MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Explicit Instruction: The Key to Effective Differentiated Instruction

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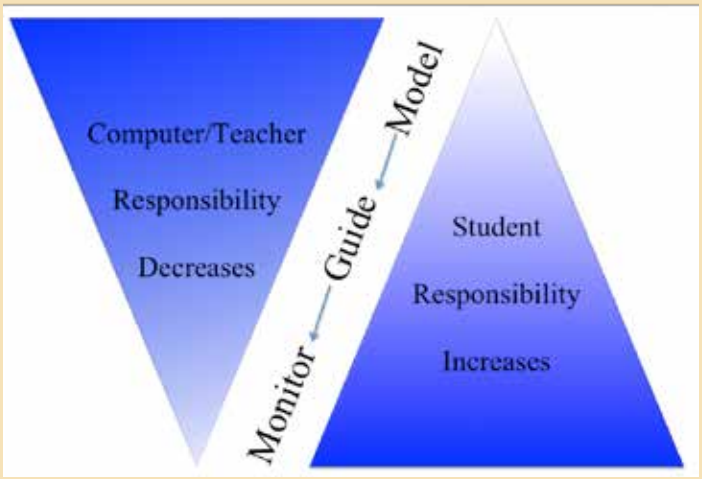
Differentiated instruction involves finding different ways to present instruction to ensure the success of all students. Teachers who use differentiated instruction "ramp up" their instruction when students need it and "ramp down" their instructional efforts when students are successful. One key way of ensuring student success in the classroom relates to the use of explicit instruction. Explicit instruction is a systematic way of teaching that emphasizes breaking skills into small steps and giving students multiple opportunities to respond under careful teacher guidance. Explicit instruction takes the guesswork out of student learning; students are shown how to perform a skill and are given time to practice using the skill. In this way, explicit instruction can be a more efficient way to provide learning opportunities for students; students tend to practice fewer errors and remain more motivated during instruction given their success. In an explicit instructional paradigm, teachers take full responsibility of student learning, fading their level of guidance as students demonstrate their success in independent ways. Figure 1 illustrates how instruction is faded by a teacher or a computer, depending on what type of instruction is provided to students. This type of instruction is a mainstay of *SRA FLEX Literacy*, a digital-, print-, and project-based program published by McGraw-Hill Education (see http://www.flexliteracy.com for details on this program).



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Explicit instruction includes several important components. First, teachers review previously learned information. This review sets the stage for acquiring new information, providing the necessary scaffolds on which to "hang" new information. Teachers may discuss homework completed the night before or prerequisites the students have already acquired. Second, teachers describe the goals or objectives of the lesson. They tell students what they will be learning and what the point of the lesson is. Students have a clear direction for the lesson. Third, teachers model new information. They use think alouds and detailed directions to promote student learning. They are mindful that students need clear and unambiguous explanations, even showing samples, models, or rubrics in their teaching. Fourth, teachers guide students through the learning process. This guided practice includes the use of examples related to what the teacher modeled, positive feedback, corrective feedback, and frequent opportunities to respond. When corrective feedback is provided, teachers should show students what they need to do and then have them practice again. Finally, teachers provide opportunities for students to perform the skill on their own. This independent practice is provided only when students have been successful

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tanya Uganski

Thank you for all those involved in MASP and a very successful fall conference. We had great speakers and good attendance! I know that I always learn a few new ways of looking situations, new assessments or connect with other school psychologists to discuss literacy or new information on interventions in the schools.

Our membership committee set a goal of adding additional members and met their goal! We have steadily been increasing our membership to MASP! Thanks to all who have joined us and to the Membership Committee

On March 20th our critical issues conference will be focused on Best Practices for Autism Spectrum Disorder Evaluations and will be in Lansing. Come join us and network with other school psychologists from around the state to discuss the information from the Governor's Autism Council and best practices for School Psychologists.

I recently read an article on Change Theory and it reminded me how difficult it is to change systems and that change knowledge can be so very powerful. I view School Psychologists as change agents and believe we have a wonderful set of skills we can use to help change our school systems. Michael Fullan (2006) in his article on change theory discusses the idea that while we need to focus on changing individuals we also need to focus on the culture or system in which they work. Fullan describes some of the underpinnings of change theory which include: a focus on motivation, capacity building, learning in context, a bias for reflective action, tri-level engagement (e.g., school, district, & state level), learning and changing content and persistence and flexibility in staying the course.

This article can be found in the Centre for Strategic Education Series Seminar Series Paper No. 157, November 2006.

The proposed changes for Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) were reviewed by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) committee in December. Individuals were also able to give written testimony to the committee. We will be hearing more on the proposed changes as decisions are made. MDE made the following resources available at: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-6530_6598-342123--,00.html.

You can help change student outcomes, one step at a time!

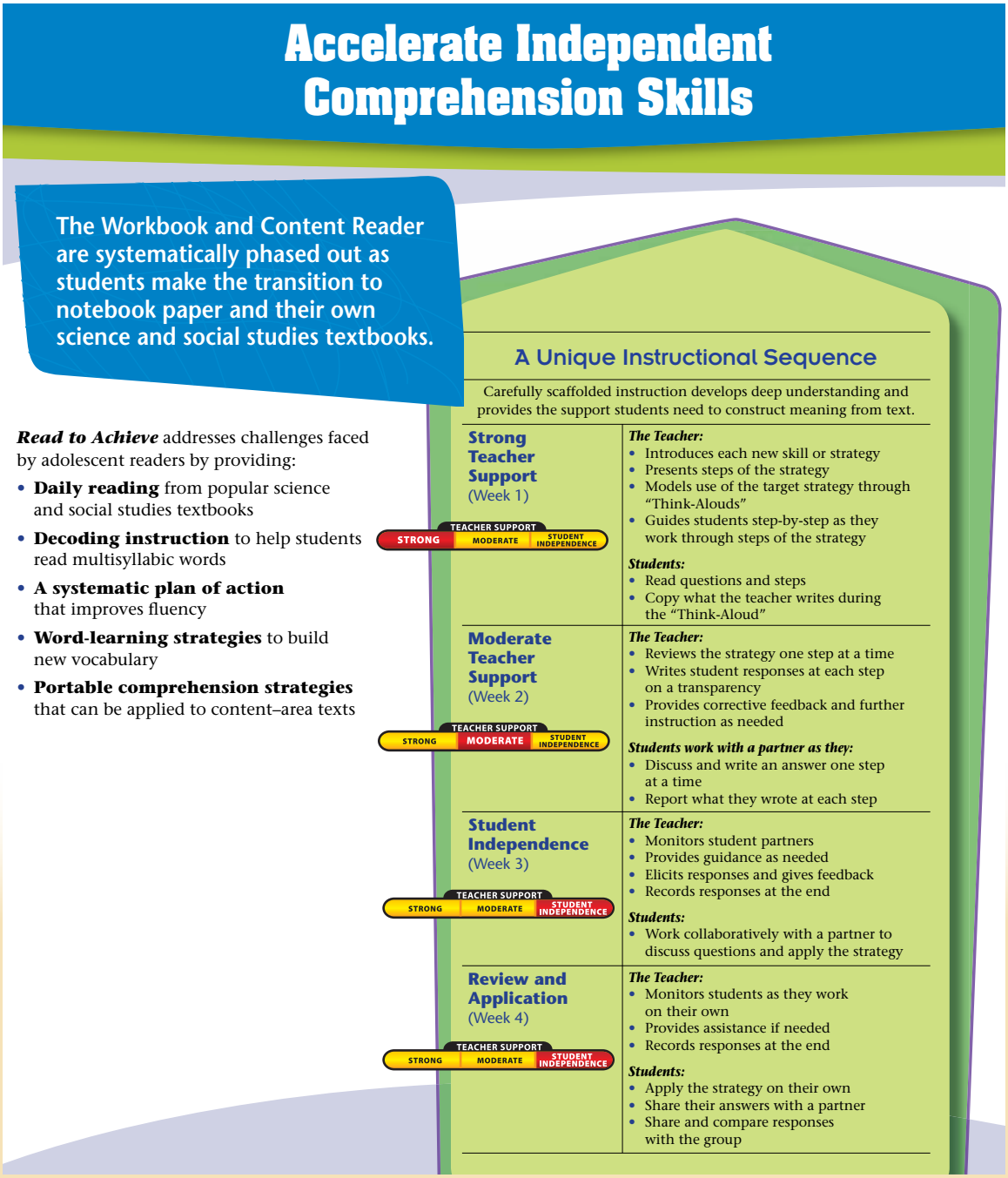
Have a great start to the new year!

Tanya Uganski
President/MASP

during guided practice. Independent practice opportunities align with what was modeled by teachers and practiced by students. Teachers adjust the next day's lesson based on student performance during independent practice.

Figure 2 provides an example explicit instructional framework from the program, *Read to Achieve: Comprehending Content-Area Text* by SRA/McGraw-Hill (see https://www.mheonline.com/program/view/1/1/139/0076234789/ for details on this program).

This program incorporates explicit instruction to ensure students in grades 6-12 can read informational text more effectively, take notes from textbooks and lecture, and study from their notes. Multiple comprehension strategies are taught including text connections, SQ4R, and comprehension monitoring. Teachers provide strong support during the first unit of acquiring a strategy; this support fades to moderate teacher support during the second unit, and student independence (with a partner and then alone) during the third and fourth units of strategy acquisition. Strategy review is a mainstay to ensure students continue to practice skills over time. Importantly, published program materials (program text and workbooks) end at Unit 100; teachers then have students use their own science and social studies textbooks and notebook paper to complete the final five units of the program. The key is to ensure students use the skills gained through explicit instruction when it really counts—in their own materials used in the classroom.



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Many programs include differentiated instruction strategies for approaching mastery, at mastery, and English Language Learning students. Figure 3 shows recommendations on differentiated instruction provided after Unit 3 in the *Read to Achieve* content area program.

Again, explicit instruction is key in ensuring students learn strategies at high levels.

