

Project ACHIEVE Overview and Briefing Document

3/07

“Building Strong Schools to Strengthen Student Outcomes”

**A National Model Prevention Program through the
U. S. Department of Health & Human Service’s Substance Abuse
and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
and the
U. S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)**

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1. Program Description

Project ACHIEVE is an innovative school reform and school effectiveness program that has been implemented in schools and school districts across the country since 1990. To date, one or more of its components have been presented to almost 1,500 schools in over 40 states—with the schools ranging from urban to suburban to rural, and from the lowest performing to the highest performing schools in the nation.

Project ACHIEVE’s ultimate goal is to help design and implement effective school and schooling processes to maximize the academic and social/emotional/behavioral progress and achievement of all students. Project ACHIEVE has also helped schools to implement effective and efficient problem-solving and strategic intervention processes for students with academic and behavioral difficulties, while improving the staff’s professional development and effective instruction interactions, and increasing the quality of parent (and community) involvement and engagement. In all, Project ACHIEVE helps schools, communities, and families to develop, strengthen, reinforce, and solidify children and adolescents’ resilience, protective, and effective self-management skills such that they are more able to resist unhealthy and maladaptive behavior patterns.

At its core, Project ACHIEVE is a blueprint that is based on research-proven and empirically-demonstrated effective practices that have been woven together into an implementation process that works. Using the blueprint, schools complete a needs assessment to determine their current needs, the current approaches they are using that are working, and the gaps that are preventing them from improving further. Project ACHIEVE then employs a whole school improvement process that has professional development and ongoing technical consultation as its foundation. The professional development process focuses on teaching staff (a) research-based information and effective instructional and educational practices that (b) translate into skills that are successfully implemented in school and classroom settings in a way where (c) staff confidence and autonomy develops over time.

Using its school effectiveness and professional development process, Project ACHIEVE places particular emphasis on increasing student performance in the areas of social skills and conflict resolution, improving student achievement and academic progress, facilitating positive school climates and safe school practices, increasing and sustaining effective school and schooling processes, and in increasing parental involvement and support.

In summary, Project ACHIEVE is an innovative school reform and school effectiveness program targeting the academic and social development of all students. In doing this, Project ACHIEVE implements preventive programs that focus on the needs of all students. It develops and implements strategic intervention programs for at-risk and underachieving students. Finally, it coordinates comprehensive and multi-faceted “wrap-around” programs for students with intensive needs.

Project ACHIEVE teaches and reinforces critical staff skills and intervention approaches that focus on helping staff to strategically plan for and address the immediate and long-term academic and behavioral needs of all students. Project ACHIEVE uses an integrated process that involves strategic planning and the building of school and staff resources, internal capacity, and system independence. Formative and summative evaluations using “real-time” data help to determine whether Project interventions and procedures are improving student, staff, and home/community outcomes. Project ACHIEVE has demonstrated its ability to positively impact schools and districts across the country, and it has earned its designation as a National Model Prevention Program from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. Project ACHIEVE truly lives its motto: “Building Strong Schools to Strengthen Student Outcomes.”

2. Proven Results

- Overall discipline referrals to the office decreased 16%
- School-based discipline referrals to the office decreased 10%
- School bus discipline referrals to the office decreased 26%
- Out-of-school suspensions decreased 29%
- Grade retentions decreased 47%
- Special education referrals decreased 61%
- Special education placements decreased 57%

- Reading CTBS: 33% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 29% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Math CTBS: 40% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 36% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Language CTBS: 41% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 36% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.

3. Intervention

Project ACHIEVE combines the best aspects of Universal (Primary prevention), Indicated (Secondary prevention), and Selective (Tertiary prevention) intervention approaches.

More specifically, Project ACHIEVE implements preventive programs that focus on the needs of all students. It develops and implements strategic intervention programs for at-risk and underachieving students. Finally, it coordinates comprehensive and multi-faceted “wrap-around” programs for students with intensive needs.

4. Target Population

Project ACHIEVE has been implemented in school districts across the country. Focusing predominantly on preschools, elementary schools, and middle schools, Project ACHIEVE components have been used in high schools, alternative schools, psychiatric and juvenile justice facilities, Head Start and after school programs, and recently, in a number of specialized Charter Schools.

Target Domains

- Individual
- Family
- School
- Peer Group
- Community (as needed)
- Society

Examples of Target Populations in our Longitudinal Sites

Jesse Keen Elementary School (Lakeland, FL)

Project ACHIEVE began at Jesse Keen Elementary School at the beginning of the 1990-91 school year. Demographically, Jesse Keen's enrollment has remained fairly stable over the past decade ranging averaging 650 students per year with approximately 60% Caucasian, 30% African-American, and 10% other minority students. Jesse Keen's average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students is 72%; and its poverty level averages 87% of the student body. Located in an inner-city warehouse district, the school's staff have received training in every component of the Project, and they are now implementing virtually every facet independently within a site-based management system. Jesse Keen is a full-service school, a Chapter I school-wide school, and it has staffed a Parent Drop-In Center that provides parent training and outreach services in the past.

Cleveland Elementary School (Tampa, FL)

Project ACHIEVE began at Cleveland Elementary School at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year. Cleveland Elementary draws from a neighborhood of public housing complexes in one of the most dangerous sections of Tampa. In fact, it was in this area where a series of racial disturbances occurred in 1987. Demographically, Cleveland Elementary's enrollment averages 500 students per year with an approximate racial make-up of 20% Caucasian, 62% African-American, 17% Hispanic, and less than 1% other minority students. Cleveland Elementary has an average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students of 66%, and a poverty level that averages 97% of the student body. Recent trends suggest fewer Caucasian and more Hispanic students coming to Cleveland over the past few years.

