

ASCD IN ACTION

AN ASCD FOCUS AREA: AT-RISK STUDENTS

ASCD Urban Middle Grades Network

With a recent grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, ASCD has established the Urban Middle Grades Network—a project designed to assist participating schools in developing high performing systems to improve the educational experiences of urban disadvantaged adolescents in grades 6-9.

This initiative focuses on the need to make major changes in the way middle schools educate 10- to 15-year-old disadvantaged students—children scoring below the 40th per-

centile on standardized tests or eligible for reduced lunch programs—and underscores the importance of bridging the achievement gap between low- and high-income youngsters.

Over a two-year period, ASCD will help school teams develop and implement strategic plans that incorporate the knowledge base of promising interventions that research, practice, and the literature have shown to increase the probability of student success. That knowledge base has been translated into the 3-High Achievement Model—a framework around which principals, teachers, and community members can plan a middle school program that effectively addresses the academic, behavioral, social, and developmental needs of early adolescents.

The model highlights three guiding principles—high content, high expectations, and high support—to help determine what is taught, how it is taught, and how schools can be organized to improve the learning of at-risk youth. The model reflects the belief that all young people are capable of higher levels of academic performance than they may feel is possible.

Fifteen urban school systems, representing 16 schools nationwide, attended the first network meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, on August 10-13, 1989. Beginning in 1990, a research team will document the results of these interventions to begin to demonstrate how middle level schools can be restructured to better meet the needs of disadvantaged youth.

The second meeting will be held February 15-18, 1990, in New Orleans. Featured speakers and workshop leaders will continue to assist network schools in strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation. Project facilitator is Helené Hodges, Director of Research and Information for ASCD. □

ASCD photograph





TAKE ACTION

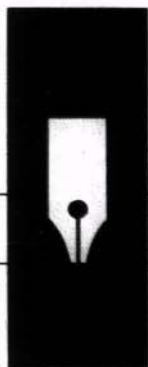
Join the **Cooperative Learning Network**, which enables curriculum resource specialists, curriculum directors, and supervisors to share research, materials, and resources relating to cooperative learning. For information, contact:

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TAKE NOTE

You can save money by registering early for ASCD's next Annual Conference, March 3-6, 1990, in San Antonio, Texas. Write to ASCD Annual Conference or call Michelle Kelly (703) 549-9110 (ext. 317) to request an Annual Conference Preview, which includes information on Conference speakers, descriptions of assemblies, lists of hotels, and early registration materials. The deadline for early-bird registration discounts is **January 26, 1990**.



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming Annual Conferences

1990, San Antonio, March 3-6
1991, San Francisco, March 16-19
1992, New Orleans, April 4-7
1993, Washington, D.C., March 27-30

Upcoming Mini-Conferences

December 12-14, 1989, *Creating the Exemplary Middle School*, Williamsburg, Va.
April 2-4, 1990, *Learning Styles*, Scottsdale, Ariz.

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