To make your lessons more explicit, consider "I do, we do, you do." "I do" means you say, "Watch me. I'll show you how to do it." In the case of teaching a comprehension strategy such as slowing down and rereading difficult text, you might say, "I just read this paragraph about echinoderms and I'm not sure what I read. Watch me. I'll show you how to slow down and reread the text." After reading the text, you'll discuss with the students how doing this made it easier to understand the text and what you

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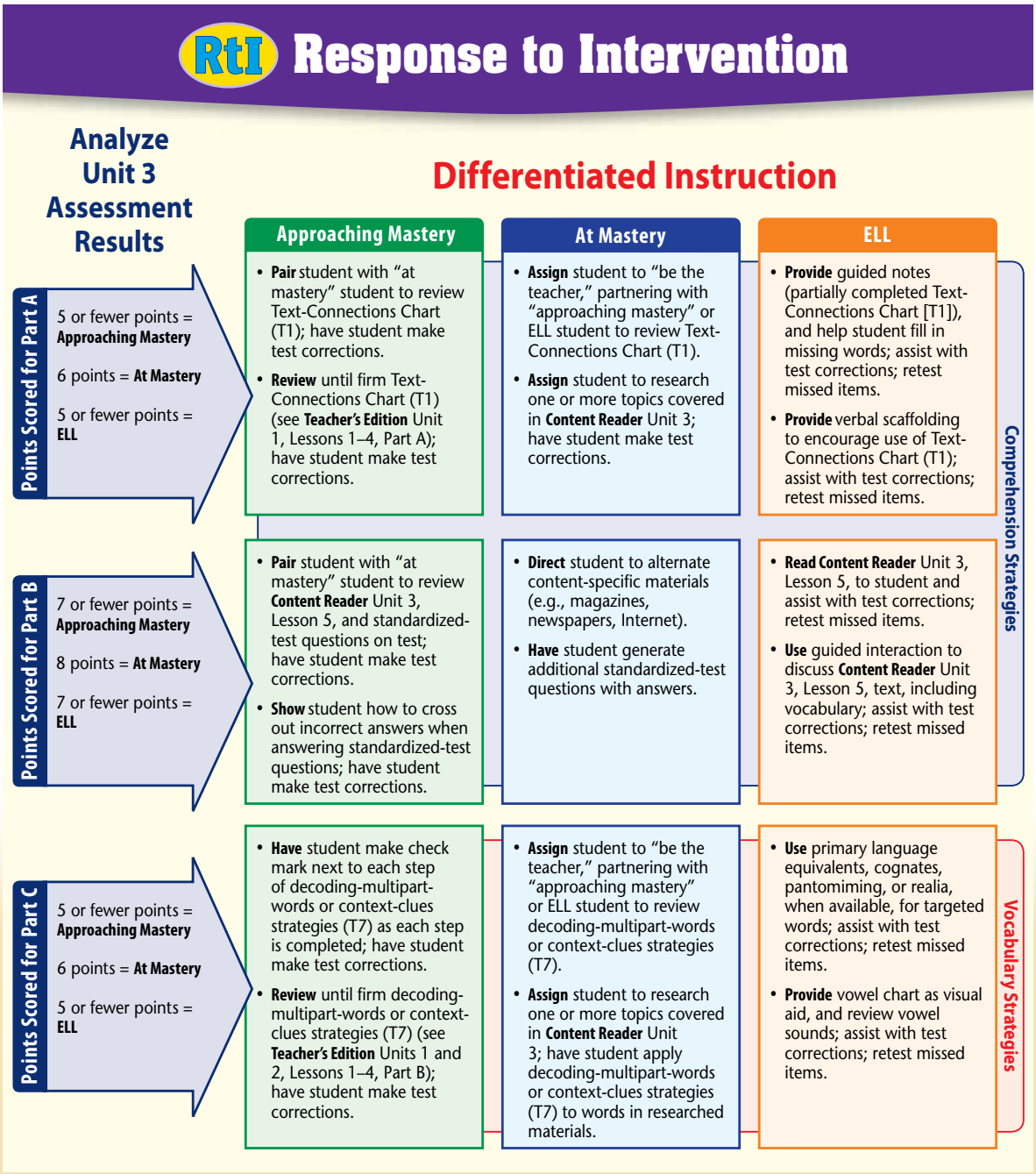
learned after rereading it.

"We do" means you say, "Let's do this/these together." For comprehension monitoring, you might say, "Let's try slowing down and rereading this paragraph together. Then we'll talk about what we just read." After this, you'll discuss with the students how slowing down and rereading this paragraph made it easier to understand.

"You do" means you say, "Now you do this/these on your own." For comprehension monitoring, you might say, "Now you try slowing down and rereading another paragraph." Again, discussion with the students is helpful following this activity to ensure they understand the importance of using comprehension monitoring when reading difficult text. Over time, opportunities for "you do" should be included to ensure strategy mastery over time. You may even prompt students by saying "That section was tough. What could we do to help us understand it better?"



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Using "I do, we do, you do" provides a relatively easy way for teachers to incorporate this instructional framework in the classroom. Explicit instruction is the key to providing differentiated instruction to promote student success.

Resources on Explicit Instruction

For more information on explicit instruction, please see the following text and corresponding website with videos showcasing explicit instruction:

Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

http://explicitinstruction.org

For more information on the various meanings of direct (and explicit) instruction, please see the following document:

Rosenshine, B. V. (2008). *Five meanings of direct instruction.* Lincoln, IL: Center on Innovation & Improvement. Retrieved from http://www.centerii.org/search/Resources%5CFiveDirectInstruct.pdf

Nominations/Elections Committee

By Heidi Feldman/Chair

The MASP nominations and elections process needs active participation from MASP membership. Please participate by mailing your ballots this year!

For now, nomination ballots will be delivered via US mail in accordance with current MASP constitutional requirements. Election ballots are later prepared based on qualifying nomination balloting results and delivered to eligible voting members via US mail. Qualifying election ballots are then counted by a committee to determine the elected members to each open position on the ballot.

For the upcoming election for 2015-2016, members with current standing as of January 1st will be mailed a nomination ballot. Look for your ballot in the mail after January 1st, 2015.

For the Executive Board, there are two open positions for the ballot this year. Please consider running for President-Elect. This is a wonderful opportunity to become an active part of MASP. Additionally, the Secretary position will be on the ballot this year.

The Regional Director and Alternate positions on the ballot this year will be Regions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 & 13. Members in these regions are encouraged to nominate themselves or a fellow member willing to serve in this capacity.

Description of President-Elect Position

The term of this office is one year, beginning July 1. The President-Elect is a voting member of the Executive Board and Executive Council. In the absence of, or at the request of the President, the President-Elect shall serve as the chairperson of the Executive Board. The President-Elect assists the President in carrying out the organizational activities of MASP.

Description of Secretary Position

The Secretary is a voting member of the Executive Board and the Executive Council. The Secretary is responsible for accurately recording the events and information at official MASP meetings, maintaining official records, and writing official correspondence. Other responsibilities include sending notices of all Executive Board meetings to each board member, recording and distributing minutes of meetings, taking attendance at meetings, and keeping copies of all materials distributed at meetings. The Secretary is also responsible for keeping an up-to-date version of the MASP by-laws. Other duties of the Secretary include: assisting the President in developing meeting agendas, reviewing initiatives of board approval and points of action, assisting the President in arranging the location of meetings and confirming attendance prior to meetings.

Description of Regional Director Position

Regional Directors are voting members of the Executive Board. Regional Directors must be members of the Association and elected by the membership of the specific region represented. The duties of Regional Directors include: Attending all Executive Board meetings during their term of office, submitting annual regional goals, objectives and budget requests to the Chairperson of the Fiscal Advisory Committee, keeping region members informed of MASP issues via regional newsletters, organizing and conducting at least one regional meeting/workshop per year, working to increase MASP membership within the region, encouraging participation in the Association, and submitting at least one region report for publication in The Michigan Psych Report per year. Regional Directors shall be elected for a term of two years, beginning on July 1.

Please return your completed nomination ballot by the deadline, February 15th, 2014. Your vote matters!

Standing Officers for 2014-2015	Standing Officers for 2015-2016
President, Tanya Uganski	President, Marv Nordeen
President-Elect, Marv Nordeen	President-Elect, **OPEN**
Past President, Paul Robb Uganski	Past President, Tanya
Treasurer, Stefanie Gill	Treasurer, Stefanie Gill
Secretary, Donna Sprague	Secretary, **OPEN**

Regional Boundaries

Region 1: Upper Peninsula

Region 2: All Lower Peninsula counties north of and including Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Roscommon, Ogemaw and Iosco.

Region 3: Kent, Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, and Ottawa counties.

Region 4: Arenac, Bay, Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Saginaw, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties.

Region 5: Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties.

Region 6: Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Ionia, Livingston, and Shiawassee counties

Region 7: Oakland county.

Region 8: Macomb and St Clair Counties.

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Region 9: Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Monroe, and Washtenaw counties.

Region 10: Wayne County Districts: Cherry Hill, Garden City, Inkster, Livonia, Northville, Plymouth, Redford Union, Romulus, South Redford, Van Buren, and Wayne-Westland Districts.

Region 11: Wayne County Districts: Allen Park, Crestwood, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights #7, Ecorse, Flat Rock, Gibraltar, Grosse Ile, Huron, Lincoln Park, Melvindale-Northern Allen Park, River Rouge, Riverview, Southgate, Taylor, Trenton, Westwood, Woodhaven-Brownstown, and Wyandotte.

Region 12: Wayne County Districts: Detroit, Grosse Pointe, Hamtramck, Harper Woods, and Highland Park Districts.

Region 13: Osceola, Clare, Gladwin, Mecosta, Isabella, Gratiot, Midland, and Montcalm counties.

"School Psychologist Spotlight"

By Kristin Phillips

*Many thanks for **Paul Chrustowski of Detroit Public Schools** for sharing such interesting information about his role for this issue. It is encouraging to hear that sometimes those high school "vocational interest inventories" pan out!*

What is your educational background and when did you start in the profession? How did you choose this as your career?

