Located within the Navajo Nation, Ganado Public Schools are committed to improving educational services through a long-term district restructuring process. This process involves: (1) strategic planning and envisioning sessions that generate concrete details of future schools; (2) reorganization of personnel to support curriculum development and implementation; (3) school-based improvement projects; and (4) the Career Ladder Program. This paper focuses on elements of the restructuring process that promote improvement through collaboration between the central administration and the schools. One element, the Career Ladder Program, is an Arizona state pilot project that compensates teachers based on performance and student outcomes. The Career Ladder Program emphasizes collaboration and collegiality among teachers, improvement of instructional strategies, and development of teacher leadership skills relevant to site-based improvement projects. The Foundations of Learning is a culturally relevant curriculum model based on Navajo beliefs and traditions. The Career Ladder Program is collaborating with curriculum support staff to complete alignment of the Foundations of Learning with culturally relevant assessments and interactive instructional strategies. At Ganado High School, the faculty council manages the budget through a collaborative planning process. (SV)
Presentation by

Susan Stropko, Intermediate School Principal
Victor Benally, High School Principal
Don Jensen, Middle School Principal

Ganado Public Schools
Ganado, Arizona 86505

1992 National Rural Education Association Convention
Traverse City, Michigan
October 12, 1992
Ganado Public Schools serve 1,900 students in grades K-12 in the Navajo Nation in northeastern Arizona. Ninety-eight percent of the students, 35 percent of the professional staff members, and almost all of the noncertificated staff members are Navajo. The district is rural and isolated in a region of low socio-economic conditions.

The primary challenges faced by the schools in providing quality education services are social and economic factors which are correlated with low student achievement, and the limited English proficiency of most of the students.

Major strengths and opportunities are the students' strong Navajo cultural heritage and their strong nonverbal intelligence.

The Governing Board and administration are committed to improving educational services in order to accelerate students' learning and prepare them to succeed in post-secondary activities.

The restructuring process involves several components that are described in the Overview section:

- Strategic Envisioning and Planning
- District Reorganization
- School Improvement Process
- Career Ladder Program

The purposes of this presentation are (a) to provide an overview of the context and main components of the district restructuring process, and (b) to provide more information about three elements within the components that promote improvement through collaboration between central administration and the schools:

- Career Ladder Program
- Foundations of Learning
- High School Collaborative Budget Model
Strategic Envisioning and Planning

The District has engaged in strategic planning for about seven years. In the past year, strategic envisioning was added to the process to help people to envision concrete details of the schools as they will become.

The first envisioning session was completed by the District Planning Team, composed of Board members, administrators, teachers, other staff, students, and parents. Follow-up sessions were completed in some of the schools and with the Career Ladder Program Planning Team. A graphic description of the strategic envisioning and management process is enclosed as The Seven Steps to Growth.

In order to produce the description of the envisioned future schools, small groups created descriptions of what a day in the life of a student would be in five years. The groups pretended that a major broadcast network sent a team of video camera operators and reporters to prepare a feature broadcast of the schools in Ganado that were famous for effective education. The groups produced descriptions of what the reporters would see and hear in the schools when observing students, teachers, administrators, central administration personnel, and parents.

The descriptions of the schools as they will become, as generated by each of the envisioning groups, were very similar. The planning groups designed strategies and activities to move the schools toward the envisioned future schools. Implementation is in progress. Some of the components are (a) reorganization of staff to support curriculum alignment under the Foundations of Learning, (b) school improvement process, and (c) the Career Ladder Program improvement process, including mini-grants.
District Reorganization

The district reorganized to provide personnel time for curriculum development including aligned learning targets, quality classroom assessments, and effective and congruent instructional strategies. The new positions that were created were Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Curriculum Specialist, Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Specialist, Parent Trainer, and an Instructional Resource Teacher in each of the four schools.

The Associate Superintendent position was created to direct school and curriculum support staff efforts toward effective, congruent instruction.

The curriculum support staff is linked to the schools through the Instruction Resource Teachers (IRTs). The IRTs support the principals in their instructional leadership role.

The Curriculum and Assessment Specialists, as well as the Associate Superintendent and the four principals, serve on the Career Ladder Committee. The Career Ladder Program and Curriculum staff collaborate on projects such as Mini-Grants, professional development, and process improvement.

