Correlates of Effective Schools:

The First and Second Generation

by Lawrence W. Lezotte

A number of schools have been relying on effective schools research as the framework for their school improvement program. After three or four years, many claim that they have successfully met the criteria described in the research on the correlates of effective schools. These educators ask if there is anything that comes after, or goes beyond, these standards.

The concept of second generation correlates attempts to incorporate the recent research and school improvement findings and offers an even more challenging developmental stage to which schools committed to the **Learning for All** mission ought to aspire.

There are two underlying assumptions to keep in mind: First, school improvement is an endless journey. Second, the second generation correlates cannot be implemented successfully unless the first generation correlate standards are present in the school. In one sense, the second generation correlates represent a developmental step beyond the first and, when successfully accomplished, will move the school even closer to the mission of **Learning for All**.

1. Safe and Orderly Environment

The First Generation: In the effective school there is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning.

The Second Generation: In the first generation, the safe and orderly environment correlate was defined in terms of the absence of undesirable student behavior (e.g., students fighting). In the second generation, the concept of a school environment conducive to **Learning for All** must move beyond the elimination of undesirable behavior. The second generation will place increased emphasis on the presence of certain desirable behaviors (e.g., cooperative team learning). These second generation schools will be places where students actually help one another.

Moving beyond simply the elimination of undesirable behavior will represent a significant challenge for many schools. For example, it is unlikely that a school's faculty could successfully teach its students to work together unless the adults in the school model collaborative behaviors in their own professional working relationships. Since schools as workplaces are characterized by their isolation, creating more collaborative/ cooperative environments for both the adults and students will require substantial commitment and change in most schools.

First, teachers must learn the "technologies" of teamwork. Second, the school will have to create the "opportunity structures" for collaboration. Finally, the staff will have to nurture the belief that collaboration, which often requires more time initially, will assist the schools to be more effective and satisfying in the long run.

But schools will not be able to get students to work together cooperatively unless they have been taught to respect human diversity and appreciate democratic values. These student learnings will require a major and sustained commitment to multicultural education. Students and the adults who teach them will need to come to terms with the fact that the United States is no longer a nation with minorities. We are now a nation of minorities. This new reality is currently being resisted by many of our community and parent advocacy groups, as well as by some educators.

2. Climate of High Expectations for Success

The First Generation: In the effective school there is a climate of expectation in which the staff believe and demonstrate that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skills, and the staff also believe that they have the capability to help all students achieve that mastery.

The Second Generation: In the second generation, the emphasis placed on high expectations for success will be broadened significantly. In the first generation, expectations were described in terms of attitudes and beliefs that suggested how the teacher should behave in the teaching-learning situation. Those descriptions sought to tell teachers how they should initially deliver the lesson. High expectations meant, for example, that the teacher should evenly distribute questions asked among all students and should provide each student with an equal opportunity to participate in the learning process. Unfortunately, this "equalization of opportunity," though beneficial, proved to be insufficient to assure mastery for many learners. Teachers found themselves in the difficult position of having had high expectations and having acted upon them—yet some students still did not learn.

In the second generation, the teachers will anticipate this and they will develop a broader array of responses. For example, teachers will implement additional strategies, such as reteaching and regrouping, to assure that all students do achieve mastery. Implementing this expanded concept of high expectations will require the school as an organization to reflect high expectations. Most of the useful strategies will require the cooperation of the school as a whole; teachers cannot implement most of these strategies working alone in isolated classrooms.

High expectations for success will be judged, not only by the initial staff beliefs and behaviors, but also by the organization's response when some students do not learn. For example, if the teacher plans a lesson, delivers that lesson, assesses learning and finds that some students did not learn, and still goes on to the next lesson, then that teacher didn't expect the students to learn in the first place. If the school condones through silence that teacher's behavior, it apparently does not expect the students to learn, or the teacher to teach these students.