I first became interested in being a psychologist in high school when, in ninth grade, we had to take a vocational interest inventory, and psychology was one of the best career matches based on my responses. I went to Wayne State University, initially ignoring those ninth grade recommendations and explored a degree in Design in the College of Fine Arts. After a particularly memorable critique by a professor who described my artwork as too "schmaltzy," I promptly changed majors and ultimately received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. I then attended Wayne State's School & Community Psychology Program for my Master's degree. I chose that program because it was unique in that it was a Master's terminal program that offered both a Limited License as well as School Psychology Certification. I was interested in getting the credentials to work in the clinical environment, but did not think I could wait to start my profession until I completed a doctoral degree. After a couple of years working in the clinical field, I did return to Wayne State for my Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with my cognate in the biological basis of behavior. Between my degrees and work, I have not been away from Wayne State since 1986 and I have either lived, worked, and/or gone to school in Detroit my whole life! School Psychology was initially the farthest thing from my mind. However, the clinical world at that time was getting difficult financially. I enjoyed my jobs, but I lost my first job in an adolescent psychiatric facility because the hospital went bankrupt. My next job was as a therapist for a foster care agency, but then that agency let the entire treatment department go. I did independent contracting on the side for a while with a partner, Kathy Spatafora, as C&S Psychological Services, but that had a lot of start-up costs and required a lot of "hustling" to really make a living out of that. In 1994, I was hired as a school psychologist for Detroit Public Schools. It was supposed to be a temporary "lay-over" between clinical jobs, but that "lay-over" has thankfully lasted over two decades now! I quickly learned that DPS was full of a lot of quality people, many of whom have become life-long friends. I did not want to leave because of my co-workers. I'll be honest; that allure of having the summers off, like I used to, was an initial selling point too!

Paul Chrustowski

Describe your current position and how it may or may not have evolved from the "traditional" role of a school psychologist.

After 10 years working as a school psychologist for DPS, I was promoted to supervisor, which is my current primary role. I currently provide clinical and administrative supervision to 26 school psychologists servicing the East side of the city, our Center-Based Programs, and our Early Childhood / Early Intervention school psychologists. I am also responsible for some of the essential, but more mundane, duties needed for successfully running a department — approving payroll, doing requisitions, planning professional development, etc. I have also been liaison between the Office of Psychological Services and Wayne State University's School & Community Psychology program for the past 10 years. Much of the school psychology students' practicum work is done exclusively at DPS schools, so I coordinate that, secure the placement sites, and arrange the School Psychologist mentors. I really love the way my role, as well as my staff's roles, have evolved. Sure, the school psychologists still do a lot of evaluations, but they do so much more now in terms of collaborative problem-solving, consultation, student interventions, and presentations to staff.

I still have some related side-jobs and projects too.

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Since 2001, I have been adjunct faculty at Wayne State University, teaching primarily in their School & Community Psychology Program, which is so different from the program of the same name from which I graduated! I teach Behavioral Psychology and Social Psychology. In recent years, I have also been a consultant to a local app development group, Future Help Designs, in the development, promotion, and training of two behavioral psychology-related apps, *iBAA* (Behavioral Assessment Application) and *Keep In Mind*, an app which assists in implementation of behavior change plans.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

I have come to realize that if I was not a School Psychologist, I probably would have been a teacher or college instructor. I am really rewarded by any aspects of my job related to presenting, professional development, and instruction. I really get in the "flow" when I am planning a presentation, writing some training materials, or trying to come up with some innovative ways to teach new information. I love ensuring that my staff and students have the knowledge they need to be successful mental health and educational professionals.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

The most challenging part of my job has been all the financially related obstacles that have been outside of our control. Those in education and mental health in general are certainly not paid what we're worth! Some may find it surprising that it is not working in Detroit Public Schools that has been challenging, as much as dealing with all the *misperceptions about Detroit* out there. There is so much knowledge and dedication here among our staff. People who are not part of DPS often just don't realize all the positive things going on, and media can often be misleading. So often when someone on the "outside" hears that I work for DPS, I get these sympathetic looks, and the canned response, "That must be hard." For the most part, it is pretty great, and the remarkable people I work with make it that way!

What has been the most memorable moment(s) in your job?

The most memorable moments have been all the fun times spent with my colleagues, particularly those coordination day lunch hours. Throughout the years we have coped by using those private times to "let our hair down," commiserate, get ridiculous, and just laugh! In the midst of the silliness, those times brought us together and yet still provided memorable opportunities to learn from each other. Sometimes I think I learned more about school psychology by listening to my colleagues' experiences than all the years in school.

What is your "passion" as a school psychologist?

I guess my passion is ensuring that my staff always has the latest knowledge they need to stay current in their profession and continue to grow. I also have particular interests in bully-prevention, behavioral psychology in school, and safe schools for LGBT youth. I love technology. I have enjoyed working with the app development and presenting them to audiences on a national level and hearing how school psychologists make use of this technology.

What changes have you seen in the profession since you began your career as a School Psychologist?

In continuing with the topic of technology, I would say that is how I have seen the profession change the most. When I first started, there were not even laptop computers! Now we have iPhone apps, iPad administered psychological tests, on-line test scoring — it's all very exciting to see how far we have come and how much more efficient we are.

What resources do you rely on most?

My colleagues, both in school psychology as well as the other specialized support disciplines, have been, and continue to be, my most valuable resources. One of the benefits of working in the largest district in the state is that I am never alone, and no matter the topic, I can find someone here who is the resident expert on whatever I might need to know. We emphasize and really value collaborative problem-solving in DPS.

Do you have a favorite intervention, project, or unique technique you can share?

My work in recent years on the development if the *iBAA* and *Keep In Mind* apps has been my favorite project.

What do you find helpful as a member of MASP?

MASP has always been the first source of information about up and coming developments in school psychology. Things that we take as commonplace now, such as RtI and PBIS, I first heard about at MASP. It is also a great way to network. MASP conferences are so much more meaningful now. After all these years of work and teaching, it is great to attend a MASP function and see so many familiar faces, reconnect, and learn from each other.

Tell us a little bit about you personally and what you enjoy in your free time.

Free time! What's that? Seven years ago, I began my most enjoyable and challenging career yet — parent. Whatever time I have outside of work is spent with my family doing things with my adopted daughter, Olivia, and sharing in her interests of violin and art. I enjoy reading, keeping in touch with friends and family via social media, and relish in some TV guilty pleasures such as *Downton Abbey* and *Game of Thrones.*

Any words of wisdom for new people coming into the field?

I would advise new people to be vulnerable enough to get to know their colleagues, both in school psychology and other disciplines, as their co-workers can be invaluable sources of knowledge and support. Remember that laughter can get you through those times when you think the challenges are insurmountable.

NASP Delegate Update

By Tracy Hobbs/ NASP Michigan Delegate

Tracy Hobbs

Marv Nordeen, our President Elect, and I had the distinct privilege of representing MASP and Michigan at the NASP Central Region Meeting held in Madison, Wisconsin the weekend of November 7th through 9th. This meeting brought together almost 50 energetic school psychology leaders from both NASP and state associations and provided excellent leadership and professional development as well as valuable networking opportunities.

National Association of School Psychologists

The weekend started Friday with an all-day presentation by Stacy Skalski (NASP's Director of Professional Policy and Practice) and Betty DeBoer (the Central Region's representative to NASP's Assistance to States Committee): Implementing the NASP Practice Model in Policy and Practice. Their presentation focused on four key areas:

- Understanding the NASP Practice Model
- Communicating the Value of School Psychologists Using the Practice Model
- Infusing the NASP Practice Model into State and Local Personnel Evaluation
- Advocating for the Model and Associated Standards in Policy and Practice

In Stacy's opinion, the biggest threat to our profession is the inconsistent practice of school psychology across the country; based on my own experiences, I also see this inconsistency right here in Michigan! One of the major impacts is the different ways the profession of school psychology (and our roles in schools) is perceived. The NASP Practice Model provides a unified set of national principles that guide graduate education, credentialing, professional practice and services, and ethical behaviors; standards related to these areas were revised and adopted in 2010 and can be found at: http://www.nasponline.org/standards/2010 standards.aspx

The Practice Model is designed to promote the connection between research, training and standards and our actual practice by delineating what services might reasonably be expected to be available from school psychologists. An overview of the Practice Model can be found at: http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model.

It is also important to look at an individual's scope of practice when referencing the Practice Model: it helps define how the Model applies to your own practice and delivery of services and is dependent on system issues such as workload, practitioner to student ratio, intensity of student needs, culture and traditions surrounding practice in a school/school district or if you may specialize in specific services aligned to meet the needs of the school/school district.

One of our most important advocacy roles is to help our school communities see the value in our work … and using the Practice Model is an excellent way to do just that! NASP has created a great resource which highlights the role of school psychologists in improving student outcomes; it links research to policy and practice by cross-referencing NASP's standards for practice, policy papers and framework, and the research associated with improved student outcomes; it can be found at: http://nasponline.org/advocacy/SP_Improving_Student_Outcomes_Final.pdf. Our role in improving student outcomes clusters in the following areas:

- School psychologists help improve instruction and learning
- School psychologists support healthy, successful students
- School psychologists help create safe, positive school climates
- School psychologists work to strengthen family-school partnerships
- School psychologists work to improve assessment and accountability

The core messages surrounding these efforts are:

- In the effort to raise achievement for all students, school psychologists are potentially an untapped resource
- School psychologists help educators and families use data and evidence-based approaches to improve teaching and learning
- And, improve your school's outcomes by supporting your school psychologists' comprehensive role

The information about infusing the Practice Model into state and local personnel evaluations was particularly timely. MASP was carefully monitoring the teacher evaluation bills which were under consideration in the recently-ended Legislative session to ensure that the evaluation of school psychologists here in Michigan would be relevant and appropriate. Ultimately, these bills did not make it out of the House and Senate Education Committees for a vote but it is anticipated that they will be re-introduced and we will continue to watch the progress of this legislation. Current language in these bills does not specifically reference school psychologists so it may fall to MASP to develop and create a model for the

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evaluation of school psychologists; fortunately, we have some excellent resources to use! NASP has developed valuable resources and advocacy tools around the issue of personal evaluation and created a taskforce to develop guidelines to lead policy decisions in this area and in July, 2012, adopted "A Framework for the Personnel Evaluation of School Psychologists Using the NASP Practice Model." This framework along with several well-designed evaluation rubrics/tools were reviewed and will provide MASP with an excellent foundation as we work to adopt a Michigan model.