School Improvement Process

The four schools are engaged in school improvement processes under the leadership of the principals and with the support of the Career Ladder Program and the Curriculum support staff. Each of the schools is in a different development phase and has its own variation of improvement process.

For the purposes of this presentation, the High School continuous improvement process is highlighted. Two elements of the High School process that are working well are (a) the Outcome-Based Education pilot project in the Language Arts Department, developed in collaboration with the Career Ladder Program, and (b) the collaborative planning and decision-making process as developed in the school budget planning process. These two elements have in common the preparation of teachers to participate as empowered collaborators in a restructuring process. Both elements were born through central and school administrators' vision and action, and both are strong because once developed, the processes grew to belong to the teachers.
Career Ladder Program

Ganado is one of 14 districts to pilot an Arizona state project to promote district and school restructuring and to test the assumption that teachers will be more effective in producing achievement with their students if they are compensated based on their performance rather than on their education and experience. The pilot became permanent in 1992, and seven additional districts have been approved and funded to develop Career Ladder Programs this year. About $20,000,000 is allocated by the state to Arizona Career Ladder Programs. The programs serve about 25 percent of the students in Arizona. Most of the money goes to teacher compensation, but the expenditure is balanced with investment in professional development.

The overview has described four components of the district and school restructuring process. The following sections will describe in more detail three collaborative processes and projects: Career Ladder Program, Foundations of Learning, and Collaborative School Budget Model.
The Career Ladder Program is planned through a strategic envisioning and planning process, and through the advice of a steering committee on which the majority is Career Ladder teachers. Other committee representatives include the Associate Superintendent, the Curriculum and Assessment Specialists, and the Career Ladder Administrator.

The purpose of the Career Ladder Program is to produce continually improving teacher performance and student achievement. The Program includes outcome-based education in the student achievement and instructional components.

A challenge of the Career Ladder Program was to demonstrate student achievement in the absence of a clear district description of desired student learning. The Foundations of Learning was developed partly in response to the need for clear student learning outcomes.

The Career Ladder Program has supported the school restructuring process by (a) developing collaboration skills with teacher groups, (b) developing improved instructional strategies in the classrooms, (c) developing teachers' skills in outcome-based education and curriculum alignment, (d) developing teachers' leadership skills to enable them to lead the site-based projects for instruction and school improvement, and (e) emphasizing student achievement and student involvement in the instructional process.

Career Ladder Program elements in addition to performance-based compensation include collaborative process, strategic planning and management, developmentally appropriate professional growth opportunities, structure to foster collegiality among teachers, development of teacher leaders, and emphasis on improving teacher performance and student achievement. The student achievement emphasis includes implementation of congruent, effective, and interactive instructional strategies as well as aligned outcomes and assessments.

The Career Ladder Program Student Achievement Component is an outcome-based education model and requires demonstration of appropriate and effective teaching strategies, student outcomes, assessments, and learning results for all students in the population within the Foundations of Learning.

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The teaching performance component emphasizes basic skills and more advanced interactive teaching strategies. A value underlying the teaching performance component is that students should have a say in the planning and decisions within their classroom. Student involvement in collaborative process is a requirement for the more advanced development phases of the Career Ladder Program.

The Program also provides for collaborative work in developing and refining the program, in professional development activities, and in peer coaching and collaboration. In the current year, a Program element under development is evaluation and placement of teachers based on team performance rather than on individual performance.

To counteract the divisive nature of performance-based compensation, the Career Ladder Program collaborates with the Curriculum support staff and the schools to provide professional development opportunities to all teachers. The most successful of these opportunities has been the Mini-Grant Project.

The Mini-Grant Project was developed and coordinated by two teachers who also mentor all participants. The intent was to provide teachers an opportunity to "learn a little and earn a little." Funding for the Project was matched, $10,000 from the Career Ladder Program, and $10,000 from the Curriculum Accelerated Learning Project. The Mini-Grant Project required teachers to participate in short professional development sessions on student outcomes and assessments and teaching higher order thinking. The mentoring process focused on helping teachers to teach more effectively.

