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ABSTRACT
                This seminar overview presents a summary of widely
accepted findings by researchers on the qualities, behaviors, and
characteristics of effective teachers. As defined in this paper, an
effective teacher is one who can engage students in the learning
processes, minimize disruptive behavior, and produce desired learning
in a large number of students. In the first section, four
generalizations about what teachers do as effective managers of
student learners are discussed. These dimensions of classroom
mangement include implementing a workable set of rules, structuring
and monitoring activities to minimize disruptions, quick and
consistent response to misbehavior, and responding to inappropriate
behavior without denigrating the student involved. The second section
presents eight dimensions of effective teaching, or management of
student learning, including: (1) "knowing" students; (2) assigning
appropriate tasks; (3) orienting students; (4) monitoring students;
(5) relating teaching and testing; (6) involving students in
learning; (7) providing continuity; and (8) correcting errors and
misunderstandings. In the final section, a discussion is offered on
the interrelationships among these dimensions and the complexity of
implementing effective teacher behaviors. (JD)

Title I Dissemination and Program Improvement

East Coast Seminar

SESSION I: OVERVIEW PRESENTATION

Teachers, Teaching and Educational Effectiveness

by

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In 1972, Benjamin S. Bloom published an article entitled "Innocence in Education." The major thesis of the article was that educators need to become more aware of what they know and don't know about educating children in our schools. Bloom contended that, as educators, we have been "<u>innocents in education</u> because we have not put our own house in order." We need to be much clearer about what we do and do not know so that we don't continually confuse the two. If I could have one wish for education during the next decade, it would be the systematic ordering of our basic knowledge in such a way that what is known and true can be acted on, while what is super-stitution, fad, and myth can be recognized as such as used only when there is nothing else to support us in our frustration and despair" (p. 333).

One of the areas in which Bloom saw our innocence being threatened at that time was that of teachers and teaching. Bloom contended that the evidence suggested that teaching, rather than teachers, is the key to effective student learning. In Bloom's words, "it is not what teachers are <u>like</u> but what they <u>do</u> in interacting with their students in the classroom that determines what students learn and how they feel about the learning and about themselves" (p. 339). He continued "as the role of teaching becomes more central than the characteristics of the teacher, we are likely to become clearer as to the kinds of preservice and inservice teacher training that can improve teaching" (p. 339).

The majority of the classroom research over the past decade has supported Bloom's contention. The purpose of this paper is to summarize the major

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findings of that research in such a way that the reader loses even more of
his or her innocence concerning the importance of teaching in fostering
learning on the part ot students.

## What Do We Mean When We Say That Teachers Are Effective?

Before one can gain          rstanding of the research findings, one mus.
first deal with the issu      :acher effectiveness.  Bloom's contention that
it is what teachers do, not       they are, that makes them effective skirts
the issue of effectiveness.       jimply, the question is "what do we mean
when we say that teachers are eii :ctive?"  The answer to the question depends
almost totally on the perspect.ve the respondent takes.

From a fairly long term pf rspective, teachers are effective when they
produce the desired learning uutcomes in their students.  That is, effective
teachers consistently facilitat2 greater learning or achievement on the part
of their students.  From a somewhat shorter-term perspective, however,
teachers are effective when they "produce high levels of student on-task
behaviors and minimize behaviors that disrupt normal school activities"
(Lasley, 1981, p. 14).

While the differences in these answers parallel the oft made distinction
between teaching and classroom management, similarities in the answers do
exist.  There is growing evidence to suggest that teachers who are effective
in the short term (i.e., produce on-task behaviors while minimizing disruptive
behaviors) also are effective in the long term (i.e., produce high levels
of learning and achievement).  In fact, with the public clamoring simultane-
ously for higher achievement (often in the guise of "minimum competence")
and better discipline, both aspects of effectiveness clearly are worth pursuing.

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As used in this paper, then, an effective teacher is one who can engage students in the learning process, minimize disruptive behaviors, and, ultimately, produce desired learning in a large number of students in his or her classroom. To state the point somewhat differently, an effective teacher is one who simultaneously can effectively manage _learning_ and _learners_. The information presented in this paper is organized into the following major sections: effective management of learners, effective management of learning, and the complexity of doing what is known.

