require first, that the general education teacher recognize that the special education students need different interventions to succeed academically in the general education classrooms. This particular intervention is constructed by the special education teacher so that the time effort on that section of the project is minimal for the U. S. History teacher. The implementation will require collaboration between the two staff; the general education teacher will allow posting of the project and reinforce the organization that it pictorially represents during teaching to the entire class. For the students to believe and achieve, the teacher must lead; moving the yellow arrow to the next academic target, will help the students stay organized by staying aligned with the progress of time and class assignments that are to be achieved to

date. Seating the special education students in the classroom so that they have this board in their eyesight at all times is vital. A copy of progress reports will still have to be delivered to the special education teacher and to the students bi-weekly to help clarify present level of performance. If time allows, further integration of the organization intervention into the curriculum by color coding handouts to match the magnetic strips for every quarter. This will help students in cleaning out their binders at the end of quarters. The existing collaboration will still exist between the resource room and the United States History classroom teachers in accommodating students when learning the curriculum.

#### Role of the Special Education Student

Now that the quarterly academic target that constitutes a passing grade is clearly defined, students are enabled to decide on which accommodation they require for completing individual assignments. The support they receive and can access in the resource room will still be available for them.

#### Peer Review

Five colleagues reviewed the project, A Motivational Strategy That Accommodates Middle School Special Education Students: Achieving Academic Success and the accompanying Motivational Strategy Handbook, and returned insightful comments about the implementation of the project. The first review is from a para educator in the resource room, who has on occasion worked in the general education classroom supporting students with disability. Part of her job description is that every school day morning she visits each general education classroom to enter the work



required for the students on a weekly assignment grid. Teachers usually have this information written in the top corner of their black board by the door. A copy of this assignment list is sent to all teachers in special services: English as second language, Title, sixth grade special education, and one copy for the staff meeting table. Her response to the project was, "I hope that the teachers do this, because it will sure make my job easier. If the kids have this visual they will know where they are at." From her private conversation with students she hears too many remarks referring to a teacher 'liking someone' and therefore giving them a good grade. This visual would clarify where and how grades are achieved.

The eighth grade general education United States History teacher in whose room this project will be implemented responded favorably and said that this would 'hugely' help all of the kids. His concern was that when more teaching and reteaching is needed for concept attainment this would augment the original magnetic strip assignment list and would the students respond favorable to additions. Adding more work to this list could create a few teachable moments for the students if they did not want to accept additional work. Conversation ensued about the flexibility of the list, and the white board space that can be used to explain and refine academic targets. One solution could be posting a minimum score for achievement with the assignment. Overall he felt that this project was very doable and past experience makes him think that it will be very helpful in keeping all students organized by having this visual in the classroom. Printing handouts in the same color as the assignment list would take planning and possible room storage so

that it would be available for immediate use. He especially liked the connection made between the work, progress report and report card grade.

The next peer review was done by one of the seventh grade social studies general education teachers. Conversation on the project lasted about twenty minutes and much of it was on how could he, and his seventh grade social studies colleague, implement the project in their room. The screens used for the overhead projector are in front of the board that would contain the magnetic assignment strips. A possible solution is to attach vertical metal strips to the wall in the students' line of sight. The main benefit he saw was keeping a visual target in the room that clearly represented the connectedness between course work, progress reports and report cards.

The first special education teacher to review the project will be teaching in the middle school resource room next year and is apprehensive about the steep learning curve she will encounter with all of the different subjects, teachers, and students with disability. Her comments directly referring to the project were that it should help keep all students more organized and focused on academic goals necessary for receiving passing grades. When in the high school as a counselor, she experienced many students who did not have a clear understanding of what they were to do to receive a passing grade in their classes, and posting assignments in this manner should solve the confusion at any grade level. She also mentioned that in the high school the students often do not have an understanding of the connectedness between academics and post high school work. A possible solution is that a small poster needs to be made that shows the relevance of the report card to graduation to post high school careers.

The last peer review is from a special education teacher who works in Title Reading at the middle school for part of her contract day. The comments were positive and her concerns were that over achievers would charge ahead and complete assignments prior to teaching the concept and overwhelm the teacher with work done out of sequence. A possible solution is to only accept work on the due date. She also felt that a hard copy done in the quarter color would be a valuable communication tool for parents, supporting teachers, and students. She thought that having a magnetic assignment strip in the resource room and other special services rooms would be a valuable assist to those teachers as a communication tool when teaming on academic targets. The para educator would then be more concerned with routing the assignment grid for the purpose of due dates, time extensions, and reteaching of concepts.

