

EMPLOYMENT

- E1 - Child care
- E2 - Employment agencies
- E3 - Help wanted
- E4 - Resumes
- E5 - Sales help wanted
- E6 - Trade schools
- E6A - Employment Aids
- E7 - Work wanted

Does not appear today

Child Care Providers

VIEWER SCHOOL DISTRICT
Russ's on Plainfield, Full time
Call: 334-4444

THE MORNING NEWS

LONG TERM - Temporary assignments available. Duties include screening calls, typing letters, memos and filing. Good hourly rate and incentive bonus program. Ask about our cash referral bonus.

CALL US!

PERSONNEL SERVICES
2424 Burton SE
957-3061

DELIVERY AND MAINTENANCE POSITION AVAILABLE - In our service department. Requires good driving record and excellent physical condition. We offer company benefits, 401k and company benefits. Call for information, Kent Culligan, Inc.

DELIVERY - Early morning delivery agents, 5 day delivery of USA excellent earnings. Call 1-800-333-3333. Ask for Mr. Wings.

DELIVERY COUNTER PERSON - Retail store. Part time. Some experience required. Apply at 1724 S. W. 9-3pm

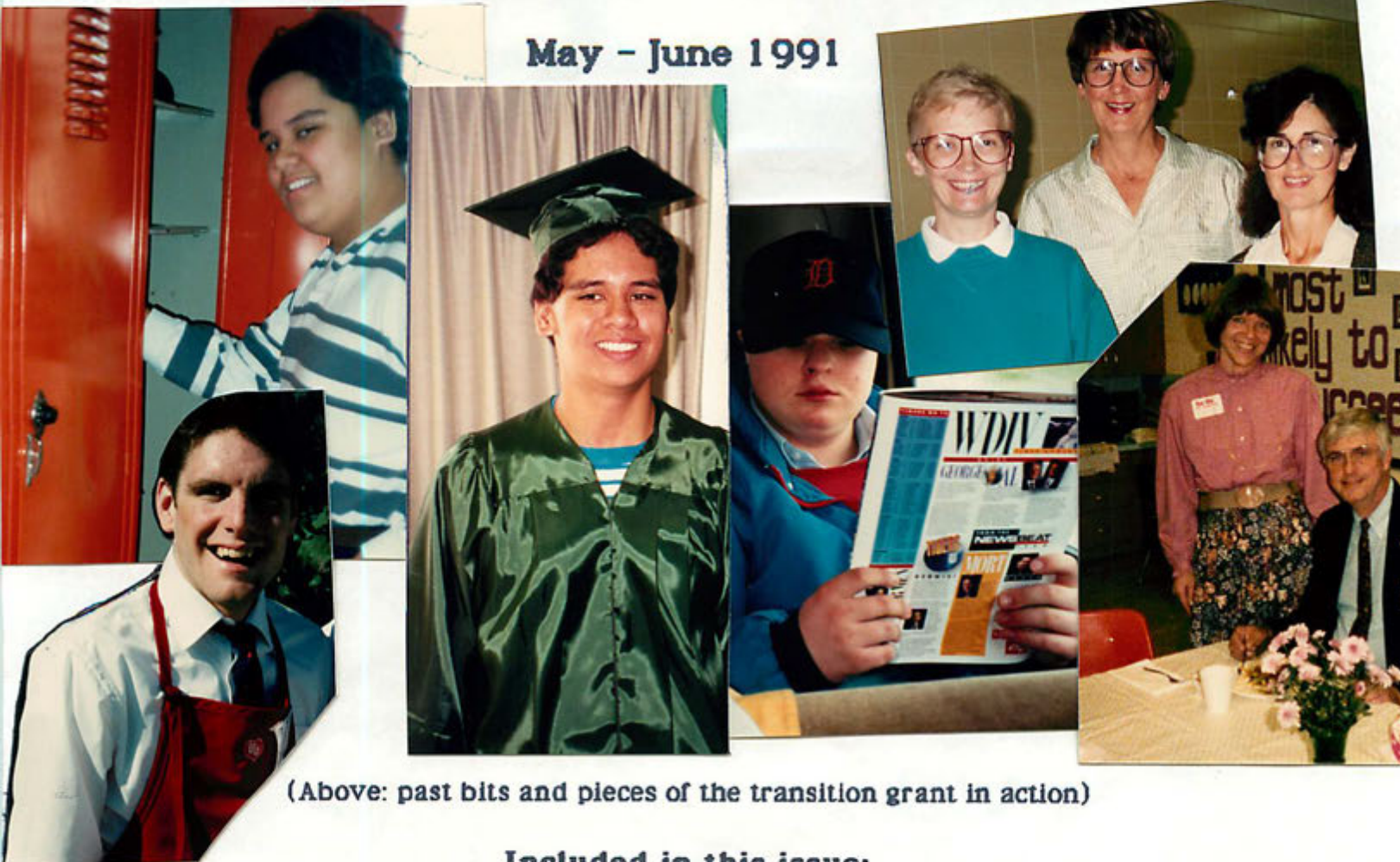
DELIVERY/SALES - Part time. Ballou and Gift Shop. Have good driving record. 1811 Plainfield NE.