Following Friday's presentation, Marv and I will be presenting information on the Practice Model to the MASP Board to review and then consider adopting as the standard for practice here in Michigan. Luckily, we'll be using NASP's soon-to-be-published "NASP Practice Model Implementation Guidebook" to guide our efforts.

While additional time over the weekend was spent on presentations related to transformational change and the NASP Practice Model, we were also given time to network and have discussions around such "Hot Topic" issues as membership recruitment and services, operational/ organizational leadership, professional development opportunities for members, and advocacy efforts. During a state association sharing activity, Marv and I were proud to share some of our MASP success stories:

- Participation in the Governor's Commission on Mental Health
- Revitalized MASP leadership
- Higher membership numbers
- Transitioned to a digital format for our newsletter, "The Michigan Psych Report"
- Successful annual conference
- Governor's Proclamation recognizing 2014 School Psychology Awareness Week

We also talked about some of our Association priorities:

- Revise our By-laws, Constitution, Vision and Mission statements
- Facilitate a PREPaRE (NASP's Crisis Response and Intervention curriculum) training in Michigan
- Continue to improve member services and numbers by outreach to nonmembers
- Work to address the critical shortage of school psychologists here in Michigan

All in all, it was an amazing weekend: we left feeling both energized … and exhausted! And due to NASP's Governance Enhancement Initiative (which has reorganized and shifted the dates of NASP leadership activities), Marv, Tanya Uganski (current MASP President) and I will have the opportunity to attend another Central Region meeting along with an all-day Assistance to States workshop which will be held in February in conjunction with the convention in Orlando.

Speaking of the NASP Convention, I hope to see many of you there! As always, it provides an incredible array of professional development activities with over 1,200 sessions scheduled. Additional information is available at: http://www.nasponline.org/conventions/2015/index.aspx

NASP Central Region Crew

NASP Central Region meeting – Tracy, Stacy, Steve & Marv

Legislative Update

Noah Smith/Capitol Services

Noah Smith

The New Session

The legislature's first official day of session is January 14, 2015, but that is largely a ceremonial day whereby new lawmakers are sworn-in. The first real day of session will be January 20, 2015, which is also the Governor's State of the State Address.

Please note, an end-of-session report is included at the end of this document.

Election and Legislative Leadership Update

Materials are attached to this report detailing the outcome of the elections, including a list (and short bios) of the new members of the legislature for MASP's convenience.

The legislature has not yet selected its committees and committee members, and likely will not until January 2015 when the new legislative session begins. However, key legislative leadership positions have already been selected:

Senate Majority Leader: Arlan Meekhof (R – West Olive)

Senate Majority Floor Leader: Mike Kowall (R – White Lake Twp)

Senate Appropriations Chair: Dave Hildenbrand (R – Lowell)

Senate Minority Leader: Jim Ananich (D – Flint)

Senate Minority Floor Leader: Morris Hood III (D – Detroit)

Speaker of the House: Kevin Cotter (R – Mt Pleasant)

Speaker Pro Tem: Tom Leonard (R – DeWitt)

Majority Floor Leader: Aric Nesbitt (R – Lawton)

Appropriations Chair: Al Pscholka (R – Stevensville)

House Minority Leader: Tim Greimel (D – Auburn Hills)

Minority Floor Leader: Sam Singh (D – East Lansing)

Education Reforms Fail to Pass

Bills aimed at making numerous different reforms to public education were left behind as the legislature adjourned for the year. These included bills to require mandatory repetition of third grade for students who fail standardized reading tests; expand the Education Achievement Authority; convert public school pension system (MPSERS) to a defined contribution scheme; require letter grading of public schools; and create an "early warning" system for schools in financial distress that would have placed hundreds of school districts on an accelerated path to an emergency financial manager. Many of these bills passed one chamber or the other but House and Senate leaders were unsuccessful in reaching an agreement before the end of the 2014 session. MASP can expect many of these measures again next session; January is a fine time for the organization to consider positions on each of the concepts above (if need be) and engage early in the legislative process.

Truancy

Senator Tanya Schuitmaker (R – Lawton) has introduced SB 1151 and 1152, which make changes to how schools handle truancy. In short, the bills do the following:

SB 1151

- Child can't be suspended/ expelled for being chronically absent or truant
- Deleted: mandatory continuous and consecutive attendance
- Schools shall provide appropriate assistance for illiterate parents and provide document in native language for non-native speakers in regards to documentation for excused absences

SB 1152

- Intervention policy for truant or chronically absent students
- superintendent may take in account reason for child's absence, and if lesser intervention would properly address the issue before requiring parental notification
- If an intervention meeting is necessary, schools shall offer an attendance agreement that allows child to resume regular attendance, and discuss consequences if attendance issue is not resolved
- Schools may offer interventions available such as but not limited to: mental health screening, problem solving, tutoring and mentoring
- The Student's teacher must be provided with copy of letter and attendance agreement to monitor and report attendance
- If interventions don't resolve attendance issue, school shall purse intervention by the courts

Though the bills were very recently introduced (December 2, 2014), the sponsor has made it clear that these measures are a priority issue for her in 2015. MASP is developing a position on the bills, and will work with Senator Schuitmaker next session.

Special Education Rules

Back in 2013, the Michigan Department of Education introduced a set of rule revisions to the Special Education Rules, insisting that they were needed to bring Michigan's rules closer in-line to federal rules. The revisions focused

on evaluation, eligibility, and IEPs, among many other changes.

The rules, according not only to MASP, but a large number of parent- and professional organizations, were very problematic and vague, even appearing in some cases to make special education services optional. Despite long and concerted efforts to get changes made to the rules that were better for students and the special education system, the revisions remained largely unchanged from their proposed form.

The Joint Committee in Administrative Rules (JCAR), which is the legislature's point on entry into the rule-making process, heard the rules on the week of December 8. JCAR does not have much power, however, and does not function like a normal legislative "statutory" committee. Unlike a statutory committee, in which if legislation is not heard by a certain time that legislation dies, if JCAR chooses not to hear a set of rules, they become official rules anyway after the lapse of 15 "session days (a day in which both chambers of the legislature are set to meet)." When JCAR does meet, it meets to either waive the 15 day "clock," thus making the rules immediately official, or to agree to the 15 days. Only when there are legitimate drafting errors can rules be sent back to a Department.

When JCAR met on the special education rules, they decided not to waive the 15 session day period. Normally, again, this would mean they become official rules; just later. But in this case, there were not 15 session days left in the year; only 4. Thus, the rules "died" and the Department of Education has to start all over again in 2015. In addition, Lt. Governor Brian Calley testified, acknowledging that the rules were flawed and promising a more inclusive process in 2015.

School Mental Health

The ad hoc school mental health coalition, including MASP, school social workers, and school counselors, recently had a meeting with the Michigan Department of Community Health's Manager of Adolescent and School Health unit. As the coalition, under John Clay's leadership, has developed a position paper and template to be used in schools, the MDCH requested to meet with the group to discuss next steps.

In other words, MDCH has child and adolescent health centers. Our coalition has access to understanding the various roles of mental health professionals in schools, and access to key and ideal programs. The question is: how do the two concepts meet?

The coalition is working through some of the particulars into January, and will meet near the end of the month with MDCH again to start moving the program forward.

Religious Freedom Restoration Act

House Speaker Jase Bolger (R – Marshall) has introduced HB 5958: the "Michigan Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA)." The bill was initially introduced to the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by incoming House Speaker-Elect Kevin Cotter (R – Mt Pleasant).

The bill was heard for the first time on December 4. NASW LSP Chair Susan Grettenberger testified on behalf of NASW against the measure. However, debate was cut short and the bill was voted out of committee along party lines. Later that afternoon, it was voted out of the House 59-50; again along party lines.

First, a brief history. RFRA exists at the federal level, passed back in 1993. It was later ruled by the Supreme Court to only apply to federal law. Since then, about twenty states have passed their own versions of RFRA. The federal version was used most recently and famously in the Hobby Lobby case to allow the corporation to refuse insurance coverage for birth control in their workers' health plans.

The original intent of the law was to protect, for example, Native Americans who use certain controlled substances for ceremonial purposes (such as peyote) from prosecution under federal drug laws. However, as the ACLU suggests, the Bill of Rights shields religious individuals from government prosecution. What this new Michigan legislation could do is turn this "shield into a sword" by encouraging people to use their religious beliefs as an excuse to violate the rights of others, embolden people to use religion as justification for violating state and local law, and would undermine local anti-discrimination laws or employment rules. Some 20 states currently have some derivation of this law in place today, dating as far back as 1993.

This act is meant for a few, clear purposes: contraceptive coverage, and the entire domain of LGBTQ issues, from marriage to civil rights to baking cakes in a cake store. The bill is attempting to insulate itself from constitutional challenges while still allowing for the exemptions, funds and benefits religious organizations enjoy today.

If an attempt is made to sum-up the effect of this bill in a single sentence, then the best effort is this act's exemptions from rules of general applicability: even if the aim of a broader law is NOT to impinge on religious freedom, a person can claim that it does.

What does this mean for health professionals? What it could mean, among many possible scenarios, is that practitioners could theoretically refuse to serve a patient or client, based on "sincerely held religious beliefs," and their employers would have no legal recourse to fire them or reprimand them despite the clear ethical violation. This bill is reminiscent of the Julea Ward case at Eastern Michigan University where a counseling student refused to treat a gay client and was eventually dismissed from the program by the university.

The bill failed to pass before the legislature adjourned for the year. It will certainly be reintroduced next session.