Several changes are called for in order to implement this expanded concept of high expectations successfully. First, teachers will have to come to recognize that high expectations for student success must be "launched" from a platform of teachers having high expectations for self. Then the school organization will have to be restructured to assure that teachers have access to more "tools" to help them achieve successful **Learning for All**. Third, schools, as cultural organizations, must recognize that schools must be transformed from institutions designed for "instruction" to institutions designed to assure "learning."

3. Instructional Leadership

The First Generation: In the effective school the principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff, parents, and students. The principal understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program.

The Second Generation: In the first generation, the standards for instructional leadership focused primarily on the principal and the administrative staff of the school. In the second generation, instructional leadership will remain important; however, the concept will be broadened and leadership will be viewed as a dispersed concept that includes all adults, especially the teachers. This is in keeping with the teacher empowerment concept; it recognizes that a principal cannot be the only leader in a complex organization like a school. With the democratization of organizations, especially schools, the leadership function becomes one of creating a "community of shared values." The mission will remain critical because it will serve to give the community of shared values a shared sense of "magnetic north," an identification of what this school community cares most about. The role of the principal will be changed to that of "a leader of leaders," rather than a leader of followers. Specifically, the principal will have to develop his/her skills as coach, partner and cheerleader. The broader concept of leadership recognizes that leadership is always delegated from the followership in any organization. It also recognizes what teachers have known for a long time and what good schools have capitalized on since the beginning of time: namely, expertise is generally distributed among many, not concentrated in a single person.

4. Clear and Focused Mission

The First Generation: In the effective school there is a clearly articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to the instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures and accountability. Staff accept responsibility for students' learning of the school's essential curricular goals.

The Second Generation: In the first generation the effective school mission emphasized teaching for **Learning for All**. The two issues that surfaced were: Did this really mean all students or just those with whom the schools had a history of reasonable success? When it became clear that this mission was inclusive of all students especially the children of the poor (minority and non-minority), the second issue surfaced. It centered itself around the question: Learn what? Partially because of the accountability

movement and partially because of the belief that disadvantaged students could not learn higher-level curricula, the focus was on mastery of mostly low-level skills.

In the second generation, the focus will shift toward a more appropriate balance between higher-level learning and those more basic skills that are truly prerequisite to their mastery. Designing and delivering a curriculum that responds to the demands of accountability, and is responsive to the need for higher levels of learning, will require substantial staff development. Teachers will have to be better trained to develop curricula and lessons with the "end in mind." They will have to know and be comfortable with the concept of "backward mapping," and they will need to know "task analysis." These "tools of the trade" are essential for an efficient and effective "results-oriented" school that successfully serves all students.

Finally, a subtle but significant change in the concept of school mission deserves notice. Throughout the first generation, effective schools proponents advocated the mission of teaching for **Learning for All**. In the second generation the advocated mission will be **Learning for All**. The rationale for this change is that the "teaching for" portion of the old statement created ambiguity (although this was unintended) and kept too much of the focus on "teaching" rather than "learning." This allowed people to discount school learnings that were not the result of direct teaching. Finally, the new formulation of **Learning for All** opens the door to the continued learning of the educators as well as the students.

5. Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task

The First Generation: In the effective school teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction in the essential skills. For a high percentage of this time students are engaged in whole class or large group, teacher-directed, planned learning activities.

The Second Generation: In the second generation, time will continue to be a difficult problem for the teacher. In all likelihood, the problems that arise from too much to teach and not enough time to teach it will intensify. In the past, when the teachers were oriented toward "covering curricular content" and more content was added, they knew their response should be to "speed-up." Now teachers are being asked to stress the mission that assures that the students master the content that is covered. How are they to respond? In the next generation, teachers will have to become more skilled at interdisciplinary curriculum and they will need to learn how to comfortably practice "organized abandonment." They will have to be able to ask the question, "What goes and what stays?" One of the reasons that many of the mandated approaches to school reform have failed is that, in every case, the local school was asked to do more! One of the characteristics of the most effective schools is their willingness to declare that some things are more important than others; they are willing to abandon some less important content so as to be able to have enough time dedicated to those areas that are valued the most.