Hotchkiss Elementary School Results

Project ACHIEVE began at Hotchkiss Elementary School, an inner-city science magnet school, at the very end of the 1994-95 school year, its first year in existence. Demographically, Hotchkiss Elementary's enrollment has steadily increased since it opened ranging from 934 to 1193 students per year ($M = 1062$) with an average racial make-up of 15% Caucasian, 43% African-American, 40% Hispanic, and less than 2% other minority students. Hotchkiss' average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students is 56%, and its average poverty level for students is approximately 82%. Recent student data suggest a trend toward fewer Caucasian students and more Hispanic students.

While these examples are drawn from schools with large numbers of students living in poverty and experiencing significant challenges in their lives, Project ACHIEVE has been implemented in urban, suburban, and rural locations throughout the country (from Alaska to Wyoming to Ohio to Arkansas to Maryland to Vermont), in schools reflecting the lowest to the highest socio-economic levels, and in districts ranging from extremely small to significantly large.

6. How it Works

Project ACHIEVE is a school effectiveness or school improvement process that uses an effective whole-school design/school reform process with schools and school districts to:

- ❖ Maximize Students' Academic Achievement
- ❖ Create Safe School Environments and Positive School Climates
- ❖ Build Effective Teaching and Problem Solving Teams that Speed Successful Interventions to Challenging Students
- ❖ Increase and Sustain Effective Classroom Instruction
- ❖ Increase and Sustain Strong Parent Involvement
- ❖ Develop and Implement Effective Strategic Plans
- ❖ Organize Building Committees and Student Learning Clusters
- ❖ Develop Effective Data Management Systems for Outcome Evaluations

Essential Components

Successful replication of the Project ACHIEVE model involves seven interdependent components:

The **Strategic Planning and Organizational Analysis and Development Component** initially focuses on assessing the organizational climate, administrative style, staff decision-making, and other interactive and interpersonal processes in a school. Activities then move into identifying and reinforcing, or establishing and implementing the organizational policies, procedures, and cyclical approaches that support the academic and social-emotional/ behavioral success of all students. The ultimate “product” of this component are three- and one-year School Improvement Plans that help schools build capacity and autonomy, identify and focus resources, facilitate stability and sustainability, and realize student, staff, and system success.

The **Problem Solving, Teaming, and Consultation Processes Component** focuses on consistent, school-wide data-based, functional assessment, problem-solving approaches that all staff learn and use when developing effective instructional processes and then addressing students who are not responding to this instruction and the next “level” of evidence- or research-based classroom instruction or interventions. This “Response-to-Intervention” component emphasizes a “problem-solving/consultation/ intervention” mode of operation that directly contrasts with past “wait-to-fail” and “refer-test-place” approaches, and it is applied with students experiencing academic and/or behavioral concerns. This component is largely implemented through a building-level SPRINT team (School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team) of multidisciplinary professionals that help provide early intervention services, as much as possible, in general education classrooms.

The **Effective School, Schooling, and Professional Development Component** focuses on processes that ensure that effective and differentiated instruction and effective and positive behavior management exists in every classroom for every student, and that involve all teachers, administrators, related service professionals, and others. To support this, effective schools recognize that professional development occurs, formally and informally, every day for every staff person, and they systematically plan and implement ongoing professional development

programs and processes resulting in increased knowledge, enhanced skills, and emerging confidence and autonomy. This occurs through in-service instruction and a clinical supervision approach that involves modeling, guided practice, informed feedback, planned applications, and the transfer of training. Ultimately, as with other components, the primary goal is to maximize students' attention to task, academic engaged time, positive practice repetitions, and academic and behavioral achievement.

The **Academic Instruction linked to Academic Assessment, Intervention, and Achievement Component** focuses on positively impacting the “Instructional Environment” in every classroom within a school. The Instructional Environment consists of the interdependent interactions, in a classroom, of the Teacher-Instructional process, the Student, and the Curriculum. Critically, this component initially addresses the presence of effective, differentiated instruction for all students, ongoing progress monitoring, and evaluations that tracks students’ mastery of academic material over time. When students are not progressing or mastering material, functional, curriculum-based assessments are conducted whereby teachers identify and analyze relevant curricular and instructional variables and their relationship to student achievement outcomes, assess curricular (i.e., scope and sequence) placement and performance expectations and outcomes, and complete curricular task analyses and student mastery checks. These diagnostic assessments are eventually linked to strategic interventions that use, as much as possible, direct instruction and a mastery-focused strategies.

The **Behavioral Instruction linked to Behavioral Assessment, Intervention, and Self-Management Component** focuses on the implementation of effective behavioral interventions to address students' curricular and behavioral problems and/or teachers' instructional and classroom management procedures. The cornerstone of this component is the creation of a school-wide “Positive Behavioral Support System” (PBSS) which includes the use of social skills training with all students by school staff and parents; the development of classroom, grade-level, and building-wide accountability systems; and the use of “special situation” analyses to address building and peer-driven situations; and the development of crisis prevention, intervention, and response procedures and teams. When students do not respond, behaviorally, to the preventative PBSS strategies, functional assessment is conducted and linked to strategic behavioral interventions that are designed to resolve the identified behavioral problems.

The **Parent and Community Training, Support, and Outreach Component** focuses on increasing the involvement of all parents, but especially the involvement of the parents of at-risk, underachieving, and students with disabilities. Relative to community involvement, many schools do not use, much less know, the expertise and resources available to them that can help their mission and the progress of their students. For students with significant academic or behavioral challenges, the coordination and integration of community-based professionals and services often results in stronger and more pervasive progress and outcomes.