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Lame Duck Wrap-Up
December 19, 2014

Roads

Early in the morning on Dec 19th, the legislature completed work on a package of legislation that would raise over $1 billion for transportation infrastructure. In addition, the package would raise $300 million in new revenues for public education and nearly $100 million for local governments. All of the changes will be placed on a statewide ballot question in May of 2015. If voters reject the plan, only the legislation regarding internet sales tax (known as the Main Street Fairness Plan) will remain in place. The plan is made up of the following parts:

- The sales tax on gasoline will be eliminated (tax reduction of approx. $700 million)
- Michigan sales tax would be increased from 6 to 7% (tax increase of $1.34 billion)
- Increased driver registration fees and overweight truck fees (tax increase of $95 million)
- 'Main Street Fairness' legislation included in plan: companies with a 'nexus' in Michigan must collect sales tax revenue for online sales (tax increase of $40 million)
- Earned Income Tax Credit would be restored to 20% of the federal level (tax reduction of $260 million)
- Transform current per gallon motor fuel tax to a wholesale tax and increase the rate to raise $1.2 billion for transportation infrastructure

When factoring in the various tax increases and tax reductions, the plan would raise overall revenues by approximately $1.8 billion. The new money, when fully phased in, would primarily be divided between roads and bridges ($1.3 billion); public education ($300 million); local government ($94 million); and public transportation ($112 million). Other pieces of the agreement include:

- The School Aid Fund will be used only for k-12 and community colleges, not universities. This reverses a trend started several years ago where up to $200 million was removed from the SAF to pay for university operations. Commitments were made by the governor and legislative leaders to restore the lost funds for universities through the general fund
- The creation of a study to examine the true cost of education with the goal of providing a better indication of k-12 spending needs

While the House and Senate have been debating a final road package for weeks, in the end the ballot proposal passed overwhelmingly in the House but barely made it through the Senate. Many Senators expressed concern that voters may shy away from such a complicated proposal. Over the next few months backers and detractors of the plan will have the opportunity to sway voters one way or the other.

Religious Freedom Restoration Act Dies

Earlier last week, the House passed HB 5958- the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). As the last day of lame duck session approached, several Senators signed a letter urging Majority Leader Randy Richardville (R-Monroe) to take up the house passed version of the bill after he had told local media he felt there was no 'fervor' in his chamber for the issue. The letter was signed by the letter's author Senator Tom Casperson (R-Escanaba), Senate Minority Floor Leader Tupac Hunter (D-Detroit), and 13 other Republicans.

House Bill 5958, sponsored by Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall), would limit Michigan government's ability to infringe on one's "sincerely held religious beliefs." Opponents of the bill, several of whom protested outside of the state capitol building this week, believe that the bill is essentially a license to discriminate, and will violate the civil rights of gay individuals, women, and others. Supporting the bill, Ari Adler, spokesperson for Speaker Bolger, maintained that that it only requires that state or local government have sufficient justification for its action when infringing on someone's religious beliefs. The bill failed to move before the end of lame duck.

Medical Marijuana Legislation Goes Up in Smoke

Legislation that deals with Michigan's medical marijuana dispensaries was recently discharged from Senate committee after lying dormant for months. Michigan law enforcement held a press conference this week to voice their strong concerns with the legislation. The Michigan Sheriffs Association, the Michigan Chiefs were joined by the Michigan Association for Local Public Health, who announced that they had formed a list of 19 new issues with the latest version of House Bill 4271. One of the main components of the bill is to allow state-issued medical marijuana growers, or caretakers, to sell their excess marijuana. Law enforcement has a major issue with the financial incentive aspect of the bill, and sees this as a loophole, with nothing stopping authorized growers from selling 100% of their marijuana, rather than using any for themselves. The issue was ultimately not taken up.

Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less, breathe more; talk less, say more; love more, and all good things will be yours.

– Swedish proverb

STUDENT CONNECTIONS – *Nicole Weber/Section Editor*

Nicole Weber

In this issue of Student Connections, you will find a collection of summaries written by graduate students in attendance at the Fall Conference. Please join me in thanking them for their contributions to the winter newsletter.

A Review of "Unlocking the Mystery of Selective Mutism and Social Phobia"

MASP presentation by: Aimee Kotrba, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist

Review written by: Janell Bahoura, Wayne State University

Dr. Aimee Kotrba, a licensed clinical psychologist in Brighton, Michigan, specializes in the assessment and treatment of Selective Mutism. At the MASP conference on October 27, 2014, Dr. Kotrba delivered enlightening information regarding selective mutism and effective treatments. Dr. Kotrba began the break out session by defining Selective Mutism as a specific anxiety disorder that is characterized by a child's inability to speak and communicate effectively in select social settings, especially school. She further explained that the child's behavior is deliberate self-protection, not deliberate oppositionality. Dr. Kotrba clarified that children who are selectively mute tend to appear oppositional because they may not seem outwardly anxious. Also, Dr. Kotrba explicated that biological and genetic factors may increase the likelihood of a child becoming selectively mute. For example, many children with selective mutism may have inherited a tendency to be anxious from a family member.

Furthermore, Dr. Kotrba conceptualized how negative reinforcement increases the likelihood of a child remaining selectively mute. She provided a scenario of the sequence of events that is likely to occur when a child is prompted to speak. Typically, the prompt to speak in a social setting will cause a child's anxiety levels to rise, which results in avoidant behaviors. An adult/parent may feel inclined to rescue the child by speaking for him/her, thereby decreasing both the parent and child's anxiety levels. As a result, the behavior becomes negatively reinforced, which increases the likelihood the child will avoid the anxiety of speaking. Dr. Kotrba explained that if left untreated, children with selective mutism may experience negative results, such as worsening anxiety, depression, social isolation, self-esteem issues, and more.

When evaluating for selective mutism, Dr. Kotrba stated that a diagnostic interview is conducted. She elaborated that during this interview, information regarding modes of communication, the family, and the child are obtained. In addition to the diagnostic interview, Dr. Kotrba mentioned utilizing evaluative tools when assessing for selective mutism, including the Selective Mutism Questionnaire, SCARED (Self-Report for Childhood Anxiety Related Disorders), and School Speech Questionnaire.

Dr. Kotrba educated the audience about the evidence based treatment program employed on selectively mute children. She emphasized that in order for treatment to be most effective, early intervention and a team approach is crucial. Members of the team may include the parent, school administrator, teacher, clinical psychologist, school psychologist, medical doctor, social worker, and a speech pathologist. She said the first steps taken when working with children with selective mutism is to build rapport and to provide education regarding selective mutism and the behavioral treatment using developmentally appropriate speech. Dr. Kotrba further described how the behavior treatment employs desensitization in the attempt to treat selective mutism. Desensitization increases the ability to communicate slowly as the child learns to face his/her fears at a reasonable pace. Parents, school personnel, and psychologists/mental health professionals play an active part in the desensitization process. Dr. Kotrba further explained the role of shaping, stimulus fading, and contingency management in this evidence based treatment program. As Dr. Kotrba stated, shaping involves initially reinforcing more frequently occurring behaviors (nonverbals, simple sounds, etc.) to gradually reinforcing behaviors that approximate full speech (words, sentences, etc.). In order to generalize the skills learned, Dr. Kotrba mentioned that time is spent in other environments after the child has learned to obtain speech in one location. Stimulus fading, as defined by Dr. Kotrba, involves gradually increasing the number of different people the child speaks to and settings the child speaks in. Dr. Kotrba elucidated on how the behavioral intervention uses contingent management to help selectively mute children as its aim is to make nonverbal communication less reinforcing and verbal communication more reinforcing. Following the description of the behavioral treatment, Dr. Kotrba specifically described how the intervention can be implemented in the schools. She also stated that the intervention is typically done in small doses (10-45 minutes) and, on average, treatment lasts for 3 months to 2 years. Dr. Kotrba suggested that intensive doses are better as they are more likely to produce quicker outcomes and avoid the negative outcomes associated with selective mutism.

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Dr. Kotrba closed the breakout session with a few take-away points regarding selective mutism and its treatment. She reiterated that children are not mute because they will not speak but because they cannot speak. She also reiterated the importance of early behavioral intervention and how effective treatment is in treating selective mutism. Finally, she stressed how a team approach is critical for treatment.

For more information about Dr. Aimee Kotrba and her work on Selective Mutism, please visit http://www.selectivemutismtreatment.com/.

A Review of "The IR Method: From Knowing to Doing with Fidelity"

MASP presentation by: Lara L. MacQuarrie, Ph.D. & Jane Sturgell, Psy. S., NCSP

Review written by: Lindsey Swarthout, Wayne State University

At the MASP convention on October 27, 2014, Dr. Lara MacQuarrie and Jane Sturgell, NCSP, delivered some enlightening information regarding the method of using incremental rehearsal with fidelity. Incremental rehearsal can be defined as an instructional strategy, which presents information in small increments and allows for adequate rehearsal, or repetition, to ensure automaticity. Studies have shown that incremental rehearsal is more efficient than repeated reading or by using a flashcard strategy.

To do this instructional strategy, nine known words are used to begin and one unknown word is introduced by saying the unknown word, defining it, spelling it, and using it in a sentence. Once the unknown word has been introduced a certain number of times, it becomes a known word and a new unknown word can be introduced. This strategy systematically lengthens the student's practice interval when learning new material.

Dr. Macquarrie and Strugell provided information on the application of this strategy for school psychologist. To start, it is important to begin small, be familiar with the current research of incremental rehearsal, try working 1-on-1 with a student, and linking data from the IR method to reports and instructional recommendations. Once a helper feels comfortable using this strategy, it is important to share and teach it with others. In order to use this strategy efficiently, it is important to train teachers, paraprofessionals, psychologists, and/or caregivers. Incremental rehearsal can be a helpful way for students to learn unknown words in order to help them instructional inside of the classroom.