The only alternative to abandonment would be to adjust the available time that students spend in school, so that those who need more time to reach mastery would be given it. The necessary time must be provided in a quality program that is not perceived as punitive by those in it, or as excessive, by those who will have to fund it. These conditions will be a real challenge indeed!

If the American dream and the democratic ideal of educating everyone is going to move forward, we must explore several important policies and practices from the past. Regarding the issue of time to learn, for example, if the children of the disadvantaged present a "larger educational task" to the teachers and if it can be demonstrated that this "larger task" will require more time, then our notions of limited compulsory schooling may need to be changed. The current system of compulsory schooling makes little allowance for the fact that some students need more time to achieve mastery. If we could get the system to be more mastery-based and more humane at the same time, our nation and its students would benefit immensely.

6. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

The First Generation: In the effective school student academic progress is measured frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are used to improve individual student performance and also to improve the instructional program.

The Second Generation: In the first generation, the correlate was interpreted to mean that the teachers should frequently monitor their students' learning and, where necessary, the teacher should adjust his/her behavior. Several major changes can be anticipated in the second generation. First, the use of technology will permit teachers to do a better job of monitoring their students' progress. Second, this same technology will allow students to monitor their own learning and, where necessary, adjust their own behavior. The use of computerized practice tests, the ability to get immediate results on homework, and the ability to see correct solutions developed on the screen are a few of the available "tools for assuring student learning."

A second major change that will become more apparent in the second generation is already under way. In the area of assessment the emphasis will continue to shift away from standardized norm-referenced paper-pencil tests and toward curricular-based, criterion-referenced measures of student mastery. In the second generation, the monitoring of student learning will emphasize "more authentic assessments" of curriculum mastery. This generally means that there will be less emphasis on the paper-pencil, multiple-choice tests, and more emphasis on assessments of products of student work, including performances and portfolios.

Teachers will pay much more attention to the alignment that must exist between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum. Two new questions are being stimulated by the reform movement and will dominate much of the professional educators' discourse in the second generation: "What's worth knowing?" and "How will we know when they know it?" In all likelihood, the answer to the first question will become clear relatively

quickly, because we can reach agreement that we want our students to be self-disciplined, socially responsible, and just. The problem comes with the second question, "How will we know when they know it?" Educators and citizens are going to have to come to terms with that question. The bad news is that it demands our best thinking and will require patience if we are going to reach consensus. The good news is that once we begin to reach consensus, the schools will be able to deliver significant progress toward these agreed-upon outcomes.

7. Home-School Relations

The First Generation: In the effective school parents understand and support the school's basic mission and are given the opportunity to play an important role in helping the school to achieve this mission.

The Second Generation: During the first generation, the role of parents in the education of their children was always somewhat unclear. Schools often gave "lip service" to having parents more actively involved in the schooling of their children. Unfortunately, when pressed, many educators were willing to admit that they really did not know how to deal effectively with increased levels of parent involvement in the schools.

In the second generation, the relationship between parents and the school must be an authentic partnership between the school and home. In the past when teachers said they wanted more parent involvement, more often than not they were looking for unqualified support from parents. Many teachers believed that parents, if they truly valued education, knew how to get their children to behave in the ways that the school desired. It is now clear to both teachers and parents that the parent involvement issue is not that simple. Parents are often as perplexed as the teachers about the best way to inspire students to learn what the school teaches. The best hope for effectively confronting the problem—and not each other—is to build enough trust and enough communication to realize that both teachers and parents have the same goal—an effective school and home for all children!

Lezotte, Lawrence W. *Correlates of Effective Schools: The First and Second Generation.* Effective Schools Products, Ltd., Okemos, MI, 1991.