In this peer review there were five individuals' four certified teachers: two were general educators and two were special educators, and a para educator who works with these peers and students with disability. All peers work at the middle school in this district with the same student population. Conversation was positive and all saw the project as workable and helpful and that it could be adapted to fit specific sites. Suggestions on physically implementing the structure of magnetic striping were discussed: using vertical metal strips instead of white boards. All of who critiqued the project saw it as being a valuable tool in visually representing and teaching the connectedness between class work, progress reports and report card grades. After the peer review it was noted by the participants that the strategy could be modified to accommodate a variety of teaching styles, student needs and subject areas.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

With the inclusion of students with disability into the general education classrooms, as determined by IDEA, there has been the increased necessity for teachers to use interventions supporting these students academic achievement. Alberto and Troutman (1999), refer to the importance of clearly defined academic targets in developing lessons and teaching strategies. Interventions reported by other authors include the use of pull-out direct instruction, less electives, and more skill practice in the area of need, Saturday school, and careful consideration to student needs during lesson planning and teaching. Collaboration between all PEG members in program development and delivery of services was stressed as a necessity by Villa and Thousand (2003). Homework intervention of time management was covered by Bausch and Becker (2001), along with the importance of organizing learning tools.

Creating this organization intervention for use in the United States History eighth grade classroom in this district is a timely venture due to the fourteen students with disability that will be in that classroom next year. The present level of performance for students with disability indicates 11% failing grades, there is a need for clearly defined academic targeting to support academic achievement. When teaching these students in previous years, it became evident that they often missed the connection between completed classroom assignments, progress reports, and report cards. Hence, the students themselves gave rise to the necessity of an organization that would clarify the connections that reflect their progress in permanent records. Collaboration among staff gave impetus to the design of the organization intervention, further refined its

development and will be evident in the application and end critiquing of its success.

Student achievement will determine what aspects of the intervention need to be refined.

The stimulus for constructing the intervention was provided by the students' lack of complete awareness of interconnectedness between achievement, progress reports, and report cards as revealed during grading conferences and story telling responses in the WIAT II. The intervention expanded on the format already presented in progress reports and built a visual example of the relationship between student work, those progress reports and report cards. This representation of the progression of student progress from product to ending grade will be displayed in the middle school United States History classroom in this district for the upcoming school year.

### Conclusions

Teaching a student to become a successful learner is a very complex, intense process that requires the professional educator to be flexible and adaptable to individual student needs, and at the same time present an exemplary model of organization for academic targeting and goal attainment for the students. Teachers are professionally accountable and responsible for using best practice to clearly define academic targets that encourage students in doing their best.

### Implications

As the use of the high school banner in the resource room provided visual purpose to all academic activity, the use of this organization intervention tool should facilitate student organization to the point that students can refer to where their academic efforts should be and at what time. This should result in less time used by the teacher in

answering the 'what are we going to do now' student inquiries. How quarter grades are achieved should no longer be a surprise, but an expected result of applied effort on completing assignments during the quarter.

### Recommendations

A comparative case study between classrooms, one using the intervention and the other not using the intervention, would serve to validate this tool's use for organizing and motivating students in completing academic targets. Even a comparison within one class from quarter-to-quarter or semester-to-semester would reflect the effects of using or not using the intervention. Especially, if the color coding is integrated from the magnetic strips to the curriculum handouts. Other strategies that would further define the academic target would be to post the point value for each assignment and a poster with the total points needed to achieve each grade level. The assignment strips could include the due date to enhance student awareness of the passage of time. Progress report assignment numbers should correspond to magnetic strip assignment numbers. Special education students should be seated in the classroom so that they continually have the intervention in their line of sight. The intention for constructing and using this organization intervention is to increase the amount of passing grades on the quarterly report cards of students with disability. Student comments will also reveal whether or not this organization intervention is a valuable accommodation for academic success.

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Motivational Strategy Handbook

# MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY HANDBOOK

**An Intervention**

**Clarifying the Interconnectedness Between  
Curriculum Assignments, Progress Reports,  
and Report Cards**

**Created for Eighth Grade U. S. History**

**By**

**Susan J. Koempel**

**August 2005**

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**“All teachers should see that, as they prepare young people to perform larger and more worthy parts in life, they are really giving shape and character to the society of the future—that education of today is to determine the history of tomorrow. Others may be working for the present, but teachers are working for the future.”**

**Warnick, G. & Straquadine, G. (2005) Organization and structure for effective teaching. *The Agricultural Education Magazine*. 77 (4) 5-7.**

## ABSTRACT

### MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES THAT ACCOMMODATE MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: ACHIEVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

By

Susan J. Koempel

May 2005

The project provides middle school teachers with a handbook for clarifying academic targets in the general education U. S. history classroom. This strategy clearly defines, in a pictorial manner, the interconnectedness that exists between report cards, progress reports, and quarterly curriculum assignments. The intervention of this organizational strategy will assist students in decisions, regarding the timely completion and turn in of assignments, by creating an overall awareness of the progress of time and assignment due dates during the quarter. Originally, the production of the intervention was done by the special education staff so that there would be minimal time energy investment by the general education staff. A successful outcome will rely on the collaboration efforts between special education and general education staff as an overall awareness of quarterly requirements for success is created for the student.

