

INSTRUCTIONAL CONSULTATION TEAMS

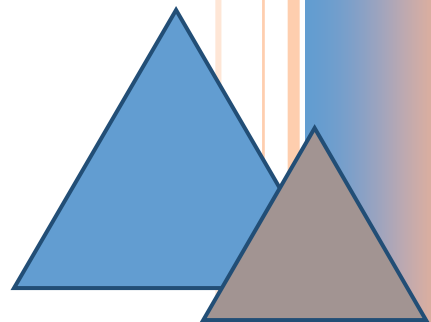
Prepared for Livingston Educational Service Agency

Sandra J. Riley

Dawn Bentley

Naomi Norman

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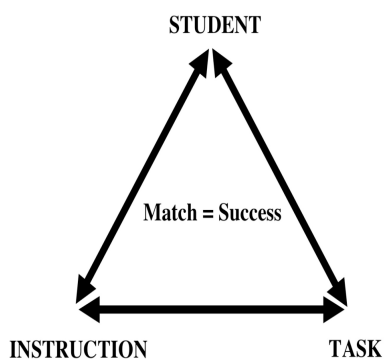
Overview of the Instructional Consultation Process

Goals and Objectives

Instructional Consultation Teams (ICT) is a proactive model of service delivery that provides academic and behavioral support to all students who are struggling in the general education classroom. It is a systematic, problem-solving process for all teachers and staff to help them reflect on and develop instruction for all students.

The goal of IC teams is to enhance/improve and increase student and staff performance. There are four objectives:

- 1. Develop a systematic support network within each building, including a trained IC Team Facilitator and a trained Instructional Consultation Team.**
- 2. Enhance teachers' skills in and application of best practices of instructional assessment and delivery.**
- 3. Develop school-wide norms of collaboration and problem-solving.**
- 4. Utilize data for classroom and school decisions.**



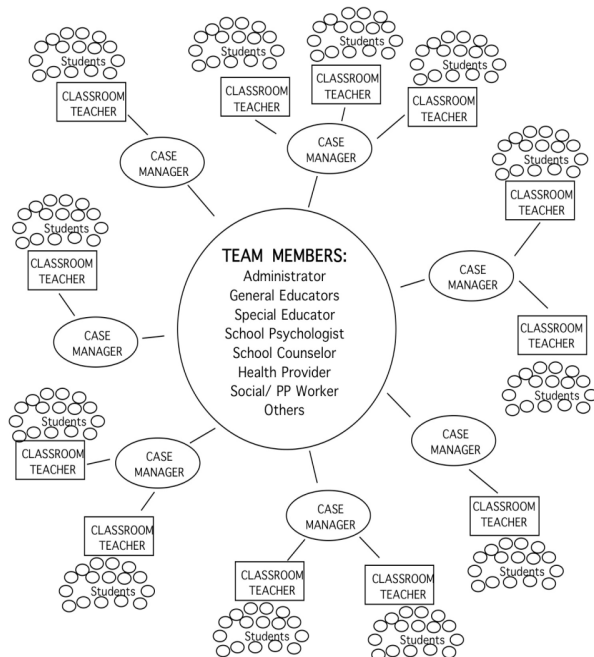
IC Teams are based on the belief that student-learning difficulties are a result of a mismatch between the student's entry skills and the instructional environment. This view promotes efforts to support the classroom teacher to assess the student's entry level skills and match the instruction to help meet the curriculum targets.

Facilitator and Team

An IC facilitator receives extensive advanced training and coaching in the instructional consultation and assessment process. They become the internal capacity to build and maintain the team as a support system for teachers and students. The facilitator trains a team comprised of representation of the school resources such as general education teachers, special education teachers and school principal. **The team is trained in three primary skills; communication skills, systematic problem solving and instructional and behavioral assessment.**

The function of the IC Team is to provide support to the teacher utilizing an Instructional Consultation Case Management Model, provide a venue for on-going team member skill development and assist in aligning school resources for student and teacher support. (2007-2008 ICAT Resources)

Process Delivery



When a teacher is in need of support because a student or group of students is not achieving at the expected rate, they request assistance from the team. A member of the team (case manager) works collaboratively with the teacher through a systematic problem-solving process to prioritize the instructional concerns, assess, set goals and set up an instructional plan. Data is an on-going part of the process to determine the effectiveness of the plan.