## Effective Management of Learners

Quite recently, Lasley (1981) summarized the bulk of the research on classroom management. Based on this research Lasley was able to identify four generalizations which he presented as things teachers do as effective managers of learners. Using a term that will be employed throughout this paper, Lasley identified important _dimensions_ of effective classroom management.

1. Effective teachers develop and implement a workable set of class-room rules. A workable set of rules is one that meets three criteria. These rules must be (a) stated so that those effected by the rules know how to behave, (b) reasonable and necessary, and (c) enforceable. If possible, the rules should be enforced by means of naturally occurring consequences of the rule violations, rather than contrived punishments. In contrast with effective teachers, ineffective teachers either do not have rules, do not communicate them clearly, or do not enforce them.

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2. **Effective teachers structure and monitor classroom activities so as to minimize disruptive behaviors.** This generalization represents a preventive approach to classroom management. If the classroom tasks and activities are appropriate for the learners and if the engagement in those tasks and activities is monitored by the teacher, disruptive behaviors are less likely to occur. Or, to put it somewhat differently, if students are not involved in learning, they will be involved in something else. That "something else" quite frequently is some type of disruptive behavior. More will be said about this generalization later in the paper.

3. **Effective teachers develop definitions of inappropriate behaviors which they respond to quickly and consistently.** This generalization actually is composed of two separate dimensions: recognizing inappropriate behavior and doing something about it. In order to define inappropriate behaviors teachers must take into consideration three aspects of the behavior (a) the severity of the behavior itself, (b) his or her perception of the student exhibiting the behavior, and (c) the timing of the behavior. As a consequence defining inappropriate behavior is no easy task. Although fighting is more severe than whispering, some teachers respond only to fighting, others to both.

The behaviors of some students may be more inappropriate than those exhibited by others. Quite likely, this fact has something to do with the intent or inferred intent of the behavior on the part of the student. The difference in the way in which teachers respond to different students is

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perceived by many students as an indication of teacher inconsistency. Finally, the same behavior exhibited at different times may be acceptable or unacceptable. Leaving ones seat during seatwork may be acceptable while leaving ones seat during a discussion may not be. Although the identification of what constitutes inappropriate behaviors is not an easy task, effective teachers have accomplished this task.

The second dimension of this generalization is as important as the first. The need to respond quickly stems from the psychological principal of contiguity. Put simply, the students must see the relationship or connection between their behavior and the teacher's response. The more quickly the teacher responds, the more likely it is that the connection will be made in the student's mind.

The need for consistency in response is often overlooked but extremely important. Students should learn that the same teacher response always follows the same misbehavior. If the response is consistent, students begin to predict what will happen to them when they exhibit that behavior in the future. Once such predictions are made students become increasingly responsible for their own behavior. As a consequence students become less likely to "test" the teacher.

4. Effective teachers respond to inappropriate behavior without denigrating the student exhibiting the behavior. When disciplining students, effective teachers focus on what the student did rather than what the student is. They tend to respond to student misbehavior privately rather than publicly. This allows both the teacher and student to "save face." Also,

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effective teachers initiate contracts of a when-then variety (e.g., when
you do that, then this will happen) in order to involve the student in his
or her own behavior change. Once again, the "when-then" approach places
the responsibility for appropriate or inappropriate behavior clearly on the
students.

Quite interestingly, the four generalizations offered by Lasley are
quite consistent with two of seven general approaches to classroom management
identified by Weber (1977) in his analysis of general approaches to classroom
management. More importantly, however, the two general approaches with
which they are similar are those Weber also found to be the most effective in
terms of maximizing time-on-task and minimizing disruptive behavior. These
two general approaches can be summarized as follows.

The group process approach. The major assumption underlying this
approach to classroom management is that schooling takes place within a
group context. The central task of the teacher is to establish and maintain
an effective, productive classroom group. The establishment and maintenance
of a productive classroom group is fostered by providing (a) clear expectations,
(b) shared leadership, (c) high attraction, (d) productive group norms,
(3) open communication, and (f) high cohesiveness.

The socioemotional climate approach. The major assumption of this
approach is that effective management is largely a function of positive
teacher-student and student-student relationships. The central task of
the teacher then is to promote positive teacher-student and student-student
relationships. Teachers are encouraged to talk to the situation and not
the character of personality of the student. Students should be taught to

evaluate their own behavior. Logical consequences rather than punishment is used in dealing with misbehavior. Personal involvement of teachers with students is seen as being crucial to successful classroom management.