The **Data Management, Evaluation, and Accountability Component** focuses on actively evaluating, formatively and summatively, the status and progress of students’ academic and behavioral mastery of skills and concepts, as well as the processes and activities inherent in all of the other supportive components (see above) of an effective school. Part of this process involves collecting formative and summative data that validate the impact of a school’s strategic planning and school improvement efforts; its professional development and capacity-building efforts

relative to the staff; its selection, training and implementation of academic and behavioral curricula and, later, interventions; and its effectiveness relative to the functional assessment, strategic intervention, and response to intervention services for students not making appropriate academic and behavioral progress. Another part of this process involves evaluating the consultative success of related service and support personnel with classroom teachers, as well as the interpersonal interactions that address the other process-oriented parts of the Seven C's (Communication, Caring, Commitment, Collaboration, Consultation, Consistency, and Celebration) that influence system, staff, and student success.

Within this context, some of Project ACHIEVE's activities and intervention components include its:

- ❖ Stop & Think Social Skills Program
- ❖ Discipline, Behavior Management, and School Safety System at the student, individual classroom, grade level team, and total building levels
- ❖ "Special Situations" Analysis of Setting-specific and Peer Group-specific problems in the school
- ❖ Crisis prevention, intervention, and response planning and implementation
- ❖ Functional behavioral assessment, strategic behavioral interventions, and the creation of School-wide positive behavioral support systems
- ❖ Parent and Community school safety outreach and involvement activities
- ❖ Data-based, Functional Assessment, Problem-Solving Process
- ❖ Development and implementation of Early Intervention, Student Support, and Child Study teams
- ❖ Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA/CBM), other functional academic assessment, and strategic Instructional Consultation intervention strategies and approaches
- ❖ Regular and Special Education inclusion, integration, and effective instruction procedures, strategies, and approaches
- ❖ Strategic planning, organizational change, and school improvement policies, procedures, and strategies
- ❖ Integrated "Building Committee" approaches to organization and personnel management
- ❖ Professional development, peer consultation, and technical assistance procedures, strategies, and activities
- ❖ Clinical supervision and peer- or co-teaching strategies and procedures
- ❖ Parent and community involvement, training, and support assessments, procedures, strategies, and activities
- ❖ Formative and summative Program Evaluation and Accountability procedures, strategies, and activities along with the creation of functional, interactive, real time data-bases
- ❖ Training of Trainers program along with other systemic capacity-building and long-term institutionalization policies, strategies, and activities

7. Implementation Essentials

At a Building level, Project ACHIEVE can be implemented with the staff and resources typically found in most schools-- especially when they have a large number of special or Title I students referred and/or already in program. Depending on the needs of a building's students, however, Project ACHIEVE activities are most efficiently and effectively implemented when there is: a full-time school counselor, full-time school psychologist or behavioral intervention specialist, full-time school social worker or parent/community educator, reading and math instructional specialists as needed, a speech/language therapist as needed, and a school nurse/health aid. In addition, the Project works best when special educators and others can be involved in classroom-based consultation and interventions for, at least, one hour per day. Finally and in addition to already-existing staff, it is recommended that school districts identify one Project Coordinator for every three to five project buildings during the first three years of implementation, and a Project Coordinator for every five to eight buildings thereafter.

Typical other resources needed include: computers and other technology-based tools, space, and relevant instructional/intervention resource materials.

Program Materials and Resources

Materials for the Stop & Think Social Skills Program consists of everything that is needed for classroom and building implementation: the Stop & Think Social Skills book that provides information so that teachers and others can organize, teach, and implement a social skills program in their school and individual classrooms, a Stop & Think Forms Book that provides the forms and copies of the teaching steps for each social skill taught in the curriculum, the five Stop & Think posters that overview the Stop & Think steps that are used during instruction, a large Stop & Think stop sign for the classroom, a package of Stop & Think Cue Cards for each student with the social skills steps for the different skills in the curriculum, and a small Stop & Think stop sign for every student's desk. Also available to support the program are Stop & Think stickers, stamps, t-shirts, pencils, and other materials for use in the classroom.

The basic Stop & Think materials are sold by the classroom unit and are available from Sopris West Publishers (Phone: 1-800-547-6747; Web site: www.sopriswest.com).

Other materials are available from Project ACHIEVE Press (see contact information at the end of this Fact Sheet), and/or in workshop format and are provided to buildings or staff as they implement the different components of Project ACHIEVE through its professional development process.

Implementation Timeline and Sequence

Startup: Project ACHIEVE is implemented in a series of carefully sequenced steps that can occur over a three-year period. Project ACHIEVE uses a professional development, in-service, and technical assistance process that provides direct training to school personnel in individual schools in the areas described above.

- **Pre-Year 1:** Organizational development and strategic planning; writing of Project ACHIEVE goals and objectives in the School Improvement Plan; evaluating the school's mission statement, organizational/committee structure, and resources; completing articulation activities and audits relative to problems areas in the school, early intervention referrals; and students who need interventions for the next school year.
- **Year 1:** Social skills training, SPRINT Problem Solving training (separate sessions for the entire staff and specialists/study team), release time for planning, meetings, and technical assistance.
- **Year 2:** Social skills/SPRINT training and booster sessions, Behavioral Observation and Instructional Environment Assessment training, Curricular-Based Assessment and Measurement (CBA/CBM) training, academic and behavioral intervention training, release time for planning, meetings, and technical assistance.
- **Year 3:** Booster sessions in all components, parent involvement planning, training and facilitation, Grade-level Intervention Planning and Implementation; leadership and Facilitators' training; release time for planning, meetings, and technical assistance.
- **Beyond Year 3:** Continued, sustained implementation of all components; academic and behavioral intervention focus for students not responding to interventions; continued release time for all grade level teams to plan and implement the activities identified on their Action Plans; additional consultation and technical assistance as needed.