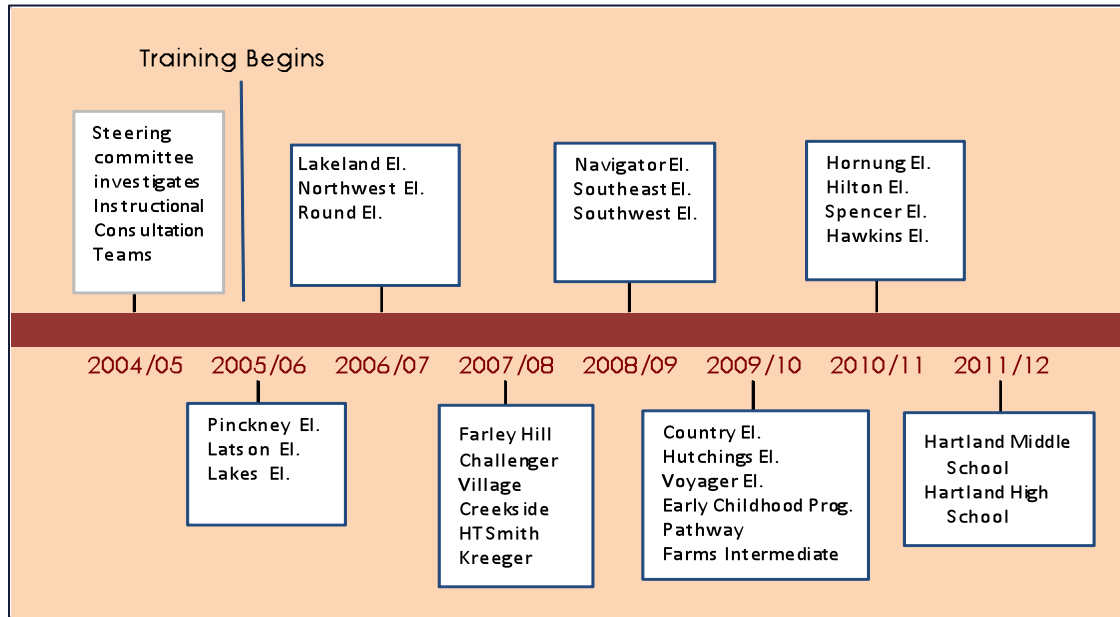
Implementation in Livingston County

Training for Instructional Consultation teams is a two-year process. The development plan is designed to provide the team facilitator the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve high implementation. Training sessions cover problem-solving in the areas of reading, writing, math, behavior and group or whole class concerns. Furthermore, it includes training in facilitation and school change so that the facilitator is equipped with the necessary skills to facilitate a team and train them in the problem solving process.

In 2004 a steering committee formed to do some investigation and readiness work with the Michigan Consortium of Instructional Consultation Teams. A plan was developed and presented to the Livingston County Superintendents.

In 2005 three schools in Livingston County started the training process. Each year new schools began the training sequence.

Implementation Timeline



Presently there are 23 schools in Livingston County participating in the Instructional Consultation Process.

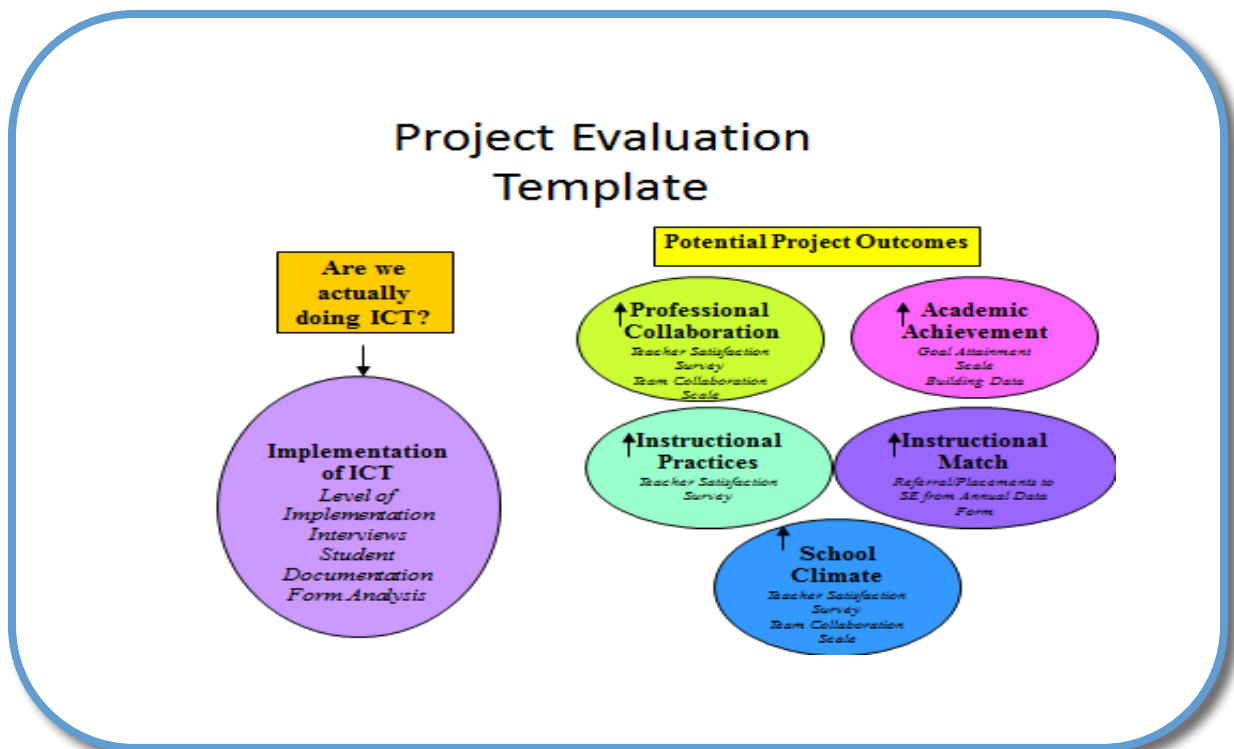
Instructional Consultation Team Program Results