DENTAL ASSISTANT - Southeast Orthodontic office. Someone to work in a team oriented setting. Send resume to: 2420 Burton, Grand Rapids MI 49506.

DENTAL ASSISTANT - Circulating in Grandville. Flexible hours. Please call or send resume to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3181 Prairie SW, Grandville

Named after that part of the day which provides the greatest opportunity, **THE MORNING NEWS** reports activities of the transition grant project. This publication is made possible by a grant from the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, contract #90415.
Life Skills Institute, Jenison Public Schools, 8375 20th, Jenison, MI 49428

May - June 1991



(Above: past bits and pieces of the transition grant in action)

Included in this issue:
Confessions of a Reluctant Consultant
Excerpts from THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM manual
A newsletter reaches it's goal: the last MORNING NEWS

Confessions of a Reluctant Consultant

by
Carol Gray

At our house, we always seem to have the best conversations at dinner. The other evening was no exception when after a lengthy discussion of careers, including my own, my children concluded it was time I made a change. I should go into teaching.

Having believed I am a teacher for quite some time, their observation took me by surprise...because it held some truth. Until that moment, "consultant" had just been how I signed my name. Suddenly I realized that by most definitions, I was no longer a teacher. That evening at dinner, I felt like I had just stepped off an airplane, looked around, and finally grasped what "buying the ticket" had meant - I had been gradually transported into an entirely different role... I had been so busy, I hadn't even watched the changes out the window. This "wasn't Kansas anymore", and I was a consultant.

I am not alone. Increasingly, special education teachers are making the transition from teaching to consulting. In this article, I want to share my experience in taking that initial step, while offering some hints to other teachers who, like myself, may be a little reluctant to begin consulting...

How to Find a Consultant in a Teacher

Initially, I assumed if something didn't come as naturally as breathing or digestion, I needed extensive training, and would never enjoy it anyway. For example, many times I had heard people claim great teachers are "born teachers". How many times have people exclaimed, "He (or she) is a natural consultant! He was born to consult!" Not too often. Of all the earth's people and personalities we should select as consultants, I was convinced I was a comical and unlikely candidate. If there was a consultant within me, why let her out? She would be opinionated, obnoxious, even irritating. After all, I had decided to be a teacher - I liked being "first in line", in control, and at the center of activity. That was me... not the likely description of a successful consultant.

I decided there had to be a consultant within me somewhere when I considered the alternative. If teachers were not willing to become consultants, the result would be consultants without teaching experience. To guide me

through the initial fears, I approached consulting as something new I did as a teacher, in place of worrying how to be a consultant - as though it were an entirely new person altogether.

This is going to hurt.

Years ago, my first teaching position was with Head Start pre-schoolers. The day arrived for the county health nurse to give the children immunization shots. I was told this day was notorious for struggles and tears. To prepare the class, I told them the nurse was coming to give them each a shot, and that for sure it would hurt for a few seconds...at least till the count of 3. I told them to hold very still, look the other way, and when they felt their shot to yell "OUCH" . We practiced. When the time came, one by one they said "OUCH!", most with a smile, some with a giggle, only one cried. I hadn't expected this approach to work at all, and seeing it work so well, the children taught me something in return.

Be honest about things that hurt and are inevitable. In assuming the role of a consultant, accept the fact that it will be uncomfortable, lonely, or frustrating now and then. What isn't? Attitude is everything. Expect it to hurt, and when it does, find a way to say "ouch" that won't derail all you've accomplished. Keep things in perspective.