8. Areas of Influence

Protective Factors:

Individual Domain:

The development of Positive Personal Characteristics including:

Social skills and social responsiveness; cooperativeness; positive sense of self; flexibility; and problem-solving skills

Strengthening a Commitment to school and belief in society's values

Increasing students' Social and emotional competence, including:

Good communication skills; responsiveness; empathy and caring; inclination toward prosocial behavior; problem-solving skills; goal-directedness; and self-discipline

Family Domain:

Facilitating Parenting that includes:

Avoidance of severe criticism; high parental expectations; and clear and consistent expectations

Fostering an emotionally supportive parental/family milieu, including:

Orderly and structured parent-child relationships; and parent involvement in homework and school-related activities

School Domain:

Developing and supporting Caring and supportive environment; Building a sense of "community" in classroom and school

Reinforcing High expectations from school personnel

Establishing Clear standards and rules for appropriate behavior

Risk Factors:

Individual Domain:

Lack of self-control, assertiveness, and other social-emotional skills

Low self-esteem and self-confidence

Emotional and psychological problems

School failure

Conduct problems and early antisocial behavior, such as lying, stealing, and aggression

Economically disadvantaged

Family Domain:

Poor child supervision and discipline

Unrealistic expectations for development

Peer Domain:

Susceptibility to negative peer pressure

Need to respond to peer teasing, taunting, and bullying

School Domain:

Poor school performance and high absenteeism
Ambiguous, lax, or inconsistent rules and sanctions for student behavior
Harsh, arbitrary, or disproportionate student management practices
Low sense of community in school
Lack of parental involvement in schooling

9. Program Background

Project ACHIEVE, developed by Dr. Howard Knoff, is an innovative whole-school reform process that partners with schools that are engaged in a formal or informal school improvement process dedicated to improving the academic and behavioral outcomes of all students, and addressing the needs of particular students who might be academically and/or socially at-risk or underachieving. Project ACHIEVE began as a district-wide training program for school psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers and elementary-level instructional consultants. Project ACHIEVE is now a school-based/whole-school improvement/professional development/technical consultation program that targets and reinforces critical staff skills and intervention approaches that focus on helping building staff to strategically plan for and address the immediate and long-term academic and behavioral needs of all students. More specifically, Project ACHIEVE places particular emphasis on increasing student performance in the areas of social skills and conflict resolution, improving student achievement and academic progress, facilitating positive school climates, and in increasing parental involvement and support. This is done through an integrated process that involves strategic planning, school staff and resource development, comprehensive in-service training and follow-up, student-focused instruction and intervention, and parent and community involvement all leading to direct and preventive services for all students.

There are seven (7) interdependent components to Project ACHIEVE. These are: (1) Strategic Planning and Organizational Development; (2) Data-based Functional Assessment Problem-Solving; (3) Effective School, Schooling, and Professional Development; (4) Academic Instruction linked to Academic Assessment, Intervention, and Achievement; (5) Behavioral Instruction linked to Behavioral Assessment, Interventions, and Self-Management; (6) Parent and Community Training, Support, and Outreach Component; and (7) Data Management, Evaluation, and Accountability

Project ACHIEVE's training is facilitated by pupil services personnel and involves regular and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, school staff (custodial, cafeteria, office), substitute teachers, bus drivers, and volunteers. In addition, the training is extended to and utilizes parent involvement and community agencies (after care facilities, community-based programs). A unique aspect of the training is the use of a "training of trainers" format that is designed to increase the number of individuals (particularly pupil services personnel) who can train others within the school district and the community.

Project Goals, Components, and Implementation Blueprint

Project ACHIEVE has been implemented in a wide range of schools—from urban to suburban to rural schools that serve students from highly affluent to high poverty homes. We have also worked with preschools, special education centers, alternative schools, Department of Defense schools, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and others with great success. Nonetheless, Project ACHIEVE’s “roots” have been with schools with a high number of at-risk children and youth. These include school-wide Chapter 1 schools, schools participating in Full-Service school programs, schools with large numbers of special education referrals each year, and schools at-risk for incidents of student aggression or violence. All of our participating schools and districts wanted Project ACHIEVE training and involvement because they wanted to build on the strengths of **their already-existing program**, they wanted to “solve” existing problems or challenges, and/or because they wanted to prevent future problems, thereby extending their current successes. Thus, regardless of a school’s setting or situation, Project ACHIEVE involvement is typically requested because of one or more of its **six primary goals**:

1. To enhance the problem-solving skills of teachers and other educators such that effective interventions for students experiencing or at-risk for academic and/or social-behavioral difficulties are developed and implemented.
2. To improve the classroom and behavior management skills of school personnel and increase the prosocial and self-management skills of students such that safe and disciplined environments are created that increase students’ academic engaged time and their positive interpersonal, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills.
3. To ensure comprehensive, high quality educational services to all students in the school, and to intervene strategically with those students who are not performing at their expected levels, serving them, as much as possible, in regular classroom settings with equal access to all programs.
4. To increase the social and academic progress of students by increasing the commitment and involvement of parents and community resources in the education of their children. This is accomplished, more specifically, through parents’ direct involvement in the schoolwork and schooling of their children, and through their use of effective parenting and supervision skills; and through additional support and wrap-around services by community-based resources and other leaders.
5. To validate the various components of Project ACHIEVE during the school’s comprehensive improvement process, and to develop the school’s capacity to independently maintain and expand the Project’s activities and outcomes as quickly as possible.
6. To create a school climate in which every teacher, staff member, and parent believes that everyone is responsible for every student in that building and community.