Benefits of Instructional Consultation

Every IC Team collects program evaluation data each year. Data is collected on program implementation integrity, student outcomes, teacher satisfaction, team collaboration and changes in referral patterns to special education. The components of IC Team Program Evaluation are integrated into the web-based system tracking offered through ICAT (Instructional Consultation and Assessment Teams) tools (icattools.com).

The benefits of Instructional Consultation Teams are:

- Provides a data-driven process for academic intervention services for students not meeting expected standards.
- Improved academic and behavioral achievement for students within the general



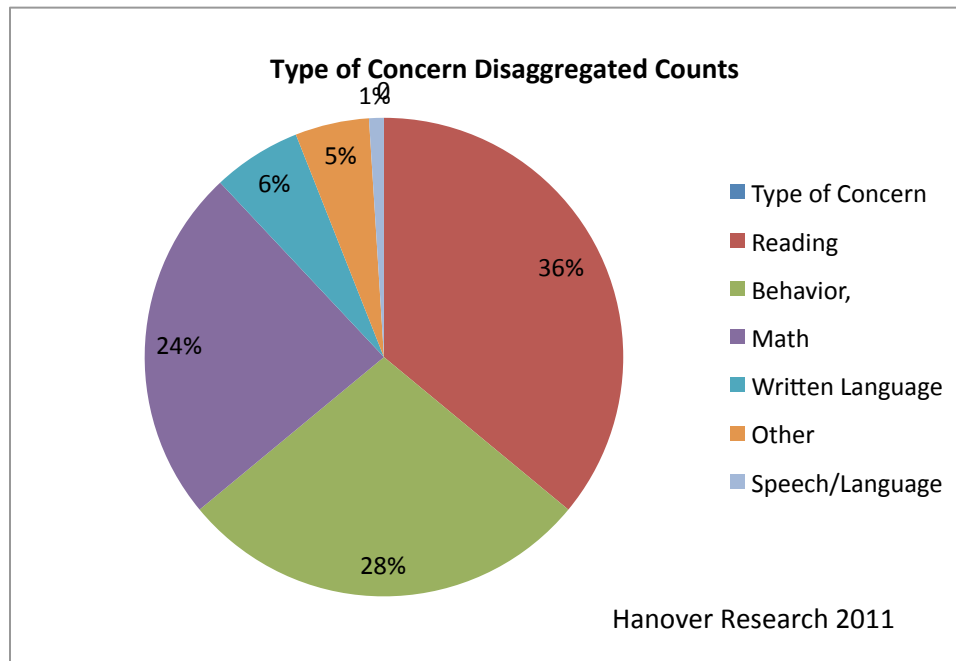
- education classroom.
- Provides ongoing professional development for staff in instruction, assessment, and collaborative problem solving.
- Maximizes resources through coordinated, goal-directed service delivery for students and teachers.
- Addresses the over-identification of students for special education services.
- Provides the opportunity for teachers to collaborate and learn from each other.

Impact on Students

Demographic Profile

In 2010 Hanover Research did a profile of student participants for the Livingston Educational Service Agency. This analysis showed that reading concerns(36%) were the

greatest number of cases. Behavior concerns were the next largest group (28%), followed by math concerns (24%)