Thirty-four teachers participated in Mini-Grants in 1991-92, equally divided between Career Ladder participants and teachers who do not participate in the Career Ladder. The products of the Mini-Grant Project were student and teacher learning and displays of student and teacher work. The Project evaluations revealed satisfaction with the process and outcomes, and a recommendation to continue the Project in 1992-93.
Overview

The Foundations of Learning has been central to district planning and development since it was created several years ago as a description of the desired learning for Ganado students. Definition of outcomes was a necessary first step to implementing Outcome-Based Education and to accountability for student achievement within the Career Ladder Program.

The Career Ladder Program is currently working in collaboration with the Curriculum support staff to complete alignment of the Foundations of Learning with (a) culturally-relevant assessments, and (b) interactive instructional strategies.

The Foundations of Learning is a culturally-relevant curriculum model that was developed through a broadly based process. During the 1989-90 school year, a committee of teachers, community members, students, counselors, and administrators worked together to develop the Foundations of Learning through several revisions until the present version was adopted by the Governing Board.

A copy is enclosed of the Foundations of Learning graphic. The graphic model is supported by several pages of learning outcomes, available upon request.

The following is a very brief description of the beliefs within the Foundations of Learning. Learned people of the Navajo could expand for volumes on the beliefs included in this short summary, and care is recommended to avoid thinking that understanding is thorough when it is instead introductory.

The Navajo people (Dine) believe in four sacred mountains that surround us in the Navajo Nation. Each direction represents an integral aspect of learning and growing. The rainbow
(naa' tiis'liid) represents the path of education and of life. The Navajos also believe the rainbow represents sovereignty. The rainbow surrounds us and it is the boundary of the Navajo Nation. The colors of the rainbow represent the logs of a hogan. The four mountains also represent the four directions inside a hogan. When blessing a hogan the four directions are blessed because the four directions create a forked design.

The hogan opens to the east. The opening of the rainbow also is to the east.

The sacred mountain to the east is Sisnajini (Blanca Peak in Colorado), represented by the color white and the stone white shell. East represents dawn and beginning. The east represents critical thinking because everything begins with thought. For example, a project begins with ideas, thoughts, and plans. Critical thinking is an important aspect of new ideas and for creating a beginning.

The sacred mountain to the south is Tsoodzil (Mt. Taylor in New Mexico), represented by the color turquoise and the stone turquoise. South represents doing, livelihood, and career. After thought and planning for any project, the next step is implementation, as one would do all that is needed to create a livelihood and career. The south is the direction of getting things done. Students think about themselves and what steps are necessary to prepare themselves. With guidance, students explore the options that are open to them. They set goals and move toward meeting them.

The sacred mountain to the west is Dóókóóósliid (San Francisco Peaks in Arizona), represented by the color yellow and the stone abalone shell. As we develop, we interact with others in society (bee'íiná) and practice what we learn in our schools, lives, and careers. An important aspect of the teachings of the west is gaining and using experience in life and in interaction and cooperation with other cultures. For example, when one achieves a degree or a place in society, it is important to use ones experiences and accomplishments to help others.

The sacred mountain to the north is Dibé Ntsaa (Mt. Hesperus or La Plata Mountains in Colorado), represented by the color black and the stone obsidian. As a day is done, darkness falls upon us. Our life from infancy comes to old age in the evening of life. A person who is in their older years commands respect and reverence. They have attained knowledge and wisdom in their lives and for this they are respected.

Communication is part of the Navajo beliefs. When a hogan is blessed, the middle of the hogan represented by the smoke hole is
a gathering area where leaders meet. Communication is a necessary part of growing, and without communication all four directions cannot exist.

The Navajo teachings and beliefs indicate that everything travels in a circle: we return to where we began. Wise people give the example that when a person is born, they must have continual and constant care; when a person is reaching the end of the life, the same constant care is also necessary for them.

The Navajo beliefs are the basis of the Foundations of Learning. The most important aspect of the Foundations of Learning is to nurture the development of whole children who are aware of their existence and self-worth, where they came from, and their relationship with others in the clan system and the world. If children know their value and their part in society and the natural world, they are in harmony with everything around them.
Process Implications

There are a number of important implications for how collaboration, such as used in our budget model, might act as a catalyst or change agent for schools.

1. Permits and encourages participatory management and shared decision-making.

2. Creates a pool of experienced and skilled individuals capable of participating, and possibly leading, in other restructuring efforts within a school.