Initially, Project ACHIEVE is a professional development/in-service process that provides direct training to school personnel in individual schools in the following areas: 1) problem-solving; 2) social skills and behavior management; 3) effective teaching/instruction; 4) curriculum-based assessment and academic interventions; 5) parent education and training; and 6) organizational planning, development, and evaluation. As such, Project ACHIEVE is implemented in a series of carefully sequenced steps that occur typically over a three-to-four-year period. These steps are designed: (a) to maximize staff acceptance of the Project and its components; (b) to provide skill training where prerequisite skills were taught before more complex skills; (c) to insure the existence of classroom-based technical support and consultation; and (d) to facilitate accurate data collection to measure outcomes and demonstrate accountability. During the first two years especially, Project ACHIEVE runs parallels to the existing program of the school. Over time, however, as specific component areas are mastered by the staff, those areas replace previous practices such that Project ACHIEVE eventually becomes the "standard operating procedure" of the building.

10. Evaluation Design

Citations:

Knoff, H.M. & Batsche, G.M. (1995). "Project Achieve: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students." **School Psychology Review**, 24(4), 579-603.

Quinn, M. M., Osher, D., Hoffman, C. C., & Hanley, T. V. (1998). "Safe, drug-free, and effective schools for ALL children: What Works!" Washington, DC: Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, American Institutes for Research. (see website: www.air.org/cecp/teams/greenhouses/projectachieve.htm)

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (2000). See website: www.samhsa.gov/centers/csap/modelprograms/evaluation.cfm?tbviewed=26

Project ACHIEVE's target audience is predominantly elementary and middle school children, and the model has been replicated in more than 100 sites across the United States. The program has undergone one evaluation with a quasi-experimental design at the elementary school level. The 1990-95 evaluation used a matched-comparison school design, with one treatment -- Jesse Keen Elementary -- and one control school. In choosing a comparison school, researchers used school demographics, giving the most weight to the percentage of students on the federal free-lunch program. Project ACHIEVE was implemented over a three-year period. Data were collected in the treatment school during four academic years (1989-1993), and during one academic year (1991-92) in the comparison school. Attrition was not a factor since the target audience was the entire student body, and the outcomes measures were not dependent on student self-report surveys.

Additional longitudinal analyses at three school sites, at the Jesse Keen, Cleveland, and Hotchkiss elementary schools (see below), were completed using a multi-baseline design across multiple variables, where each school was used as its own internal control.

The American Institutes for Research also performed an independent analysis of Project ACHIEVE for the Department of Education using a team of national experts who conducted a two day on-site evaluation of the Jesse Keen and Cleveland elementary school sites. The predominant methodology for this evaluation entailed a structured interview-based qualitative analysis that focused on students, parents, staff, school administrators, district administrators, and community/agency representatives.

Evaluating School and Project ACHIEVE Outcomes

Guided by the school's School Improvement Plan and the requirements of the federal NCLB and IDEA regulations, longitudinal data is collected and evaluated to determine the formative and summative success of the identified school and Project ACHIEVE outcomes.

Complementing those at the state, district, and local levels, Project ACHIEVE provides the following data collection and evaluation resources

- There are a series of implementation check sheets, across the different facets of the Project, to monitor adherence to the protocol.
- Two formal questionnaires, evaluating the Discipline and Behavior Management attitudes and Staff Interactional Characteristics of the school are used as pre/post measures of organizational development and change.
- Myriad formal fidelity measures have been developed through a number of federal and state grants that have implemented Project ACHIEVE in various schools.
- Discipline data is collected through a free software program, the ADDRESS (Automated Discipline Data Review and Evaluation Software System), loaded directly onto a school's computer system and used in-house.
- Through the onsite consultation services, the developer and/or master trainer develop other outcome measures that will sensitively evaluate each year's Project ACHIEVE goals and objectives as written into the School Improvement Plan.

The Generic Evaluation Process

The ongoing collection of longitudinal data to evaluate the formative and summative efficacy of Project ACHIEVE and to use to facilitate problem-solving and the development of strategic interventions is critical to the overall success of the Project.

Below is a list of different pieces of data and data sources that can be accumulated to evaluate the impact of Project ACHIEVE. Ideally, this information will be collected for the two to three years prior to the beginning of Project ACHIEVE activities in a building. This will help to track the trends in the data such that meaningful changes can be clearly recognized should they occur.

In addition, it is important that these data be tracked using an interactive database, so that reports-- organized by important variables-- can be printed and used for problem-solving and/or to provide formative feedback as to the progress of a specific Project ACHIEVE component. For this reason, it is recommended that the database used to track Project ACHIEVE data be compatible or even part of the district's computer database if possible. This may mean that a district-level programmer may be the best person to help an individual building create the needed interactive evaluation database.

General Indicators of Success

- Student Outcomes: Discipline Records, Suspension/Expulsion Records, Grade Retention Records, Special Education Referrals, Placements, Decertification (Dismissal) from Special Education, Student Achievement Scores, Student Portfolios, Attendance

- Teacher Outcomes: Frequency of Social Skills Training in Classroom, Evaluation of Integrity of Training, Teacher Referrals to Office, Teacher Satisfaction (Project ACHIEVE Evaluation Form)

- Direct/Indirect: Frequency of Use by Non-Instructional Personnel, Extent to Which Curriculum is Incorporated into Parent Education and Training, Extent to Which Curriculum is Coordinated Between Home and School

- School Outcomes: Discipline, Suspension/Expulsion, Grade Retention Records
Teacher Satisfaction Measures
School Climate Measures
Grade-level and Building Strategic and Annual Outcome Plans
School Achievement Scores (e.g., National/Local Percentile Averages, Percent of Students Scoring above the 50th Percentile)
Teacher Attendance/Student Attendance
Parent Involvement and Business Partnerships
Parent/Community Evaluation and Satisfaction Measures

11. Outcomes: Project ACHIEVE's Empirically-Proven and Validated Results from Three Longitudinal Sites

The longitudinal outcomes from three schools that have implemented Project ACHIEVE's social skills and discipline/management component are reviewed below. The schools involved are Jesse Keen Elementary School in Polk County (Lakeland), Florida; Cleveland Elementary School in Hillsborough County (Tampa), Florida; and Hotchkiss Elementary School in the Dallas (TX) Independent School District.

