



Raising Student Achievement Through the Affective Domain

The TESA model focuses teachers' attention on interpersonal behaviors that can lead to student achievement.

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One of the most significant projects addressing the relationship between the affective domain and student success is TESA (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement). Initiated in the Los Angeles County Schools in 1971, the project was originally titled Equal Opportunity in the Classroom (EOC). At that time, a three-year study was undertaken to determine the effect on student achievement if teachers practiced specific motivating and supportive behaviors with students perceived to be low achievers.

The goal of the project was to train a group of teachers to distribute 15 interactions (Figure 1) equitably among low- and high-achieving students.¹ The project originators hypothesized that, in comparison to students in a control group where teachers did not consciously interact with students in an equitable manner, low achievers in the experimental group would make statistically significant academic gains.

The results of the study confirmed the original hypothesis, except that *all* students, not just the low achievers, experienced gains when compared to the control class.² They also experienced significant reductions in absenteeism and discipline referrals.

In 1974, the project received a National Educator Pacesetter Award as one of the most outstanding Title IV-C projects in the nation. Since that time, the scope of the program has expanded to the point where, to date, over 600 educational agencies and school districts have received training. The project su-

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pervisors, in order to keep pace with the demand for the program, initiated the Project Coordinator Training Seminars to train local school district personnel to conduct sessions in their own districts. In this way TESA came to the Columbus, Ohio, public schools.

At the end of 1980, a group of 24 Columbus public schools staff members took part in a TESA Project Coordinator Training Seminar. Following the seminar, workshops were conducted back in the Columbus School district for 96 teachers and administrators. This year approximately 120 teachers and administrators will take part in the program.

Initial reports from teachers are encouraging. The program addresses, in part, the nature of teacher-student interactions as they occur on a daily basis. Teachers become aware of the importance of their personal behavior with students during the teaching-learning interaction and how it affects both academic achievement and self-concept, especially for the low achiever.

For example, TESA researchers found that most teachers give students viewed as high achievers more opportunities to recite and answer questions than students viewed as low achievers. During the training sessions, participants are made aware of this phenomenon, reasons for it are discussed, and role-playing exercises are used to train teachers to consciously ask for responses from students in a more equitable manner. Following the workshop, participants observe and code each other in their classrooms, providing feedback for each teacher on how he or she demonstrates this interaction. The same procedure is followed with the other 14 interactions.

Also significant, from a staff development point of view, is the nature of the program itself. In their article "Guidelines for Better Staff Develop-

ment," Wood and Thompson observed that adults will learn something they perceive as job-related and immediately useful and that they need to see the results of their efforts through accurate feedback. They suggest that inservice planners and presenters:

1. Focus on job-related tasks that the participants consider real and important
2. Include opportunities for participants in inservice training to practice what they are to learn in simulated and real work settings as part of their training
3. Encourage the learners to work in small groups and to learn from each other
4. Reduce the use and threat of external judgments from one's superior by allowing peer-participants to give each other feedback concerning performance and areas of needed improvement.³

All these suggestions are encompassed in the TESA training sessions. The training gives teachers specific, concrete, observable behaviors that they can see, practice, and use in their classrooms and that result in significant student achievement gains and improved attitudes toward school and self.

For those concerned with the affective dimensions of student achievement and success in school, TESA offers great promise. ■

¹Sam Kerman, Tom Kimball, Mary Martin, *Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement—Coordinator Manual* (Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa).

²Sam Kerman, "Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement," *Phi Delta Kappan* (June 1979): 716-718.

³Fred H. Wood and Steven R. Thompson, "Guideline for Better Staff Development," *Educational Leadership* 37 (February 1980): 374-378.

Figure 1. TESA Interaction Model.

Units	Strand A: Response Opportunities	Strand B: Feedback	Strand C: Personal Regard
1	Equitable distribution of response opportunities	Affirm or correct student's performance	Proximity
2	Individual helping	Praise of learning performance	Courtesy
3	Latency	Reasons for praise	Personal interest/Compliments
4	Delving	Listening	Touching
5	Higher-level questioning	Accepting feelings	Desisting

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