Find a Good Handbook... to Carry Around

I asked my boss for a book to teach myself "how to" consult. At first, he didn't have one, but later found one after I kept insisting I needed one. I never read it, but it helped to carry it around as though I meant to. Instead, I developed my own philosophy. of consulting based on all the effective consultants I had worked with as a teacher. I also tried to decide what had made the ineffective consultants, ineffective. I'm still working on improving the consultant within me, and I now feel within most teachers there is a consultant. (I look back now and can't imagine how that looked - the new consultant arriving carrying a book on how to consult.)

Practice skills you have taught to others.

In handling my changing role, I found myself struggling with the same skills I was asking of my students. Adapt. Be socially mature. Be flexible. Incorporate changes without resistance. Know your responsibilities like the back of your hand, as well as you know those things you cannot or should not control. When

you need help, ask for it. If you are asked something you don't know, say "I don't know." (Relax. The only real "expert" you'll need lies in the combined insights and decisions of every group of people you work with. Trust them.) Be positive, maintain a good attitude. Pay attention. Organize yourself. Learn to make sound judgements, and make no assumptions. Follow directions. Accept mistakes, admit them, and learn from them. Express yourself clearly, and listen...always listen.

Beginning with a simple statement, "Maybe you should go into teaching..." I searched back through five years to determine when I actually stopped being a teacher. It's a relief for me to decide I never did. Education is dynamic, and I should not have been surprised to be changed by it's dynamism. With fall assignment changes and teachers seeking new positions within our district, I was asked recently what exactly I was going to be doing next fall. I answered, "Gee, I don't know..." but corrected myself, "teaching!" By my definition, I was, I am, and I always will be a teacher. After all is said and done, it's reassuring to know some things will never change.

A Newsletter Reaches it's Goal

Endings are often harder to recognize than beginnings. Deciding whether this newsletter should continue past grant funding, which ends in September, was no exception. The goal of THE MORNING NEWS is stated on the cover of every newsletter - to report "the activities of the transition grant project." Having reached that goal, we feel it is the right decision to discontinue the newsletter with the end of the grant. Therefore, late in September of 1991, you will receive the last issue of THE MORNING NEWS.

It has been a rare and unexpected, fun and rewarding opportunity to share our triumphs and challenges with people across the nation. Thank you for your support throughout the grant. We would SINCERELY appreciate receiving your comments, letters, articles, drawings - whatever!- for the final September issue. Also, let us know if we should begin a new newsletter in the future! We will keep THE MORNING NEWS mailing list and inform you should another newsletter develop.

We will definitely miss you. We have a large United States map in the office with push pins marking the hometowns of subscribers to our newsletter. Whenever you call or write, we glance at your pin. The newsletter will end, but the map will stay for awhile as a reminder that none of us are working alone.

Editors note: This summer, THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM manual will be completed. On the next few pages, we're printing excerpts from the manual. A mini-manual is now available on request with a self-addressed envelope.

Excerpts from The Curriculum System Manual

Introduction

It has been long established and documented that children and young adults with autism are highly individual as learners. Not only are they individual in terms of relative strengths and weaknesses, but also in the skills they need to learn. In addition, each community is unique, comprised of it's own businesses and educational opportunities available for community-based instruction, inclusion in regular education, and vocational opportunities. As our students become more included in regular education, their communities, and vocational opportunities, it is critical their curriculum be stronger than ever, specifically outlining and continually measuring their progress. The closer education comes to reflecting "real life" experiences, the more critical it becomes to have a curriculum that provides professionals, parents, and students with accurate and relevant information.

As a student ventures into experiences not specifically covered by a published curriculum, the resources available to accurately measure progress and identify areas of difficulty can decline and weaken. Just the opposite should occur. It is not surprising that packaged curriculums can fall short of being relevant to the needs of students with autism and the skills they need to master in their home and community. The result can be an educational intervention that outlines and measures only in a general sense the needs of a child and community that are specific and individualized. We can potentially "miss the boat" in our attempt to effectively educate students with autism.

In response to the need for a curriculum that responds to individual students with autism in an expanding variety of educational settings, a unique approach to curriculum has been developed. This approach, known as THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM, allows professionals, parents, and students to develop an ever-expanding curriculum that specifically addresses the variety of educational settings, opportunities, and individual student needs specific to each program for students with autism.

The Goal



"If the goal is independence, teach on an island.
If the goal is inter-dependence, teach everywhere else."