Jesse Keen Elementary School Results

Project ACHIEVE began at Jesse Keen Elementary School at the beginning of the 1990-91 school year. Demographically, Jesse Keen's enrollment has remained fairly stable over the past decade ranging averaging 650 students per year with approximately 60% Caucasian, 30% African-American, and 10% other minority students. Jesse Keen's average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students is 72%; and its poverty level averages 87% of the student body. Located in an inner-city warehouse district, the school's staff have received training in every component of the Project, and they are now implementing virtually every facet independently within a site-based management system. Jesse Keen is a full-service school, a Chapter I school-wide school, and it has staffed a Parent Drop-In Center that provides parent training and outreach services in the past.

Comparing Jesse Keen's data during the year prior to Project ACHIEVE implementation with the averages from eight years of Project implementation, the following results occurred:

- Special education referrals decreased 61%
- Special education placements decreased 57%
- Overall discipline referrals to the office decreased 16%
- School-based discipline referrals to the office decreased 10%
- School bus discipline referrals to the office decreased 26%
- Out-of-school suspensions decreased 29%
- Grade retentions decreased 47%
- Reading CTBS: 33% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 29% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Math CTBS: 40% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 36% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Language CTBS: 41% of the Full Project Cohort students (from 1992-93 on) scored at or above the 50th percentile compared to 36% of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.

Cleveland Elementary School Results

Project ACHIEVE began at Cleveland Elementary School at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year. Cleveland Elementary draws from a neighborhood of public housing complexes in one of the most dangerous sections of Tampa. In fact, it was in this area where a series of racial disturbances occurred in 1987. Demographically, Cleveland Elementary's enrollment averages 500 students per year with an approximate racial make-up of 20% Caucasian, 62% African-American, 17% Hispanic, and less than 1% other minority students. Cleveland Elementary has an average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students of 66%, and a poverty level that averages 97% of the student body. Recent trends suggest fewer Caucasian and more Hispanic students coming to Cleveland over the past few years.

Averaging the data from five years of Project ACHIEVE implementation at Cleveland Elementary, the following results occurred:

- Proportion of Special Education referrals: 4.4 students per 100
- Proportion of Special Education placements: 2.6 students per 100
- Proportion of Overall discipline referrals to the office: 34.2 students per 100
- Proportion of Unduplicated discipline referrals to the office: 16.5 students per 100
- Proportion of In-School Suspensions: 16.4 students per 100
- Proportion of In-School Suspensions- Unduplicated: 10.4 students per 100
- Proportion of Out-of-School Suspensions: 4.2 students per 100
- Proportion of Out-of-School Suspensions- Unduplicated: 3.0 students per 100
- Proportion of Grade Retentions: 4.4 students per 100
- Average Reading SAT: 39thtile for the Full Project Cohort students (from 1995-96 on) compared to 27thtile of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Average Math SAT: 49thtile for the Full Project Cohort students (from 1995-96 on) compared to 34thtile of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Average Language CTBS: 36thtile for the Full Project Cohort students (from 1995-96 on) compared to 32ndtile of the Partial Project Cohort students taught and tested prior to that year.
- Florida Writes Test (4th graders): 87% of the students passed in the 1997-98 school year

Hotchkiss Elementary School Results

Project ACHIEVE began at Hotchkiss Elementary School, an inner-city science magnet school, at the very end of the 1994-95 school year, its first year in existence. Demographically, Hotchkiss Elementary's enrollment has steadily increased since it opened ranging from 934 to 1193 students per year ($M = 1062$) with an average racial make-up of 15% Caucasian, 43% African-American, 40% Hispanic, and less than 2% other minority students. Hotchkiss' average mobility rate of new and withdrawn students is 56%, and its average poverty level for students is approximately 82%. Recent student data suggest a trend toward fewer Caucasian students and more Hispanic students.

Comparing the data from the first year (1994-95) of Project ACHIEVE implementation to the average of the data from the next three years of implementation, the following results occurred:

- Overall discipline referrals to the office decreased 80%
- Classroom-based discipline referrals to the office decreased 86%
- Grade Retentions remained stable at 2.5 retentions per 100 students
- Special education referrals remained stable from 3 students per 100 to 3.3 students per 100
- Special education placements remained stable from 2 students per 100 to 2.8 students per 100
- Positive trends in the number of students scoring above the 50th %tile on the ITBS and TAAS Reading and Math sections

12. Program Developer

Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D. is the creator and Director of Project ACHIEVE. After 22 years as a university professor, he is now a full-time national consultant, author, and lecturer; and also the Director of the State Improvement Grant for the Arkansas Department of Education—Special Education Unit. Formerly a Professor of School Psychology at the University of South Florida (Tampa, FL) for 18 years and Director of its School Psychology Program for 12 years, Dr. Knoff was also the creator and Director of the Institute for School Reform, Integrated Services, and Child Mental Health and Educational Policy at USF. He also was an Assistant Professor of School Psychology at the State University of New York at Albany between 1981 and 1985, and a practicing school psychologist for four years prior to that.