3. Provides for a shared information system, which means that all documentation is available to all staff in order to make more informed decisions. In addition, there are avenues for everyone to contribute and be heard during discussions.

4. Democratic form of management, applicable and transferrable to other areas of programming.

Overview

The administration believes that all persons affected by decisions should have input into the decision-making process. Collaboration among school staff is vital to restructuring and the school improvement. It is a learned process and has been taught through two projects in the High School. Through one restructuring project, the Ganado High School staff is now managing the budget through a collaborative planning process. In another project the Language Arts Department is collaborating to fully implement Outcome-Based Education (OBE). The OBE pilot is intended to implement the Foundations of Learning, and the participants primarily have been Career Ladder Teachers.
Alternative examples to the hierarchial administrative model were examined. The goal was to improve the quality of decisions through staff involvement. A collaborative model was developed through discussions of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different management styles. Basically, we felt that a team approach provides everyone with opportunities for growth. Therefore, the model had to provide opportunities for expressing ideas, include ways in which to share power, identify an acceptable level of agreement for group decision-making, and create an information system.

Meetings began during the second semester in 1992, and continued until the end of the school year. The faculty council met weekly. An agenda was developed for each meeting and the Minutes were distributed to the entire staff. Reports were given at regular staff meetings.

Decisions were made by consensus, which meant that all members must approve a recommendation before it passed. A single dissention was cause for further discussion, clarification, and a another vote or a tabling of the issue. This took much work to resolve disagreements, but when an agreement was made it is was supported.

Each member of the Budget Council had a single vote, including the administrative representative. There was no administrative override of group decisions. The assistant principal acted as group facilitator, and did not vote.

The structure initially provided for staff development training in group processes, and in school and district budget procedures. Working agreements, procedures for justification and needs prioritization, identification of roles and responsibilities, and timetables were developed. Budget process outcomes were also created to provide direction to the process. Another element was the consideration of long range planning, and considering school needs first, then departmental needs and individual needs.

The entire faculty were instructed in how to prepare their budgetary request packets. The procedures were used to ensure consistency in presentations and to make it easier to process approved requests. Each staff member prepared requests for the individual needs of their program. Every department reviewed individual teacher requests and prepared a departmental package. A department representative made the presentation to the budget council.
Process

I. GROUND RULES

Develop working agreements, consensus building, establish procedures for justifications and prioritizing needs, identify roles and responsibilities.

II. COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Meeting North Central Association standards, state and federal law, chemical storage and disposal, safety, etc.

III. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A. N.C.A. recommendations for the building and problems associated with grounds keeping.

B. Support services, i.e., photocopy machines and the Prac Tech (school intercom system)

C. Department concerns. Identify N.C.A. recommendations regarding program improvement.

IV. DEPARTMENT NEEDS

A. Presentations by each department regarding all requests for the 1992-93 school year.

B. Prioritization of each department requisitions and a total cost of the package. Presented to staff complete without adjustments made at this time.

V. BUDGET ALLOCATION PROCESS

A. Recommend withholding ten (10%) percent of school budget for unknown expenses during the year. Any funds not accessed by March 1, 1993 will be reallocated by the Faculty Council.

B. Review of proposed budget allocations to determine expenditures against available funds.
VI. BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

A. Final review and approval of the 1992-93 requisitions.

B. Input into AS/400 system.

C. Purchase Orders sent to vendor after July 1, 1992.

VII. THREE-YEAR BUDGET PLAN

A. Develop a long range plan to address school and department needs using a rotational system, based upon established priorities.

B. Must be developed in conjunction with the school improvement plan. This plan can be roughed out, through completion of the final plan which will not be required until December 1, 1992.

Representation

I. FACULTY COUNCIL

A. Facilitator: Don Jensen

B. Members:
   Victor Benally, Administration
   Mike Waters, Science
   Mike Russell, Vocational
   Mark Reynolds, Physical Education
   Mary Ann Stone, Language Arts
   Skip Keith, Social Studies
   Linda Wyatt, Math
   Merlin Yazzie, Fine Arts
   Rachel Reynolds, Special Education
   Judy Soder, Counseling
   Arlene Johnston, Library Science
   Joan Begay, Non-voting Members
   C.J. Goin, Non-voting Members
II. WORKING AGREEMENTS

A. All decisions or actions taken by the group will be made by Consensus, which is one hundred percent agreement. This does not mean that everyone is completely satisfied, but the decision is reasonable and fair.