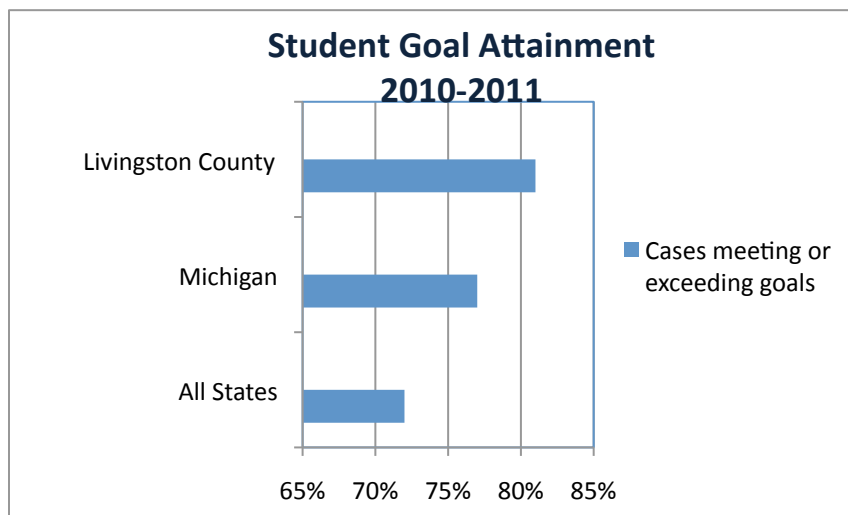
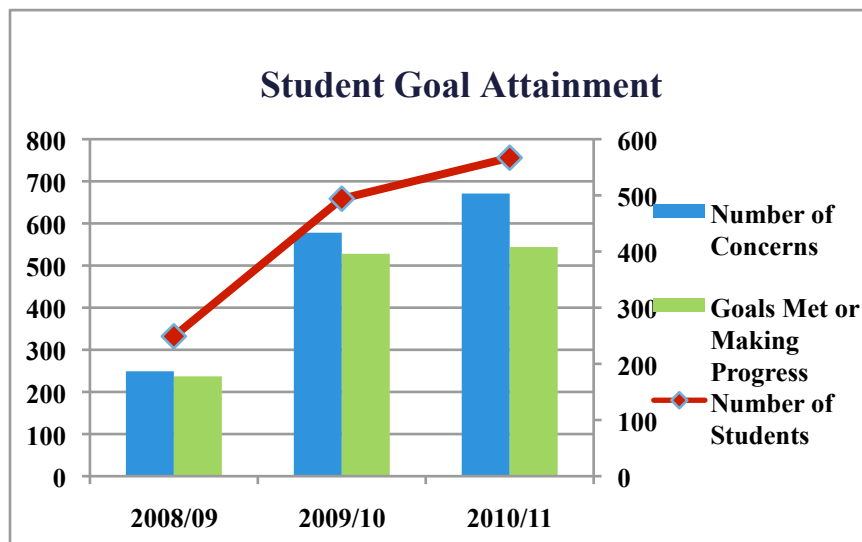
They also segmented the concerns by grade level. They noted that students at lower grade levels were generally more likely to be classified as having behavioral concerns. Many of the students having math concerns were in the fourth grade. A note of caution is that this information is taken from one year. Also, teachers that requested assistance for the entire class may skew some of the results.

Type of Concern	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Reading	0%	51%	46%	35%	50%	27%	75%	80%	41%
Behavior	100%	46%	39%	57%	22%	8%	13%	20%	32%
Math	0%	3%	4%	11%	31%	70%	22%	0%	28%
Written Language	0%	0%	6%	2%	17%	7%	16%	20%	7%
Speech	0%	11%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%
Other	0%	0%	32%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
Total Number of Students	2	35	71	102	36	113	32	5	396

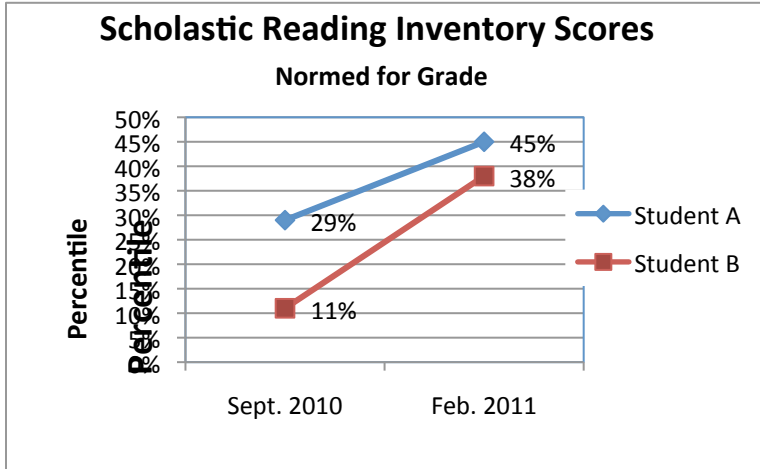
Goal Attainment

Each case is documented on a Student Documentation Form. The form includes a graph and data that is collected for baseline that depicts the student's current performance. Data collection continues after the interventions have been implemented. Decisions around the case are made based on data. Data from the Student Documentation Forms is analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the IC Team process in assisting referred students to meet the academic and behavioral goals established in the process.

Livingston County continues to have a high rate of goal attainment. In 2010/11, 81% of cases met or exceeded their goals. An average of all the schools in Michigan participating was 77% and nationally it was 72%.