## INTRODUCTION AND IMPETUS FOR CREATING PROJECT

After testing many special education students using the WIAT II it was noted that a commonly missed test question dealt with overall awareness in the section requiring students to give directions and retell stories. Another common omission is the failure to read titles in the reading section of the WIAT II. It was also observed that when conferencing with students about their present level of performance that they would often be unaware of the interconnectedness leading from curriculum assignments accomplished which are then reflected in progress reports, and that it is these completed assignments recorded as the final report card grade.

After all of this teacher driven effort to accommodate special education students, is this interesting perception from the students themselves which has been noted several times during grade conferencing. The most recent occurrence of this oddity was third quarter when discussing with Sam, his present level of performance in social studies. Sam was visually zeroed in on his progress report trying to justify to the teacher why staying after school for extra help to complete assignments so



that a passing grade could be earned was not necessary at all. To justify the after school request, the teacher then laid on the desk Sam's report cards from the first two quarters. Startled, Sam looked at the report cards and asked why were those being brought into the conference when it was the progress report that was being discussed. The response was that the two previous failing grades in social studies validated the need for a more serious intervention: stay after school and get the work done. Sam still was confused by the use of the report cards to support the after school intervention until the teacher clarified, that what is recorded on the progress report for total points is what is recorded on the report card for the final grade. Sam's response was not one of connection. Sam had always wondered how grades got on the report card. This student figured that report card grades were a reflection of how much a teacher liked or disliked a student. Clearly, an intervention presenting the connection between course assignments, progress reports and report cards need to be constructed to enable these students in effective decision making for academic success.

## CONSTRUCTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTION

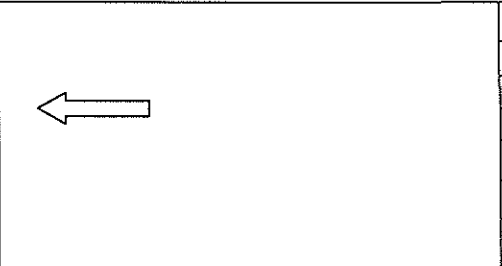
1. At the beginning of the quarter, mount one inch by six inch magnetic strips, labeled with the quarterly assignments to clearly define the academic target on the classroom whiteboard. Permanent or erasable felt tip markers are sufficient for the task.
2. Next, construct a tape bracket leading from the magnetic strips on the white board to an example of the progress report
3. Then construct another bracket from the progress report to an example of the report card. This pictorial representation of the interconnectedness between achievement and grade recording documents will clearly define the quarterly academic target, and how that target (the passing grade on the report card) is achieved.

	White board	
	with course	
	assignments	
	on magnetic	
	strips	



progress report } report card

4. It is important that the assignment order on the magnetic strips follows the same order as that used in the progress report. This will support the students as they make a connection between the assignments and progress reports.
5. The total number of points and grade earned on the progress report must be highlighted, so that the connection between it and the report card grade are visually evident on both documents.
6. The middle of the white board is reserved for instruction at teacher discretion.
7. To heighten student awareness of the progress of time and assignment that is to be turned in during that lesson use a yellow magnetic strip arrow.

Quarter 1 white		Quarter 3 blue
Quarter 2 red		Quarter 4 white

The middle section of the whiteboard is still reserved for teacher instruction. Course assignments for the four academic

quarters are visually separated by color. Note that the white colors are not lined up but in a checkerboard pattern. Lining the same color up horizontally would cause visual confusion in the students as to which quarter they were using for referencing their daily progress.

### STRATEGIES THAT FURTHER DEFINE AND CLARIFY THE ACADEMIC TARGET

- Color coding the instructional handouts to match the magnetic strips for that quarter will facilitate cleaning out binders as the students prepare for the next quarter. Papers relevant to the present quarter will not be mistakenly thrown away.
- Posting the amount of points possible for each assignment and the total number of points needed for achieving a passing grade will further define the academic target. Students would then have a definite goal to work toward during the quarter. A poster of the number of points necessary for an A, B, C, D, or F will help to accomplish this objective.

- Date the assignment magnetic strips to enhance the awareness of the passage of time.
- Number assignment magnetic strips to match the progress report numbers.
- Seat the special education students so that they have the intervention continually in their line of sight.

### **THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN USING THE INTERVENTION**

A necessity for the success of this intervention is that the teacher refers to assignment postings and updates the arrow indicator as necessary, so that the students remain targeted daily on the quarter goal of a passing grade. It was designed without causing the general education teacher a substantial investment of time or energy, and the hope is that it will save time and energy by more clearly defining the academic target for the students. The students will now know where they are in the curriculum and in the quarter, and what they still must accomplish for a passing grade for that quarter. The end result should be an increase in assignments turned in, more assignments turned in closer to the due date, and more passing grades earned by the

students. This organization intervention does not supplant the resource room, and accessing the resource room as an accommodation for reading and writing will remain the same for U. S. History.