B. Faculty Council business may be conducted when minimum of eight of eleven voting members are present.

C. The meetings will be open to anyone interested in the process. Observers may not participate in discussions. Representation for staff is provided through their faculty council representatives.

D. When a designated faculty council member is absent, a Proxy may attend in their place and present information, discuss issues, but may not vote in their place. Developing group dynamics is an involved process and individuals not completely committed to the process may interfere, rather than help, in the consensus building process.

E. Meetings will be held between 3:45pm and 5:00pm, on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays, unless otherwise agreed upon.

III. BUDGET PROCESS OUTCOMES

A. The high school budget will be developed and allocated fairly through collaborative effort by the end of May 1992.

B. Department requisitions will be submitted, reviewed, approved or denied, prepared and input into the AS/400 system, and ordered after July 1, 1992.

C. A three-year Budget Priority Plan will be developed, based upon the School Improvement Plan by December 1992.

D. Develop and present a proposal to the District based upon the Ganado High School Budget Model.

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‘Other working agreements may be made as process continues.'
IV. JUSTIFICATION SYSTEM

A. Mandatory Obligations

1. Maintenance agreements.
2. Required class materials and office supplies.
3. Safety equipment and class environment safety.
4. N.C.A. requirements.

B. Directly Benefits Students

1. Materials that encourage diversity in providing students educational experiences.
2. Hands-on experiences and materials.
3. Special student activities.
4. Outside/co-curricular experiences for student throughout the year.
5. Materials or experience that influence student achievement.
6. At-risk programming and services.
7. The greatest good for the greatest number.
8. Student incentives.

C. Staff and School

1. Staff in-services.
2. Individual professional development.
3. Compensation for extra-duty.
4. Total staff recommendations.
5. N.C.A. recommendations.
Staff Education Procedures

The following procedures need to be followed to ensure consistency in presentations and make it easier to process approved requests. Be aware that staff members who do not turn in requisitions on time might not have their needs considered:

1. Requisitions are to be prepared by each staff member and will be presented at the Faculty Council Budget Committee meeting by their department representative.

2. It is recommended that each department meet about their needs and prioritize each staff members orders, as well as discuss how best to present their department requests.

3. Each teacher is to attach a cover letter about their requisitions. The letter needs to include what they want, why they want it, and what items have the highest priority for them.

4. Line item summary of requisitions. Should include vendor, general items ordered, and total costs:

   1. Addison-Wesley Publ....Textbooks...............$1,500.00
   2. PermaBound.................Dictionaries.................500.00
   3. Sirs, Inc...............Teacher Aides...............45.00
   4. Pinetop Offc. Prdcts...Typewriter..................500.00

   TOTAL $2,545.00

5. Requisitions are to be neatly typed or printed. Include vendor, items to be ordered, stock numbers, and include shipping and taxes. The order will be coded by the department representative, with assistance from Mr. Jensen.
Restructuring in the Ganado Public Schools comes from the actions of committed people with common vision and energy. We have found that structure and process develop once the right combination of committed people is in motion. Within our system, we look for energy and initiative, and that is where we give attention to focusing development efforts. Where we do not find energy and initiative, we commit time to introducing information to people so that they may see other options for serving students. Where we find interest in improvement, we provide incentives for teachers to learn a little and earn a little. These incentives include the Career Ladder Program, Mini-Grants, paid tuition for graduate courses, and conferences to provide awareness about elements of the change process, such as OBE.

Through the collaborative efforts of many fine, committed teachers, administrators, support staff, and students, the Ganado Public Schools are improving the educational process so that the students will have a fair chance to succeed in post-secondary activities.