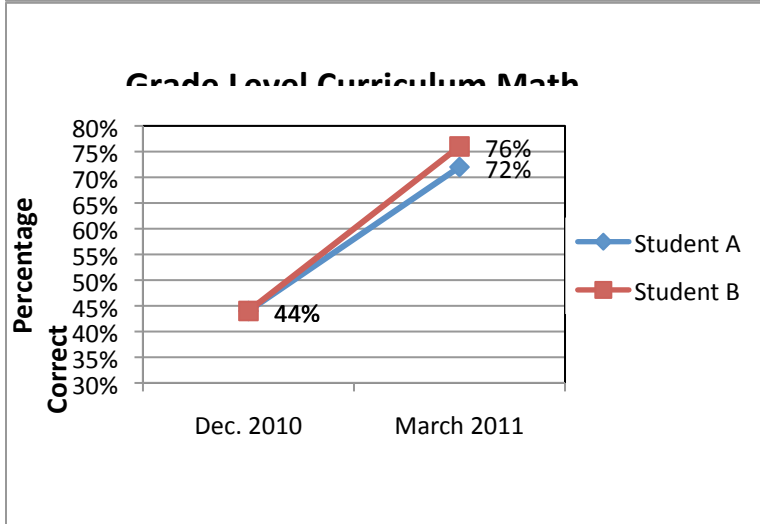
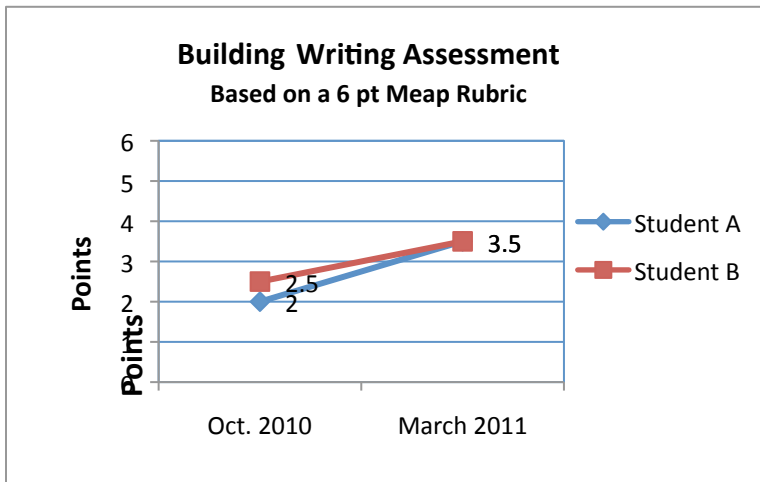


Student Achievement



This is an example of the growth that students can make toward the grade level expectations. IC is a process that can work for all students even if they have already been identified to receive Special Education services. Both of these students were students at Navigator School in Pinckney. They were already identified as special education students. In 2011 the case manager worked with the general education teacher to match instruction in the classroom for these two students. While they worked on specific targeted goals the students made great growth in the grade level

assessments.

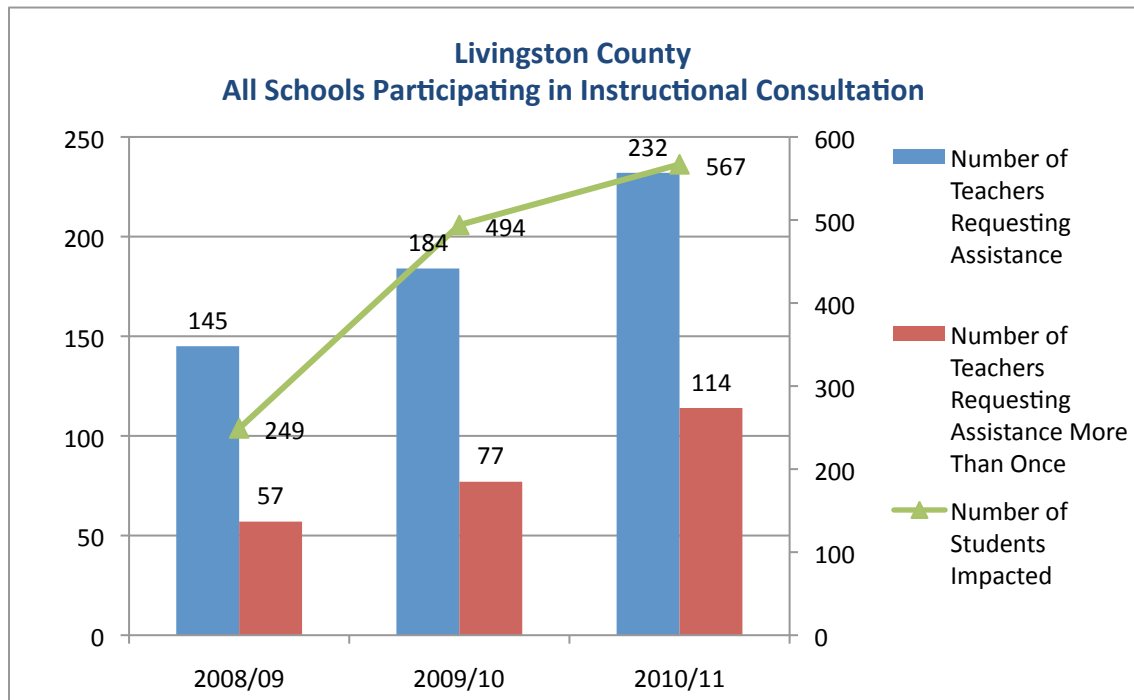


“Students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms show academic gains in a number of areas, including improved performance on standardized tests, mastery of IEP goals, grades, on-task behavior, and motivation to learn,” (National Center for Education Restructuring and Inclusion, 1991).