A Review of "SSIS Intervention Guides: Effects on Social Skills, Academics, and Behavior"

MASP presentation by: Jennifer Rollenhagen, of Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Supports Initiative, Montague

Review written by: Jaclyn Tucker, Wayne State University

At the MASP convention on October 27, 2014, Jennifer Rollenhagen delivered some enlightening information regarding the use of the Student Risk Screening Scale. Ms. Rollenhagen presented data from her experience in using the SRSS in a small group setting as a Tier 2 intervention for students who were displaying behavioral problems. She also noted that Tier 1 interventions, such as basic classroom management, effective instruction, and low intensity strategies, should be implemented before considering a Tier 2 intervention program.

She began by describing the general purpose of behavioral intervention, and the characteristics of students who would benefit from a behavioral intervention. These characteristics included steal, lie, cheat, sneak, experience peer rejection, have low academic achievement, display a negative attitude toward school, participate in aggressive behavior, or show any other externalizing problem behaviors. It was noted that not all of these behaviors need be present to be eligible for the program. Ms. Rollenhagen stated that the universal screening of students should occur 6-8 weeks into the school year in order to allow the teacher time to get to know the students and to observe their patterns of behavior. She then described the procedure for using the SRSS program, and how each group session would ideally be enacted. The program consists of explicitly teaching students coping and problem solving skills, involves role play exercises, and affords ample exposure to peer modeling. Ms. Rollenhagen indicated that it is essential to follow the SRSS guidelines delineating the sequence, scope, and content of the program exactly as it is described, in order to ensure that the program is implemented consistently and with fidelity.

Ms. Rollenhagen emphasized that the SRSS program should be used to inform instruction and to determine access to interventions, and is not used to determine special education eligibility, to exclude students from any school intervention programs, special education or general education, or to categorize the student with a mental health rating. Ms. Rollenhagen noted some challenges with implementing the program. One challenge was the

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group size. She indicated that for students with moderate to significant problem behaviors, groups should not exceed 3-4 students. Further, Ms. Rollenhagen suggested that finding the time during the school-day was a challenge; many students cannot afford to miss instructional time because of their already poor academic functioning, and coordinating schedules with multiple teachers can be trying. Another challenge was related to getting an accurate rating of the student with the problem behavior. There were times that the teacher may have been biased to inflate the frequency, duration, and/or intensity of a problem behavior because of a negative attitude toward the child. Further, her research resulted in no significant data, suggesting that these implementation challenges may or may not have been a factor. In conclusion, Ms. Rollenhagen clearly illustrated the need for a research-based Tier 2 intervention for problem behavior in the school setting. She generally described the program and the challenges in implementing the program in the schools.

A Review of "Dr. Frame's Elixir for Reading Fluency at Tiers 1, 2, or 3: It's Not Snake Oil."

MASP presentation by: John N. Frame, Ph.D

Review written by: Kailee Hobbins, Wayne State University

At the MASP convention on October 27, 2014, Dr. John N. Frame delivered a presentation explaining how to use repeated reading to increase reading fluency. Dr. Frame explained that there are many things that contribute to poor reading performance (i.e., instruction, ELL, poverty, culture) and that these children who are poor readers are dealing with failure every day. After going over some attempts that have been made to solving this problem in reading performance (i.e., NRP, Big Five, NCLB, IDEA, MI Special Education Law), Dr. Frame stated that the problem is still persisting. Further, there is a failure to appreciate reading fluency's connection to reading comprehension. Dr. Frame believes that until a child is fluently reading at grade level, the focus should be more on fluency than comprehension.

The solution to increasing reading fluency that Dr. Frame presented on was formatted to use in groups of struggling readers. He found each student in the group appropriately challenging text to read, set a time goal for each student (with the goal being to increase their Words Per Minute by 40%), and gave a boundary of errors allowed for each passage. In his program, each student was paired with another student, and while one student was reading the passage, the other student was responsible for tracking errors and timing (instructions were given to each student on this procedure). Dr. Frame explained that the theory behind repeated reading is based on automaticity and that "practice makes permanent." Once readers can effortlessly process the words they are able to reallocate attention to comprehension more effectively.

Dr. Frame ended the session with giving suggestions for a course of action for other schools. The first was that a repeated reading program in a large group could be used in each classroom three times per week in the beginning of second grade. The second suggestion was to use repeated reading as a Universal screening three times per year. Another suggestion was to give repeated reading tier-two instruction to students who are not on target to make the end of the year standard after the middle of the year assessment. The final suggestion is that after using repeated reading, those students who continue to show inadequate reading growth may be candidates for other tier-two interventions or a tier-three intervention.

Using Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS) as a Universal Screener for Behavior

MASP presentation by: Melissa Nantais, Ph.D.

Review written by: Ashley Marderosian

This session provided an overview of what the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS) is and how it can be used within a Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) framework in schools to screen and inform decisions regarding behavioral supports. While many schools currently use universal screeners to measure academics, the use of universal screening for behavior is less prevalent. The SRSS is a seven-item mass screener that can be used to identify students who are at risk for antisocial behaviors. Classroom teachers complete the SRSS by individually rating (using a four point scale) how often students engage in the following behaviors: 1. Steal, 2. Lie, cheat, sneak, 3. Behavior problem, 4. Peer rejection, 5. Low academic achievement, 6. Negative Attitude, and 7. Aggressive behavior. In order for the screener to be considered valid, this exact wording must be used. Student's points are then added up to determine their level of risk.

Before the SRSS is administered, buy in and installation of the SRSS needs to occur. One or two individuals should then be identified as SRSS coordinators, who will be responsible for training staff on how to use SRSS. One year before the SRSS is administered, the idea should be presented to school staff so that they can understand the tool's uses and importance. Most of the installation work will be completed at the district level, where a plan should be laid out about how data will be collected and shared.

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After the installation period, the SRSS should be administered three times a year, using either the paper/pencil version or a downloadable Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Data should be housed in a secure area, and eventually shared with teachers and parents according to the procedures outlined in the installation phase. SRSS data is not to be used for special education eligibility, to exclude students, or as a mental health rating.

SRSS data can be used to identify students who may require additional behavior supports beyond Tier 1, and it can be used to inform instruction and determine access to interventions. The winter benchmark data can be used to see how well students are responding to Tier 1 interventions. This data can then be used to reassess students who have been receiving interventions to determine if they can exit out, or if new students need to be added in to the interventions. Finally, spring data can be used to inform needs for the following year (e.g. what resources and training are needed).

A Review of " Motivational Interviewing for Effective Classroom Management"

MASP presentation by: Dana Marchese, Ph.D/ John Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health

Review written by: Phillip Smith, Wayne State

At the MASP conference on October 28, 2014, Dana Marchese, Ph.D, delivered a powerful lecture about motivational interviewing (MI) and how to use this technique in a classroom check-up (CCU).

Dr. Marchese started her lecture by illustrating the difficulties behind the interactions between faculty members within schools. She asked the audience, "How much control do you have whether teachers implement your recommendations?" Then Dr. Marchese asked us to think of a person in our own lives that had an important impact on our life and to think of the qualities of that person. After the audience shared their thoughts with each other, it became apparent that most of the people that had an impact on our lives, tended to possess many of the qualities that are emphasized in motivational interviewing. Some of these qualities consisted of a lack of judgment, nurturance, dynamic thinking, and reflective communication.

Motivational interviewing is a form of communication that is a catalyst for change in behavior. The spirit of MI is a client-centered form of communication that is collaborative, evocative in communication, and respectful to autonomy. The basic underlying assumptions of MI is that motivation is a state of readiness, ambivalence is a normal part of consideration of change, and that all people have the potential for change. The goals of MI are to create and amplify discrepancy and to create cognitive dissonance that occur after the 4 general principals of MI, which are to develop discrepancy, express empathy, roll with resistance, and support self-efficacy.

Dr. Marchese then had the audience speak to one another other using "roadblocks to listening," like giving orders, unwarranted advice, making threats, and interrupting. We then reflected about how such communication made us feel, many reporting that they felt irritated and annoyed. Then we had the opportunity to listen to others using the acronym "OARS," or open-ended questions, affirmations, reflections, and summarizing statements. Many reported that they felt comforted, supported, and genuinely cared for by the listener. Dr. Marchese then introduced "change talk," which are conversational clues that allow us to infer where a client may feel themselves to be in relation to active change. Change talk is illustrated by the acronym "DARN." This acronym stands for desire, where the client/person uses words like "want, prefer, wish to change." A is for ability which sounds like "able, can, could, possible." R is for reasons like, "why do it?" Finally, N means need, which is when the client/person recognizes the urgency for change by using words like, "important, need to, must."

One important take away message that Dr. Marchese emphasized is that at the end of a session or conversation, hearing "commitment language," or language that speaks to the idea of committing to change, is a great predictor of future change. In fact, because commitment language often builds throughout a conversation, commitment language that occurs within the last 5 minutes of a conversation is the strongest predictor of change.

However, there are times when it is likely that school psychologists and psychologists will deal with resistance to change from teachers and clients. The best way to deal with this situation is to "roll with resistance." Key tactics in dealing with resistance is reflective listening, or rewording a complaint for change in a way that allows the person to know that you can understand why they would be frustrated. Amplified reflections are when one exaggerates the disbelief of the person so that they may question their held belief and are more likely to consider change. Doubled reflections is when one acknowledges how, on one hand, the person may be doubtful and worried about aspects of change, but on the other, they are ready for change. Shifting focus is when change is not occurring, but one emphasizes another issue allowing them to have more time for future change. Reframing is when one takes a negative sounding statement, and reframes it in a positive light. Agreeing with a twist is acknowledging someone's belief, but then adding a twist to the statement that directs them to change.

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Dr. Marchese then introduced how MI can have a major impact on classroom checkups (CCUs). Effective consultation with teachers include respect for that person, partnership, great focus on listening before speaking, dialogue that emphasizes dialogical conversation, and builds self-efficacy. Using the principals of motivational interviewing, a school psychologist can complete CCUs by assessing classrooms, giving feedback, offering a menu of options, choosing strategies for interventions, encouraging teacher self-monitoring, and performance feedback.