Dr. Knoff received his Ph.D. degree from Syracuse University in 1980, and has worked as a practitioner, consultant, licensed private psychologist, and university professor since 1978. Known for his research and writing in organizational change and school reform, consultation and intervention processes, social skills and behavior management training, personality assessment, and professional issues, Dr. Knoff has published more than 75 articles or book chapters and delivered over 500 papers or workshops nationally—including the **Stop & Think Social Skills Program** (Preschool through Middle School editions) and the **Stop & Think Parent Book: A Guide to Children's Good Behavior** both through Sopris West Publishers.

Dr. Knoff was a recipient of the Lightner Witmer Award from the American Psychological Association's School Psychology Division in 1989 for early career contributions. During his career, through a number of collegial collaborations, he has been awarded over \$10 million in external grants—including a foundation grant from the Metropolitan Life Foundation, and seven grants from the U.S. Department of Education (primarily from the Office of Special Education Programs). Dr. Knoff was the 21st President of the National Association of School Psychologists which now represents over 25,000 school psychologists nationwide. He has received numerous awards for both his professional service and his work through Project ACHIEVE.

As Director of Project ACHIEVE, a nationally-known school effectiveness/school improvement program that has been designated a National Model Prevention Program by the U. S. Department of Health & Human Service's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Dr. Knoff has trained over 1,500 schools or school districts over a 15 year period. He is constantly sought out for his in-service presentations and his on-site consultation and technical assistance expertise in school improvement, the integration of general and special education services, implementing Positive Behavioral Support Systems, and school-based mental health systems.

As Director of the Arkansas State Improvement Grant (SIG), a five-year \$1.7 million per year grant from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, he helps to oversee the primary SIG goals of: statewide implementation of Project ACHIEVE's Positive Behavioral Self-Management approach; literacy interventions for at-risk, underachieving, and students with disabilities; and special education and related service personnel recruitment, training, and retention.

Dr. Knoff is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, a Nationally Certified School Psychologist through the National Association of School Psychologists, a Licensed Psychologist in Arkansas, and he has been trained in both crisis intervention and mediation processes.

Relative to school safety issues, Dr. Knoff was on the writing team that helped produce Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools, the document commissioned by the President that was sent to every school in the country in the Fall of 1998; and he participated in a review capacity on the follow-up document, Safeguarding our Children: An Action Guide. In addition, Dr. Knoff was invited to discuss both Project ACHIEVE and its safe schools component at the "National IDEA Summit," sponsored by OSEP and held in Washington, DC in

June, 2001. He also has discussed Project ACHIEVE at such national meetings as: (a) the 1999 Improving America's Schools Conference "Creating Safe Schools and Healthy Students Institute," sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education in Tampa, FL in October, 1999; (b) the Safe and Effective Schools for ALL Children: What Works! A National Teleconference sponsored by the U. S. Departments of Education and Justice and the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice at the American Institutes for Research in Washington, D. C. in September, 1999; (c) the National Education Association's Safe Schools Summit in Los Angeles in April, 1995; and (d) the National Education Goals Panel/National Association of Pupil Personnel Service Organization's "Safe Schools, Safe Communities" meeting in October, 1994. Dr. Knoff has been a featured speaker at numerous national and state conventions across the country; he provides frequent interviews in all areas of the media; and he was highlighted on an ABC News' 20/20 program on "Being Teased, Taunted, and Bullied" on April 28th, 1995.

Relative to his national work in school reform and related areas, Knoff was a national trainer and member of the National Association of School Psychologist' in-service cadre participating in the Associations of Service Providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education network (ASPIIRE) through the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the U. S. Department of Education. He also was a Committee Member in OSEP's five year strategic planning process—working on the Positive Behavioral Support and School-Wide Discipline work group—during the Fall of 2000. In addition, Knoff completed a three-year OSEP-funded dissemination grant for Project ACHIEVE where he worked on-site in the Baltimore City (MD) School District, Cleveland Heights/University Heights (OH) School District, and the Hillsborough County (Tampa, FL) School District.

Finally, from a consultation perspective, Dr. Knoff has worked with over 1,500 schools or school districts across the country as an organizational consultant or a technical consultant relative to the district- or building-based implementation of Project ACHIEVE or one of its seven components. He has also consulted with such agencies as the Department of Defense Dependents School District (DoDDs), the Southern Poverty Law Center, a number of state departments of education—including the Alaska State Department of Education, and a number of legal advocacy firms relative to expert testimony on cases related to student rights and assurances. In 1991, Dr. Knoff went to Germany, as lead on a contract with DoDDs during Desert Storm, to help evaluate the U.S. school system there relative to its preparation to respond to mental health and other issues due to the Gulf War. All told, Dr. Knoff is constantly sought after for his expertise in a wide variety of school, psychological, and other professional issues.

13. Contact Information

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14. National Recognition of, Publications involving, and Websites Citing Project ACHIEVE

National Recognition

Received the 2003 SAMHSA Administrators Award for **School-Based Mental Health Services**; U. S. Department of Health & Human Services: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Portland, OR, October, 2003.

Designated as a **Model Program** for inclusion in the **Model Programs** Guide Database by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the U. S. Department of Justice. Bethesda, MD, June, 2003.

Designated as a **Select Program** by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, Emotional Learning (CASEL). Chicago, IL, July, 2002.

Cited as an **Exemplary Mental Health Program** in **Exemplary Mental Health Programs: School Psychologists as Mental Health Service Providers** (National Association of School Psychologists, 3rd Edition), Bethesda, MD, 2002.

Designated as a **Model National Program** by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Prevention in the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services. Rockville, MD, July, 2000.