Impact on Teachers

Teacher Use and Collaboration

During the 2010/11 school year 232 teachers requested assistance for the IC Team. Of those 232 almost half requested assistance more than once impacting 567 students.

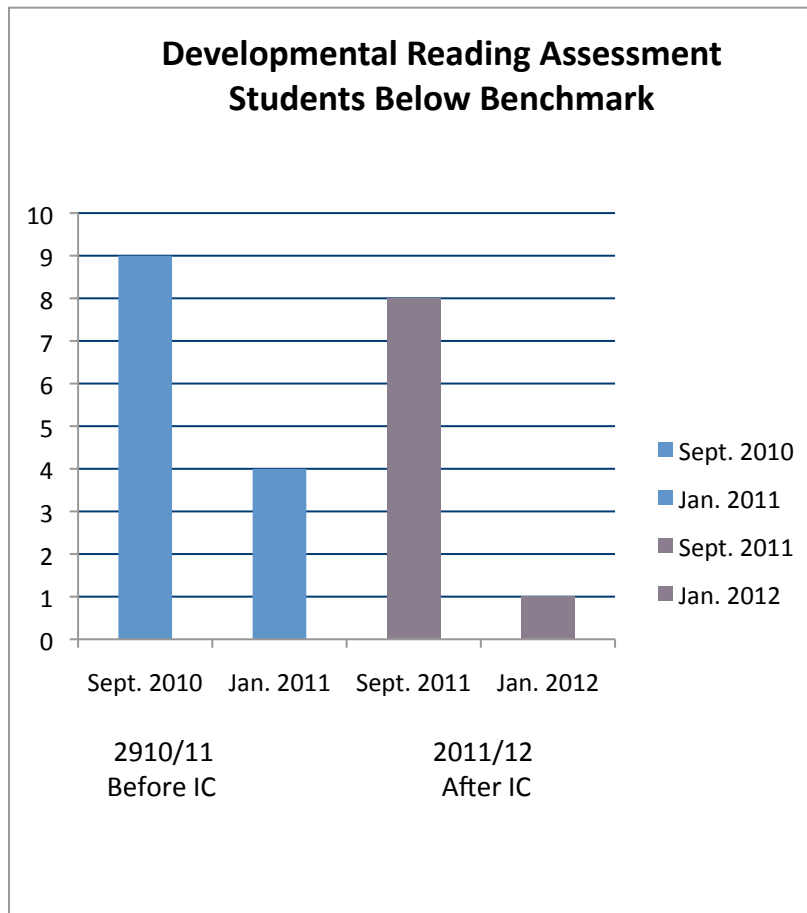


Teachers participating in the IC Process are able to give feedback to the team about their experience by responding to a Teacher Collaboration Survey. Using a Likert scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest, teachers rated the overall effectiveness of IC Teams as 4.59. Teachers reported learning new strategies and they appreciated working with another colleague and felt that it was helpful to collaborate. Findings from the Hanover IC Team Program Evaluation support the value of collaboration. *Both teachers and case managers learned from the process and appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with another educator.* (Hanover 2012)

Teacher Growth

The goal of Instructional Consultation Teams is to improve/enhance/increase student and staff performance. The way to impact student achievement is by improving instruction for students. When teachers engage in the IC Case Process they are

engaging in embedded professional development with the student/s being the indicator of improved instruction. The IC Case Process is action research in practice. As teachers learn new skills they will generalize the learning principles to other students. In 2011 80% of the teachers surveyed said besides using the new strategies with the student they requested assistance with they used the new strategies with a different student or group of students as well. They also plan to use the new strategies with future students.