In conclusion, Dr. Marchese delivered a powerful lecture on the effect of motivational interviewing that can be used within the school system to organize and create change among staff, produce behavioral change for clients in clinical settings, and in communicating with people in everyday life.

A Review of "Mental Health Crisis Intervention"

MASP presentation by: Stephen E. Brock, Ph.D., NCSP, LEP/NASP President

Review written by: Lindsey Swarthout, Wayne State University

At the MASP convention on October 27, 2014, Dr. Stephen E. Brock, delivered some enlightening information regarding the need for mental health crisis intervention and recovery in the schools. The beginning of Dr. Brock's stated that majority of youth have reported having at least one traumatic event. In the event of these traumatic instances, post-traumatic stress disorder can significantly alter students' academic trajectory. Since school can be considered the safest place for kids to be, a traumatic event can have a strong influence on the functioning of students in school. One of the main points of incidence that Dr. Brock discussed was that a large percentage of youth deaths occur from firearms, especially for the male population. A second point Dr. Brock made regarding incidence was the number of deaths by suicide. According to a 2011 statistic, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in all age groups.

For the role of school-based mental health professionals, the PREPaRE workshop can be used for crisis intervention. The first step is to prevent crises. Ensuring physical safety and psychological safety can help to prevent crises. This step also includes preventing traumatization, which includes fostering internal and external student resilience; as well as preventing trauma exposure by keeping students safe and avoiding crisis scenes and images. The second step in the model is to reaffirm physical and psychological health and safety. This involves responding to the students' needs and providing them with reassurance. For the third step, evaluating the psychological risk of the trauma is important. Crisis event variables include predictability, duration, consequences, and intensity that influence the crisis event. The crisis event is affected by the students' perceptions of the threat, which is also influenced by the students' exposure and vulnerability to the event. It is also important to then watch the initial warning signs of students' reactions that may turn into enduring warning signs that can cause psychopathological reactions.

The fourth and fifth steps involve providing interventions and responding to psychological needs for students, in the classroom, and for caregivers. Psychological intervention strategies can be at the immediate classroom-based (or group), immediate individually based, or through long-term psychotherapeutic treatments. The individual crisis intervention elements include: 1) establishing contact; 2) verifying readiness; 3) identifying and prioritizing problems; 4) addressing crisis problems; and 5) evaluating and concluding. Treatments can also include trauma-focused therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy. Finally, the last step in the PREPaRE model involves examining the effectiveness of the crisis prevention and intervention. Although our goal as school-based mental health professionals is to support the students facing a crisis, it is also important to also incorporate our own self-care practices.

A final topic that Dr. Brock talks about was suicide postvention. This can be defined as the provision of crisis intervention, support, and assistance for those affected by a completed suicide. Both survivors and exposed educators need to be provided support. The suicide postvention protocol is a twelve-step process. First, it needs to be verified that the death occurred. Second, a crisis response team is mobilized. Next, the impact on the school and the estimated level of response required needs to be assessed. Fourth, other involved school staff members are notified, which is followed by contacting the family of the suicide victim. Next, the kind of information that needs to be shared is determined, as well as how that information is shared. The eighth step is to identify the students' significantly affected by the suicide and a referral procedure is initiated. Next, a faculty planning session is conducted, followed by initiating crisis intervention services. The eleventh step includes considering the use of memorials. Finally, the postvention response needs to be debriefed. It is important to remember that not all suicide postvention looks the same and that it is especially important to reach out to the family of the suicide victim by expressing empathy and support.

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A Review of "Using CBM to Predict MEAP Reading Test Scores"

MASP presewntation by: Anna Harms, Cristy Coughlin, Patrick Sorrelle and Christine Russell

Review written by: Samantha Campbell, Wayne State University

At the MASP conference in October, Anna Harms, Cristy Coughlin, Patrick Sorrelle and Christine Russell, explained how Curriculum Based Measures are used to provide us with tools to predict performance on high-stakes assessments such as the MEAP. Anna Harms began the breakout session by explaining the background and purpose of Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi). She elaborated on the fact that MiBLSi is "a statewide structure used to create capacity for an integrated behavior and academic Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), that can be implemented with fidelity, is sustainable over time, and utilizes data-based decision making at all levels of implementation support." A ladder was introduced that displayed who was supported and how they were supported. At the top of this ladder was Michigan's department of Education/MiBLSi Leadership, which provides support across the state with guidance, visibility, funding, and political support for MiBLSi. This ladder then proceeded to go down to different levels ending with the support for all students provided by improved behavior and reading. The reason that this study was initiated was due to the need to accurately respond to requests for recommendations on how to select an appropriate set of benchmark goals and cut points for risk.

Within this study there was the desire to see how well different benchmark goals and cut points for risk, function with the MEAP reading test. DIBELS Next, and AIMSweb, were the two major CBM's used. There were 17 districts and 23,172 students involved in this study. For the DIBELS Next, they found that in order to be a better predictor of risk, it was better to favor sensitivity (proportion of students correctly classified at-risk/ nonproficient on both the screening and another critical assessment). They explained how it is better to have sensitivity in order to quickly identify students that are likely to need additional support to prevent later academic difficulty. The study that they conducted was created in order to accurately identify students who may be at-risk for reading difficulties in order to provide earlier intervention and prevent any students from "slipping through the cracks."

They found that students CBM reading assessments such as DIBELS Next and AIMSweb are efficient assessments that allow us to predict with some accuracy performance on high-stakes reading assessments up to a year in advance. These CBMs allow us to provide early intervention sooner, in order to reduce risks later on.

A Review of Leadership: "Making the Pieces Fit"

MASP Presentation by: Pete Bennett & Josh Townsley

Review written by: Jenna Shier, Wayne State University

This intriguing break-out session led by Pete Bennett and Josh Townsley focused on the topic of leadership within the work environment and centered on the qualities that shape an influential and powerful leader. Bennett and Townsley based their lecture on the novel "Start with Why" written by Simon Sinek, to help the audience weave together a clear vision of what it takes to lead and inspire others. Although conversing about leadership may cause individuals to feel uncomfortable or intimidated, it is an important topic to address. Leadership is often misunderstood, poorly developed, and ignored; however, it is the most critical factor in creating change in a group or an organization.

Bennett and Townsley stressed that anyone can become a leader regardless of their position in a company. In other words, effective leadership can be learned and practiced. In addition, they emphasized that great leaders often start with "why." A successful organization understands their company's beliefs and grasps why the company performs certain actions. It is necessary for a business to understand "why" because consumers do not purchase a company's accomplishments, rather, they buy the company's values. For example, most consumers probably have not purchased a Window's Mp3 player because the company did not effectively promote their values associated with the device. However, many individuals have purchased an Apple iPod, because the company presented their beliefs and expressed that Apple iPods are "engineered for maximum funness." The companies that build trust with consumers and stay true to their values appear to be the most successful.

Furthermore, Bennett and Townsley highlighted common characteristics that influential leaders tend to possess. All great leaders have charisma, which stems from a passion and clarity of why. Moreover, followers usually find a route, but a leader envisions the destination or goal.

All in all, this session was extremely motivational and uplifting. It was wonderful to observe Bennett and Townsley during this talk, as they replicated the qualities of true leaders.

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A Review of "School Psychologists' Role in SLD Identification: Practice, Science, and Informed Choices of Priorities."

MASP presentation by: Mark R. Shinn, Ph.D, Professor/ Coordinator of School Psychology at NLU

Review written by: Caroline Raffa, Wayne State University

Dr. Mark Shinn delivered the Sunday MASP pre-conference talk, titled "School Psychologists' Role in SLD Identification: Practice, Science, and Informed Choices of Priorities." Prompted by his desire to see Response to Intervention (RtI) utilized in the SLD decision making process, as well as within a broader model of Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS), Dr. Shinn provided compelling information regarding his position, and delivered an overall thought-provoking message designed to spur change in the field. His talk centered around the identification of key components of RtI assessment as part of SLD identification, the differentiation between norm- and standards-based dual discrepancy models, the psychometric deficiencies of the ability-achievement discrepancy and cognitive patterns of strengths and weaknesses (PSW) models, and the choices that school psychologists will make in the context of their personal use of cognitive testing.

To begin, Dr. Shinn emphasized the importance of a new way of thinking if RtI is to be successfully applied in schools. In his review of new ways of thinking Dr. Shinn first highlighted the importance of remembering that not every learning problem is a learning problem that requires special education. In other words, early intervention for learning problems can be systematically implemented without special educational supports. Similarly, Dr. Shinn argued that students who are at risk do require action that is early, powerful, and part of a proactive general education system. He also noted that only some problems may require special education if schools build a system of supports of increasingly intensive, evidence-based interventions. That is, if schools effectively implement RtI/MTSS, not all learning problems will have to be addressed in the special education context. Finally, Dr. Shinn explained how RtI represents a viable SLD identification process with multiple benefits, while PSW as a standard SLD eligibility practice is not essential and may distract vital resources from intervention. These challenging new ways of thinking laid the foundation for the remainder of Dr. Shinn's talk.

In identifying key components of RtI assessment, Dr. Shinn emphasized the importance of having a common vocabulary of terms. Clearly defining terms such as performance discrepancy, progress discrepancy, dual discrepancy, screening (individual, universal, multiple gating), benchmark assessment, progress monitoring, and extant data will aid teams in effectively and efficiently moving through the RtI process. Dr. Shinn's general RtI recommendations for SLD identification were: 1) a severe performance discrepancy on an achievement test validated for screening, 2) severe progress discrepancy on an achievement test validated for progress monitoring (i.e., evidence that the student's rate of improvement [ROI] fails to significantly reduce the severe achievement discrepancy when a tier 3 intervention is delivered with fidelity), 3) the need for special education intervention, and 4) all other procedural requirements have been addressed.