In developing THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM over the last five years, it was discovered the goal for our students is not independence, but inter-dependence. Programming for students with disabilities should reflect an understanding of their individual challenges. It should also reflect an understanding of success...and how it is achieved. In the book by Stephen Covey, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, (S&S, 1989), he discusses how successful people grow from dependence, to independence, to inter-dependence. People who achieve inter-dependence are the most successful. He says, "Life is, by nature, highly inter-dependent. To try to achieve maximum effectiveness through independence is like trying to play tennis with a golf club - the tool is not suited to the reality."

Many of our students will need lifelong support. They will work with people who support and assist them long past graduation. THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM focuses on helping students recognize their individual strengths and weaknesses. Students are assisted in making predictions about their own ability, and use a self evaluation process to identify where they may need assistance, while making a contribution as part of a community. With a goal of inter-dependence, the emphasis is placed on the acquisition of skills and how to use them in cooperation with others.

A person stranded alone has to find success independently. People living everywhere else have the opportunity to find success by making a contribution to the community, while growing through the wealth of resources and relationships available to them. The goal of THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is successful inter-dependence for our students.

The Rationale

"If you're building a house, start with the foundation."

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief a curriculum should...

- be based on standards which ensure program quality by defining the rights of all individuals involved in the educational process, and identifying procedures for decision making and program development.**

"These are not our children,

and we cannot be with them in the future."

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief a curriculum should...

- demonstrate an understanding that it is parents and their children directly effected by the success of educational programs long after graduation.**
- be the result of what parents, school personnel, and when possible students, together define is needed by a student.**

"Keep it Friendly"

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief a curriculum should...

- be "friendly":**

to students, using forms and processes easy for students to understand, enabling involvement of students in selection of goals,

evaluation and self-evaluation, and program development.

to teachers, using time efficiently.

to parents, easily understood and responsive to parent goals.

**"Compare apples to oranges...
and keep them from spoiling"**

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief a curriculum should...

- be useful in a variety of environments, enabling teachers to use one curriculum system to accurately measure and compare student progress across environments.**
- measure a variety of skills - from communication, to social, to vocational, to functional, to academic - emphasizing the inter-dependence of acquired skills.**
- provide a systematic method to review priority skills, tracking retention and generalization of skills across time.**

**"When working toward a packaged future,
use a packaged curriculum."**

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief that a curriculum should...

- allow teachers to creatively draw from a variety of existing curriculums and resources, providing the organization to direct them into an individualized curriculum.**

**"Excuse me, isn't that last year's
research you're wearing?"**

THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM is based on the belief that a curriculum should...

- easily incorporate the latest relevant research and developments into daily implementation of the curriculum.**

Program News

Congratulations, Steve

Steve is in a Ceramics course at Jenison High School. Recently, his pottery was displayed in the annual Jenison Public Schools Art Show. Steve is shown here at the show with his work and student teacher, Wendy Viening. Our thanks to Mr. Leyrer, Steve's teacher, and to Ms. Viening for working with us this past semester.



Thanks, Melissa

Since our last newsletter Melissa Andrews resigned from her position to allow her to remain at home with her new daughter, Marley. Melissa made a significant contribution to this project. She brought an infectious enthusiasm and much needed(!) organization to our program. She is loved and missed by students and staff alike. Thank you, Melissa, for all your hard work and flexibility - and the very best to you, Dave, and Marley. Keep in touch!

Thanks, Sue

Melissa's resignation left a huge pair of shoes to fill and an office sliding into the depths of them. Enter Sue Jonkers. In a short time (all we could give her) she was beginning to adapt curriculum, re-write objectives for THE CURRICULUM SYSTEM in "student-friendly" format, prepare summaries of student performance, etc. etc. etc.. In fact, Sue easily and efficiently performed many of the somewhat unique "etc.s" associated with work in this office. We would have sunk without her. Thank you, Sue.

Play Ball

Traditions are great, and we've started one that is no exception. Sorry, Kansas subscribers, but our Tigers beat your Royals 7 - 3. Several students and staff attended the May 8 ball game at Tiger Stadium. Dr. John Woods, special education director, was our driver that day (did you know Burger Kings give free meals to bus drivers? John did.) Thanks to John, the JPS administration, and parents for their support of this event!

Congratulations, Eric!

Our warmest congratulations, Eric, on your graduation from our program. Best of luck in your new home, and with your new job. We will miss you and hope you will write us! We're proud of you! The very best to you always. Let's be careful out there!



We welcome your letters and comments: Carol Gray, Jenison Public Schools, 8375 20th, Jenison, Michigan 49428.