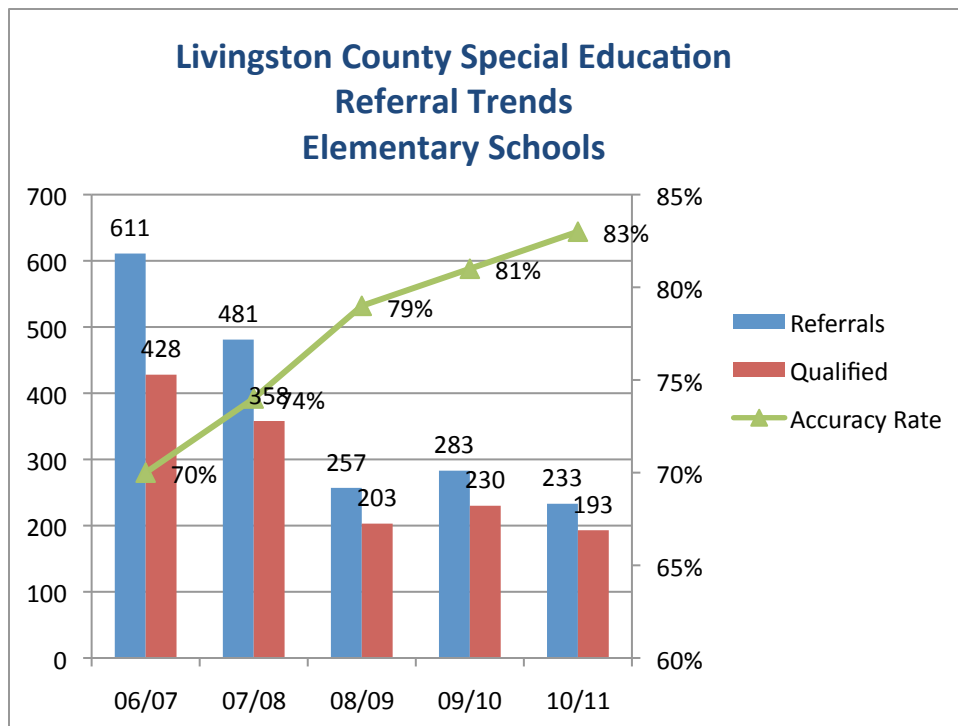


This is an example of how a teacher can apply the knowledge that she learned through a case on one student to her entire class. A teacher in Howell Public Schools was doing a case on one student. The student was making great progress. This second grade teacher started taking the skills and strategies that she was learning and used them with all of her students. She reported increased growth in reading skills for all of her students as a result of implementing the newly learned strategies. She administered the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) mid-year and reported that only one of her students was below benchmark. This was the first time in her teaching career that this happened.

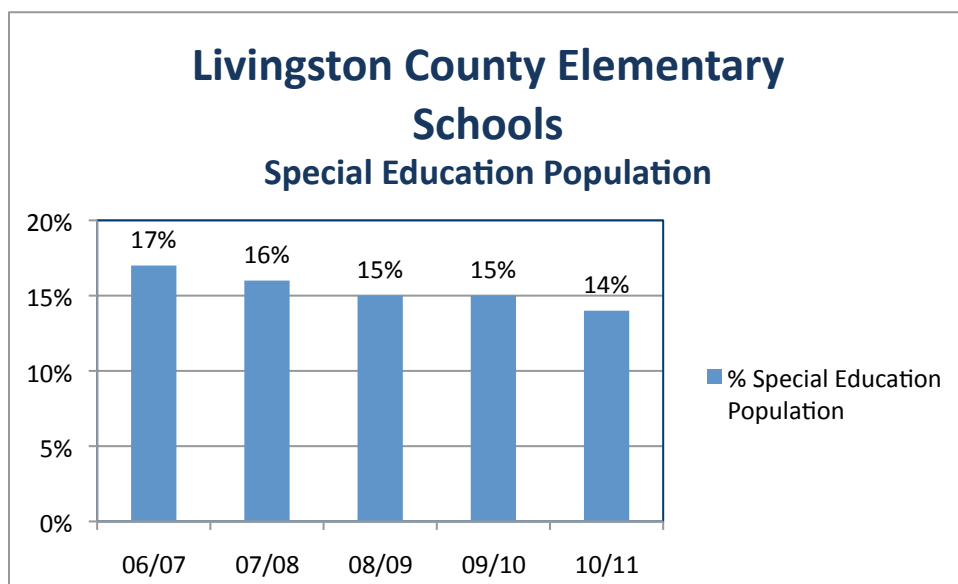
Impact on Schools

Special Education Referral Rates

As a result of implementing Instructional Consultation Teams, inappropriate special education referrals have declined. Because teachers are supported in matching instruction to the individual student within the general education classroom there is less need to look for that support from special education.



The number of special education referrals has dropped from 611 in 2006/07 school year to 239 in the 2010/11 school year. Only 70% of the students referred to special education in 2006/07 qualified for special education services in comparison to 83% percent in 2010/11. Special Education teams have a higher accuracy rate when referring students to special education and staff can use their time to support teachers rather than conducting inappropriate testing for students that do not qualify.