Credit is given to the district leaders for creating the environment in which growth is possible:

Albert A. Yazzie, Superintendent
Phillip Bluehouse, Associate Superintendent

Ambrose Shepherd, Governing Board President
Caleb Roanhorse, Governing Board Clerk
Phillip Moore, Governing Board Member
Edward Cadman, Governing Board Member
Homer Bluehouse, Governing Board Member

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Enclosures:

- Foundations of Learning graphic (one page)
- Career Ladder Program Model (one page)
- Seven Steps to Growth (one page)

For information or copies of other documents, contact:

Susan Stropko
Principal and CLP Administrator
Ganado Public Schools
Ganado, AZ 86505

602-755-3436
GANADO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 20

FOUNDATIONS OF LEARNING
# Ganado Career Ladder Program
## 1992-93 Phase Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisites</th>
<th>Phase One</th>
<th>Phase Two</th>
<th>Phase Three</th>
<th>Phase Four</th>
<th>Mini-Grant</th>
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<td>Teaching more than half-time</td>
<td>• Instructional Skills</td>
<td>• Instructional Skills</td>
<td>• Instructional Skills</td>
<td>• Instructional Skills</td>
<td>Application</td>
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<td>Satisfactory professional responsibilities evaluation</td>
<td>• Exploratory Student Outcomes Plan and Results</td>
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<td>• Exploratory Student Outcomes Plan and Results</td>
<td>• Exploratory Student Outcomes Plan</td>
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<td>No remediation plan or intent to dismiss in effect</td>
<td>• 4 observations, 2 unannounced</td>
<td>• 4 or 8 observations</td>
<td>• 4 or 8 observations</td>
<td>• 4 or 8 observations</td>
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<td>• 2 observations</td>
<td>• 2 2-week cycles with one evaluator</td>
<td>• 2 2-week cycles with one evaluator</td>
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<td>• Participation in Inservice</td>
<td>• Exploratory Student Outcomes Plan and Results</td>
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<td>Phase Three</td>
<td>• not evaluated</td>
<td>• Unit Plan and Results rated on Student Outcomes Rubrics</td>
<td>• Minimum one unit and two weeks</td>
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<td>Phase Four</td>
<td>• district process</td>
<td>• Minimal one unit and two weeks</td>
<td>• Minimum one semester or trimester</td>
<td>• Individual or Cooperative</td>
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<td>Mini-Grant</td>
<td>• work with peer coach</td>
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<td>• Advanced Study Team</td>
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<td>Required Mini-Grant</td>
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<td>10% Students Outcomes Plan</td>
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<td>• Professional Growth Plan/Results</td>
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**NOTES:**
- Best Copy Available
- Approved by the Governing Board August 11, 1992

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**Phase One**
- Teaching more than half-time
- Satisfactory professional responsibilities evaluation

**Phase Two**
- Teaching more than half-time
- Satisfactory professional responsibilities evaluation
- No remediation plan or intent to dismiss in effect

**Phase Three**
- Teaching more than half-time
- Satisfactory professional responsibilities evaluation
- Prior placement Phase 3
- Prior evaluator service
- No remediation plan or intent to dismiss in effect

**Phase Four**
- Teaching more than half-time
- Satisfactory professional responsibilities evaluation
- Prior placement Phase 3
- Prior evaluator service
- No remediation plan or intent to dismiss in effect

**Mini-Grant**
- Application
- CLP participation is required
- Project requirements

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**Focus**
- Instructional Skills
- Exploratory Student Outcomes

**Instructional Skills**
- 2 observations
- 2 1-week cycles with one evaluator

**Student Outcomes Process**
- Participation in Inservice

**Student Outcomes Results**
- not evaluated
- Unit Plan and Results rated on Student Outcomes Rubrics

**Parent Involvement**
- district process
- participate in Inservice on conferencing with parents

**Peer Coaching**
- work with peer coach

**Professional Responsibilities**
- Classroom
- School Leadership
- Consultant

**Professional Development**
- Orientation
- Instructional Skills
- Student Outcomes
- Study Team
- ESL Courses Recommended

**Placement Factors**
- Professional Development required
- 100% Instructional Skills
- 75% Instructional Skills
- 10% Students Outcomes Plan
- 15% Student Outcomes Results
- 75% Student Outcomes Results
- 25% Student Outcomes Results
- 15% Professional Responsibilities

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Seven Steps to Growth

1. VISION

2. STAKEHOLDERS

3. Scanning the Community

4. DISTRICT

5. STRATEGIES

6. OBSTACLES

7. PLANNING

Credit: Suzanne Bailey
Bailey and Associates
Vacaville, CA 95688

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Elaine Vann