As can be seen, the first two of Lasley's generalizations are consistent with the group process approach. The last two generalizations are quite consistent with the socioemotional climate approach. And, as previously stated, these two approaches and four generalizations have been found in several studies to be positively related with high levels of time-on-task and low levels of disruptive behavior.

## Effective Management of Learning

During the past decade a number of researchers have directed their attention toward identifying aspects of teaching which are related to high levels of learning on the part of the students. The names of many of these researchers -- Brophy, Evertson, Good, Medley, Rosenshine, Stallings, and Soar -- are familiar to an ever-increasing number of educators. Despite their different philosophical orientations and, oftentimes different research techniques and methods, a consistency of findings has begun to emerge. Specifically, eight dimensions of effective teaching or management of student learning have emerged. These eight dimensions and a brief description of each are listed below.

1. Effective teachers "know their students". They know the extent to which their students possess the knowledge and skills necessary to learn the new content or objectives. They also know the ways in which their students learn best.

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The need to be attentive to the knowledge and skills students bring
to the classroom has been documented by Bloom (1976). The research findings
summarized by Bloom clearly indicate that the possession of specific knowledge
and skills that are directly related to the to-be-acquired knowledge and skill
are much more highly related to the acquisition of the new knowledge and
skills than are more general abilities such as intelligence, reading
comprehension, or mathematical aptitude. That is, if all students possessed
the necessary knowledge and skills related to new knowledge and skill, the
importance of differences in general abilities and aptitudes would be greatly
reduced.

More recent research has emphasized the need for the teachers to be
attentive to the ways in which students learn. Differences in the ways in
which students actually learn or prefer to learn have been documented and
have been termed "learning styles." While a single term applies to these
differences, they have been viewed differently by different educators. Letteri
(1980), for example, associated learning styles with the way in which students
attend to and process information. Letteri contends that there are seven
dimensions on which students can be differentiated. Among these dimensions
are analytical-global, complexity-simplicity, and reflectiveness-impulsivity.
Letteri's research suggests that high, average, and low achieving students
can be differentiated on the basis of their cognitive learning styles. For
example, high achieving students tend to be analytical, focused, narrow
categorizers, complex thinkings, reflective, sharpeners, and tolerant of
ambiguity. According to Letteri, these seven dimensions account for over
60 percent of the variability in students' standardized test scores.

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In contrast, Dunn and Dunn (1979) view learning styles quite differently. They contend that there are four broad categories of learning styles. These categories are (1) environmental (such as the way in which students respond to various classroom settings), (2) emotional (such as motivation and responsibility), (3) sociological (such as preferences for learning in groups or alone), and (4) physical (such as the senses students use to take in information or environmental stimulation). Several studies suggest that learning is improved when there is a "match" between the method of instruction and the preferred learning styles of the students.

Whether the focus is on what students bring to the learning situation or how they learn the evidence is clear that effective teachers do "know their students." Such knowledge is invaluable to teachers if they are to plan and implement effective instruction.

2. <u>Effective teachers assign appropriate tasks to their students.</u> Once they have gathered information from their students, effective teachers act on this knowledge. One form of such action is the assignment of appropriate learning tasks. According to Doyle (1979), a task is composed of a goal to be attained and a set of activities related to the attainment of that goal. Two aspects of this effectiveness dimension are important to highlight. First, effective teachers are cognizant of the goal-activity relationship. They seem to know the type of activities that increase the likelihood of task attainment. They refrain from assigning activities whose relationship to goal attainment is questionable. They know students view these activities as "busy work."

Second, the tasks are assigned so as to be of appropriate difficulty

for the students. They are neither too difficult nor too easy. If an error

is made in the assignment of tasks, however, the error should be on the

easy side so that a high success rate can be ensured. Thus, effective

teachers are able to assign tasks appropriate to the present level of

functioning of their students and at the same time are related to future

tasks demanded by the curriculum.

When faced with a heterogeneous class, effective teachers realize that

some type of sorting of students within the class is necessary if assigned

tasks are to be appropriate for the vast majority of the students. If

effective teachers are unsure of the appropriateness of a given task for the

students they tend to review relevant prior learning and necessary prerequisites

to ensure some degree of task appropriateness.