Designated as a **“Best and Promising Practices” Program** by the Western Center for the Application of Preventive Technologies in association with the Oregon Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs. Salem, OR, September, 2000.

Highlighted at the **1999 Improving America’s Schools Conference “Creating Safe Schools and Healthy Students Institute.”** Sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education, Tampa, FL, October, 1999.

Highlighted at the **Safe and Effective Schools for ALL Children: What Works! A National Teleconference.** Sponsored by the U. S. Departments of Education and Justice (Office of

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention), and the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice at the American Institutes for Research, Washington, D. C., September, 1999.

Cited as an exemplary program relative to school safety at the **White House Conference on School Safety**, and highlighted in the U. S. Department of Education/Department of Justice **Annual Report on School Safety**, October, 1998.

Identified as an effective school reform program by the **Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice of the American Institutes for Research**, Washington, D. C., January, 1997.

Semi-finalist in the U. S. Department of Education's National Awards Program for Model Professional Development, October, 1996.

Recipient of over \$8 million in external Federal and State grants (Department of Education) since 1990, including five U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education training grants and one U. S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Innovation field-initiated research grant.

One of five programs across the country to be funded by the Metropolitan Life Foundation's **Positive Choices: Youth Anti-Violence Initiatives** program in the Fall of 1995 for \$100,000.

Received Honorable Mention in the Coalition on Educational Initiatives' and USA TODAY's **Community Solutions for Education** national awards program, May, 1995. The Coalition on Educational Initiatives includes Apple Computer, Inc.; Proctor & Gamble; State Farm Insurance Companies; and Subaru of America, Inc., and over twenty national professional associations.

Highlighted on the ABC News' **20/20** program "Being Teased, Taunted, and Bullied" on April 28th, 1995

Project ACHIEVE Professional Publications and References:

Knoff, H. M. (in press). Teasing, taunting, bullying, harassment, and aggression: A school-wide approach to prevention, strategic intervention, and crisis management. In M. J. Elias, J. E. Zins, & C. A. Maher (Eds.), **Handbook of prevention and intervention in perr harassment, victimization, and bullying**. New Jersey: Haworth Press.

Knoff, H. M. (2004). Inside Project ACHIEVE: A comprehensive, research-proven whole school improvement process focused on student academic and behavioral outcomes. In K. Robinson (Ed.), **Advances in school-based mental health: Best practices and program models**. Kingston, NJ: Civic Research Institute, Inc.

Knoff, H. M. (2002). Best practices in organizational assessment and strategic planning. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), **Best practices in school psychology-IV, Volume 1** (pp. 235-253). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (2002). Best practices in personality assessment. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), **Best practices in school psychology- IV, Volume 2** (pp. 1281-1302). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (March, 2002). The “Stop and Think!” Social Skills Program: Teaching children interpersonal and conflict resolution skills systems. **NASP Communiqué, 30**.

Knoff, H. M. (March, 2002). Positive Behavioral Self-Management Systems: Facilitating school-wide implementation and minimizing individual resistance. **NASP Communiqué, 30**.

Knoff, H. M. (2001, October). **Establishing school-wide prevention, intervention, and intensive needs approaches for student discipline, behavior management, and self-management: A collaborative action planning process**. Provided as a keynote paper for the virtual conference, “Creating Mentally Healthy Schools and Communities,” Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research, Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice.

Knoff, H. M. (2001). **The Stop & Think Social Skills Program (Preschool – Grade 1, Grades 2/3, Grades 4/5, Middle School 6-8)**. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Knoff, H. M. (2000). Stop and Think! Steps toward the systematic prevention of student violence. **Reaching Today’s Youth: The Community Circle of Caring Journal, 5(1)**, 63-66.

Knoff, H. M. (2000). Organizational development and strategic planning for the millennium: A blueprint toward effective school discipline, school safety, and crisis prevention. **Psychology in the Schools, 37**, 17-32.

Raffaele, L., & Knoff, H. M. (1999). Improving home-school collaboration with parents of children at-risk: Organizational principles, perspectives, and approaches. **School Psychology Review, 28**, 448-466.

Quinn, M. M., Osher, D., Hoffman, C. C., & Hanley, T. V. (1998). **Safe, drug-free, and effective schools for ALL children: What Works!** Washington, DC: Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, American Institutes for Research.

Knoff, H. M., & Batsche, G. M. (1995). Project ACHIEVE: Analyzing a school reform process for at-risk and underachieving students. **School Psychology Review, 24**, 579-603.

Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in organizational assessment and strategic planning. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), **Best practices in school psychology- III** (pp. 239-252). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in personality assessment. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), **Best practices in school psychology- III** (pp. 849-864). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Batsche, G. M., & Knoff, H. M. (1995). Best practices in linking assessment to intervention. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), **Best practices in school psychology- III** (pp. 569-586). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Knoff, H.M., & Batsche, G.M. (1993). A school reform process for at-risk students: Applying Caplan's organizational consultation principles to guide prevention, intervention, and home-school collaboration. In W.P. Erchul (Ed.), **Consultation in community, school, and organizational practice** (pp. 123-148). Washington, D.C.: Taylor and Francis.

Knoff, H. M., & Batsche, G. M. (1991). **The Referral Question Consultation process: Addressing system, school, and classroom academic and behavioral problems**. Tampa, FL: Authors.

Web Site Links Citing Project ACHIEVE:

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov/centers/csap/modelprograms/evaluation.cfm?tbviewed=26

American Institutes for Research/Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice:
www.air.org/cecp/teams/greenhouses/projectachieve.htm or
www.air-dc.org/cecp/resources/nasp/fl.htm

Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies:
www.open.org/westcapt/bp57.htm

Sopris West Publishers, Longmont, CO:
www.sopriswest.com