Dr. Shinn also differentiated between norm-based dual discrepancy models best used for SLD identification in K-8, and standards-based dual discrepancy models best used for grades 9-12. He recommends that in grades K-8, students may be eligible for special education if there is a severe achievement discrepancy below the 10th percentile of grade-level peers locally, as measured by curriculum-based measurements (CBM) using grade level-tests. This represents a norm-based approach. On the other hand, Dr. Shinn recommends that for grades 9-12, students should display a severe achievement discrepancy below the median of local end-of-year grade 7 students, as measured by CBM using grade 7 tests, which is a standards-based approach. In discussing this he also highlighted the importance of using extant data when performing re-evaluations, which are more common at the high school level.

Finally, the weaknesses of the PSW approach to SLD identification was discussed. Dr. Shinn challenged his listeners to consider the psychometric, scientific, and practical issues with PSW, as he reviewed the lack of evidence supporting "old" ways of thinking about SLD identification. Aside from the more technical aspects of this part of his talk, Dr. Shinn drove home the fact that PSW ultimately maintains the status quo with respect to prevention, promotion of intensive evidence-based interventions, and current remedial efforts.

Overall, Dr. Shinn delivered a powerful message about the role of RtI in the SLD identification process. More information can be found on Dr. Shinn's website: http://www.markshinn.org/

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A Review of "Making A Successful Transition From College to Career: Preparation for Graduate Students"

MASP presentation by: Sharon Dusney, Director of Special Services, Garden City Public Schools

Review written by: Meredith Zammit, Wayne State University

At the 2014 MASP conference, Sharon Dusney, the Director of Special Services for Garden City Public Schools, advised graduate students on how to prepare for future employment. Graduate school is a time for future school psychologists to prepare for their careers by developing skills in assessment and evaluation, consultations, ethics, and interventions. After students become equipped with the necessary interpersonal and academic skills, it is time to prepare for the transition from college to a career. This transition leaves many students with questions on how to prepare for the job market. Through the use of internship experiences, resume preparation and interview expectations, a student can expect to present as a well-rounded employment candidate.

Sharon Dusney explained that a student's internship experience is an integral component when preparing for one's first job as a school psychologist. Internships are a time for students to integrate their knowledge obtained from coursework and then apply their skills in a school setting. Students should seek out opportunities that will refine their skills, including experiences with RTI systems, familiarity and experience with a wide range of evaluations, progress monitoring, special education paperwork (i.e., IEPs and METs), and experience with Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). In order to maximize an internship experience, Dusney suggested that students make a list of what they want to learn ahead of time and then seek out school personnel who can provide those learning opportunities. A wide range of experiences will deepen a student's knowledge of the interdisciplinary role of a school psychologist.

Once students complete their internships, they should build a resume showcasing their skills and prepare for the interview process. Students' resumes should look clean, professional, and free of any errors. Additionally, Sharon Dusney commented that many employers will want to review a student's work samples. She recommended that interviewees bring their portfolio, including a variety of written reports, proof of a MET and IEP that translated information into a PLAFFP statement, FBA and behavior plans, and any clinical internship work. Students should make sure they research the district they are interviewing for to show they care and are interested in the school. Additionally, it is essential that a candidate looks professional and dresses conservatively to each interview. Before the interview process begins, students should consider potential interview questions and begin generating ideas for responses. Some possible questions may include familiarity of RTI or PSW models, evaluation and eligibility scenarios, and reasons for wanting to become a school psychologist.

While the interviewing process can make anyone nervous, Sharon Dusney encouraged students to remember that they have the tools and knowledge to succeed. If students maximize their internship experiences, prepare professional resumes and consider potential interview questions, then they will be able to confidently enter an interview and market themselves as a well-rounded, employable school psychologist.

In the News

MASP receives Governor's Proclamation recognizing School Psych Awareness week.

Yolanda Mojica, David Maxwell and Tanya Uganski with Governor's Proclamation.

SPECIAL REPORT – Summary of Shinn Survey Results

Summary prepared by: Nicole Weber, MA

Mark Shinn speaking on SLD identification

Dr. Mark Shinn was the keynote speaker of this year's Fall Pre-Conference. His presentation, titled "The School Psychologists' Role in SLD Identifications: Practice, Science, and Informed Choices," discussed big ideas in the area of SLD identification and presented attendees with new ways of thinking about RtI and PSW. Dr. Shinn asked the attendees of this year's Pre-Conference to complete two surveys, one that examined the roles and needs in terms of RtI/MTSS of school psychologists in the state of Michigan, as well as what school psychologists in Michigan know about and how they are implementing RtI and conducting PSW within their districts.

Roles of School Psychologists in Michigan

While many school psychologists say they feel their role within their district is to provide mental health services or behavior support, 51% of those who responded to the survey reported that the most important part of their job is working as part of a team to determine special education eligibility. Another 1/3 of respondents indicated that providing academic supports to both teachers and students is the most important part of their job.

However, what we are actually doing slightly differs from what we feel is the most important aspect of our jobs. In reality, just over half of the respondents (53.8%) indicated that they spend less than 10% of their time providing mental health services and behavior support. We do spend more time providing academic supports to teachers and students and more than 80% of respondents reported that more than HALF of their time was spent working as part of a team to determine special education eligibility. The remainder of our time, (half reported less than 10% and 80% reported less than 25%), is spent working with parents.

What Does our District Need?

As legislative action aims to prepare students to be "college and career ready," is our general education reading curriculum actually preparing our students for college and employment? Additionally, is our K-8 reading curriculum preparing our students for high school? Based on the survey, 26.5% of school psychologists in attendance at the MASP Pre-conference Institute are not sure. As we have to consider whether students are receiving "appropriate instruction" as part of our eligibility determination for special education, this statistic may raise some quesitons. Additionally, we find that sizeable proportions of core programs are perceived as not meeting the needs of students. 16.7% of respondents indicated that "some" (>60%) of reading programs are preparing our students, while another 16.7% indicated that less than 50% of reading programs are preparing our students.

If our general education programs are not meeting the needs of all students, do we feel that our district is able to provide early and powerful reading interventions to reduce the gap, as we know that being at risk requires an early, powerful, and pro-active general educations system? Over half felt that there was room for improvement. 37.3% of respondents felt that their district's interventions were "so-so" while another 26.5% felt that the interventions needed considerable improvement. In addition, most of the respondents indicated that they do not believe that special education services reduce the gap. 38.8% of the respondents felt that less than 50% of their districts reading interventions are reducing the gap, while 13.6% felt that 10% of their interventions were effective at reducing the gap.

In regards to our district's school climate, safety, mental health, and positive behavior needs, most of the school psychologists in attendance believe that there is a need for improvement. Forty-nine and a half percent felt that their district's needs were a very high priority and 47.1% felt that their district's services mental health services and behavior support were "so-so." Unfortunately, while many school psychologists would like to be spending their day improving these areas, our time and resources appear to be pulled elsewhere.

Our Knowledge of PSW

Unfortunately, when it comes to PSW, 45.3% of respondents indicate that they use a PSW method, but they were not sure which one! Twenty-five and a third percent reported using the Cross Battery (XBA) approach while another 16.8% reported using a combination of the Concordance/Discordance Model, the XBA approach, and the Naglieri Model. As a group, our knowledge of psychometrics related to the PSW approach was not impressive. Nearly two-thirds of respondents answered incorrectly when asked what the expected achievement score should be for a student with a cognitive score of 70 and a student with a cognitive score of 130. Nearly three-fourths of respondents were incorrect when asked about the psychometric issues in the difference of scores, which is the foundation of any intra-individual basis for interpretation, particularly PSW. Finally, 63.5% of respondents feel that whether or not teachers can develop

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research-based interventions based on PSW is irrelevant, as they feel that interventions are often determined based on other variables other than what recommendations a school psychologist provides.

In Dr. Shinn's presentation, he highlighted many of the professional issues with PSW. Unfortunately, according to Dr. Shinn, there are many psychometric issues within PSW, especially in the reliability of difference scores and chance differences. Additionally, PSW has scientific issues, as there is little agreement among the three different methods.

Implementation of RtI

According to Dr. Shinn, RtI, using a dual discrepancy approach, represents a viable SLD identification process, with multiple benefits. The dual discrepancy approach involves a severe performance discrepancy (severe educational need) as well as a progress discrepancy, or lack of progress, when provided with appropriate instruction. Additionally, if we are not able to complete SLD eligibility "right," we are diverting resources away from intervention, especially the areas of mental health services and behavior supports that many of us feel is an important part of our position within our district's.

Dr. Shinn indicated that he felt that it was important that we all know what staff believes about the process of RtI. Almost half of the respondents reported that their district's staff believes that RtI is a system of multi-tiered supported designed to provide powerful, increasingly intensive research-based interventions to those students who need it. There was a mix of how well districts have K-8 RtI systems in place. Forty-two percent reported that their district's RtI implementation was more than putzing and they had some elements solidly in place, while another 45.3% felt that it was only a smattering of elements. Only 6.3% of respondents felt that their system was deeply entrenched, with teacher's implementing the process well and administrators supporting. In the high school, over 80% of respondents reported that their RtI system was a smattering of elements if not non-existent.

Over half of respondents (54.7%) reported using PSW as their district's eligibility process while 40% reported using a combination of PSW and RtI. When it comes to special education eligibility, over half (55.3%) of respondents indicated that if it were up to them, they would choose to have our identification process be non-categorical (students would be eligible for special education or not eligible). Additionally, 43.8% of respondents would like to use a process that includes RtI and another 47.9% would choose to use a combination of RtI and PSW.

Mark Shinn speaking on SLD identification

Dr. Shinn's general RtI recommendations for SLD identification include the following:

1. Inclusionary Factor 1: A severe performance discrepancy on an achievement test validation for screening. He recommends using confidence intervals and to not become rigid on the cut-off score.
2. Inclusionary Factor 2: A severe progress discrepancy on an achievement test validated for progress monitoring. This occurs after the Rate of Improvement (ROI) fails to reduce significantly the severe achievement discrepancy even when Tier 3 intervention is of appropriate intensity and is delivered with fidelity.
3. Inclusionary Factor 3: There is a need for special education intervention, specially designed instruction to meet the student's unique needs.
4. All other procedural requirements (determinant factors and exclusionary components) have been addressed.

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