3. Effective teachers orient their students. In common parlance

effective teachers inform their students of the "rules of the game." As

has been indicated previously part of this orientation has to do with class-

room rules. From a management of learning perspective, however, the meaning

of orientation takes on a somewhat different perspective. Effective teachers

inform their students as to what they are to learn, how they are to learn it,

how long they will have to learn it, and how they are to demonstrate they have

learned. They are more likely to begin their lesson with "Here's what you

are going to learn today" than "Here's what we're going to do today." They

spend some time introducing the lesson to the learners, often indicating the

importance of the new content or objectives. They make clear expectations

they have for the students and encourage students to live up to those expectations.

4. <u>Effective teachers monitor their students</u>. They may watch the facial expression of a pre-selected subgroup of students to check their understanding of what is being presented. They ask questions in class. They call on specific students in a class or group, making sure everyone is checked and receives feedback on the correctness of their answers.

During seatwork effective teachers circulate among the students checking their work and answering questions. They use short tests fairly frequently to assess student mastery of the content and objectives. They inform students of the adequacy of their performance.

5. <u>Effective teachers relate teaching and testing</u>. Effective teachers try to ensure that there is sufficient overlap between the content or objectives taught and the content and objectives tested. They don't teach, then test to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching or the students' learning. Rather, they use the results of tests to make instructional and learning decisions. If a large number of students do poorly on the test, they reteach the content or objectives to the whole class. If only a few students perform poorly they find ways of working with these students to ensure their mastery of important content or objectives.

6. <u>Effective teachers promote student involvement or engagement in the learning process</u>. Effective teachers seem to know that its what their <u>students do</u> that is learned not what they do. They focus their students' attention on the task. They gain and maintain student's attention at the beginning of the lesson. They realize that most things worth learning take time. They spend as much time as possible to ensure the majority of students learn.

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Effective teachers wait for students to respond to questions, rather than too quickly addressing the questions to other students or providing the answers themselves. They provide opportunities for successful practice of the newly acquired learning. They do not allow students to independently practice incomplete learning. They encourage students to "think about" the new learning. In mathematics, for example, they emphasize mental computation.

7. <u>Effective teachers provide continuity for their students.</u> Effective teachers review relevant, prior learning before embarking on the transmission of new learning. They refer the new material back to earlier curriculum materials.

In addition to transitions between old and new learning, effective teachers also are concerned for the transitions between activities that occur within a class period or lesson. They provide what good high school and college coaches call "momentum." They keep things going. They indicate that lessons have beginnings, middles, and ends. They are less likely to digress from the topic at hand; to "go off on tangents."

8. <u>Effective teachers correct identified student errors and misunderstandings.</u> Effective teachers realize that errors and misunderstandings tend to accumulate and interfere with future learning. They understand the importance of correcting these errors and misunderstandings. They give students second chances to correct their answers to classroom questions. They give clues to the students. They teach students how to figure out the answers they could not derive on their own. They check homework, when assigned, and have students correct the errors identified on the homework.

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They may teach the more able students, dismiss them, and help those who need extra help. They may use students who have already mastered the content or objectives to serve as models or tutors to those who haven't.

## The Complexities of Doing What We Know

If one examines the information presented in the previous two sections, one is struck with the apparent simplicity of what we now know about effective management of learners and learning. One may be led to ask, if it's all that simple, that "common-sense," why aren't we doing it. Unfortunately, putting into practice what we know is quite complex. At least three reasons can be offered for this complexity: 1) the interrelationships among the effectiveness dimensions, 2) the difficulty doing it, and 3) the beliefs of teachers concerning whether they should do it. Let us address each of these reasons briefly.

### The Interrelationships Among the Dimensions

The dimensions of teacher effectiveness are not independent of one another. Rather, these dimensions are interrelated. As a consequence, each dimension potentially, or actually, influences other dimensions within the entire effectiveness system. Two examples may help to illustrate this point.

One of Lasley's generalizations (see page 4) suggests that effective teachers structure and monitor classroom activities so as to minimize the likelihood that disruptive behaviors will occur. This generalization clearly links the management of learning with the management of learners. If teachers are effective in managing learning than the need for managing

learners will likely be reduced. Conversely, if teachers are ineffective managers of learning, then a bulk of their time and effort likely will be spent managing learners. Thus, effective management of learners and learning are interrelated. As a consequence, what should be done to best manage learners may well depend on what is being done managing learning.

A second example comes from the general function of management of learning. The research indicates that effective teachers (1) assign appropriate tasks to their students, and (2) monitor their students' learning. In a classroom in which students differ widely in their levels or types of abilities or prior achievements, one may choose to accomplish simultaneously these two tasks by assigning different tasks to different subgroups within the class. Either instructional grouping or completely individualized instruction may be used to accomplish this goal. However, we now know (and probably have suspected for quite some time) that the greater the number of groups in a classroom the more difficult it is for the teacher to effectively monitor the students' learning. Conversely, using a whole class approach to instruction makes monitoring considerably easier but decreases the likelihood that the assigned task will be appropriate for a large proportion of the students. Once again, the interrelationship among the effectiveness dimensions becomes evident.

The Difficulty of Doing

A second reason for the complexity of doing what we know stems from the sheer difficulty of actually doing it. Some educators may feel that it simply takes to much time and effort to do. Again, a few examples may suffice to illustrate this point. Within the context of managing learners, responding

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consistently to inappropriate behavior is difficult. As human beings, consistency is not one of our strong points. Teachers are "up" one day; "down" the next. While certain misbehaviors can "slip by" when they are "up;" these same misbehaviors are dealt with severely when they are "down." It is very difficult to respond consistently. Thus, while it makes good sense to do so, acting in consort with what we believe is not easy.

A similar point can be made with respect to the admonition to "know your students." It takes time, patience, keen observation, and appropriate use of test results to get to know students. Many teachers already feel that there already is too much testing in education. Thus, the call for additional information through tests (which may not even appear to be related to the curriculum, as in the case of tests of learning styles) may not be greeted enthusiastically.

One of the negative reactions of many teachers to minimum competency or basic skills testing programs, for example, is the amount of record keeping required by such programs. Records of information are necessary if what we know about students is to be passed on from teacher to teacher, or grade level to grade level. Yet record keeping is seen as a burden, rather than a benefit.

One way of knowing students is to ensure that they possess the necessary prerequisites before confronting new learning tasks. These ways of knowing, however, imply a careful sequencing of tasks; an endeavor that takes much time and effort. Thus, while effective teachers do know their students, the knowing process is a difficult one indeed.

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Finally, correcting student errors and misunderstandings takes time.
If we take the time necessary for the correction of these errors and
misunderstandings can we complete what we need to in order to attain the
minimum program required by district or state mandate. Furthermore, wh.
do we do with all of these students in the class who escaped withou
errors and misunderstandings? Do we, in fact, rob Peter to pay Paul? The
are difficult questions indeed.

## Beliefs About What Should Be

A final problem in attempting to practice what we now know is that many
teachers don't believe that what we know should be done. Although a claim that
many teachers don't believe that we shouldn't do what is effective in terms of
student learning may be viewed as incredulous by some, let us consider a few
examples.

We know that effective teachers relate teaching and testing. One aspect
of this dimension is testing what we teach. A skeptic may view this aspect
as teaching what we test, or more skeptically, teaching to test. As such
our skeptic may be philosophically opposed to any attempt to link teaching
with testing. Hence, testing should not be related to teaching.

One must admit that there is a fine line between teaching to the test
and testing what you teach. The distinction must be made in terms of the
use or function of tests. Are tests viewed as indicators of learning or as
determinants of learning? Clearly, the intent of tests is that they are
indicators rather than determinants of learning; the determiners of both
testing and teaching is the curriculum or, more specifically, what we think
to be important for students to learn.

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A similar concern may be voiced about the desirability of orienting

students, that is, informing students of what, how, and to what extent they

are to learn. As one secondary teacher said in response to my statement

that informing students as to what they are to learn increases the likelihood

that they will in fact learn, "Of course students will learn if you tell them

what you want them to learn." Underlying this type of reaction is the belief

that it would be undesirable to inform these students. Or, as another teacher

said to me, "Part of learning is figuring out what is important to learn." My

response was that if this was indeed one part of learning it was, in fact,

one part. And, if it was but one part, then students could be informed of

when then were supposed to "figure out what was important."

Should we really orient students? Or should we let them figure out

the behavior and learning games for themselves? If we keep students informed,

are we guilty of spoon-feeding them? Such questions question the belief that

it is, in fact, a good thing to orient students to the expected or desired

learning. If teachers question whether it is a good thing to inform students,

it simply will not be done though doing so may be effective.

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