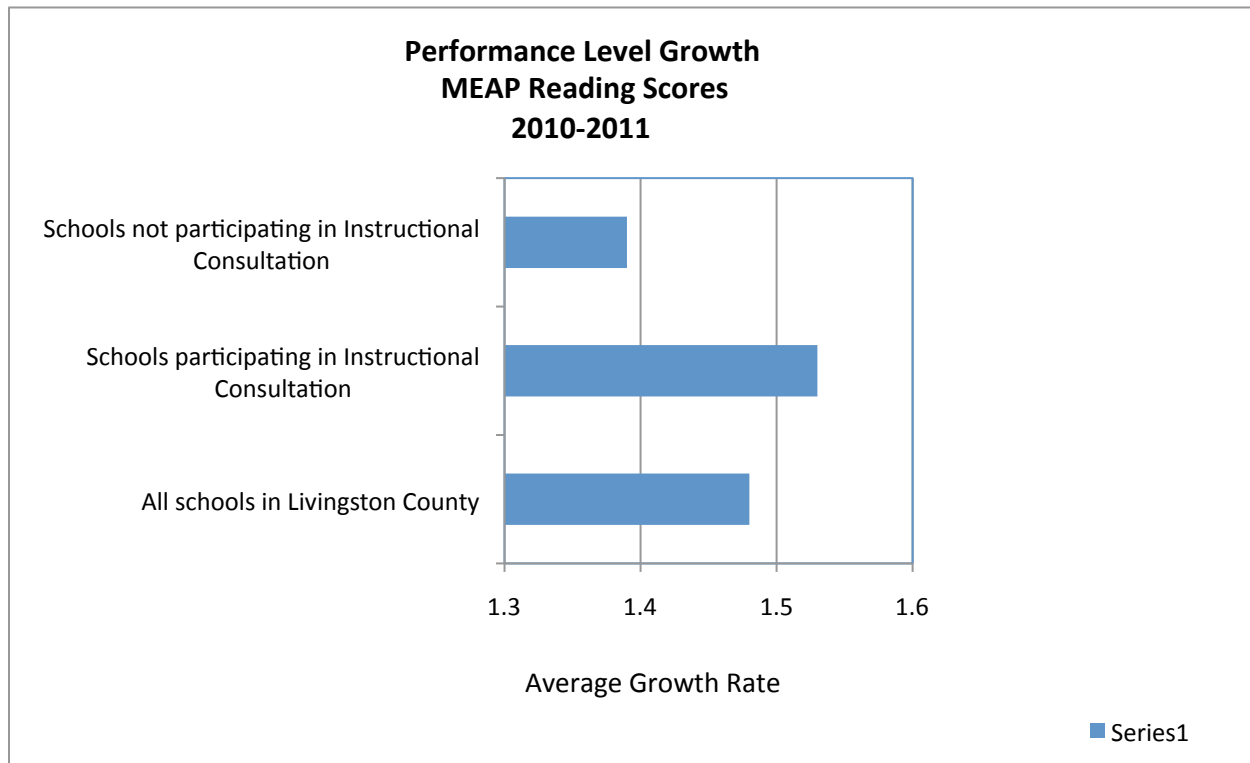


According to a report by the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, about 14% of the K-12 student population in Michigan receives special education services. Nationally, the average is 13.3%. All Livingston County Elementary Schools have decreased the percentage of students receiving special education services by 3% in the last four years. This graph represents all Elementary schools in Livingston County. However, Elementary schools in Livingston County that participate in Instructional Consultation Teams have an average of 13% Special Education Students.

School Growth

As schools engage in the IC Process with integrity, there is a systemic shift in beliefs. The shift goes from the traditional view that the struggling student has some internal deficit that prevents them from learning to the view that student-learning difficulties are a result of a mismatch between the student's entry skills and the instructional environment.

Capturing this growth has been a struggle for various reasons. While there is a lot of qualitative data supporting the school change, it is difficult to depict quantitatively. First of all, schools are at different stages of implementation. Some schools have embraced the new philosophy while other schools have resisted change. Also, there is a variety of measurement tools used in schools and districts. Schools across the county do not have common assessments. Until recently there has not been a data warehouse to store data. The one consistent assessment tool in Michigan Schools is the MEAP. However, there have been several changes to the MEAP over the past few years such as the time of year that it is administered. We took a look at the growth of schools from last year to this year to begin to analyze the impact on schools. The graph below shows a comparison in growth of IC schools to all schools in Livingston County as well as to non IC schools.



The Michigan Department of Education released a new metric for measuring individual student growth based on MEAP results. This metric compares individual student performance from one year to the next and gives points on whether students decline, maintain or show growth. Schools reaching the 1.5 threshold are showing growth. Schools scoring 1.0 to 1.5 are maintaining, and schools scoring less than 1 are declining.

Summary of Research Findings

In its 2012 *Summary of IC Team Research: Enhancing, Improving and Increasing Student and Staff Performance*, the Instructional Consultation, Assessment and Teaming (ICAT) Center describes their latest research agenda, which serves to document the impact of Instructional Consultation (IC) Teams. This agenda focuses on three results areas: *output*, *outcomes*, and *impact*. This research pulls data from a variety of different studies that occurred between 1990 and 2011.

IC Team *output* research documents the percentage of students who achieved their goals established through the IC process, as well as the number of teachers in IC-implementing schools who used their building IC for support. While student goal attainment averaged 80% across the study, teacher IC utilization rates varied greatly as a result of attrition in the involved schools.

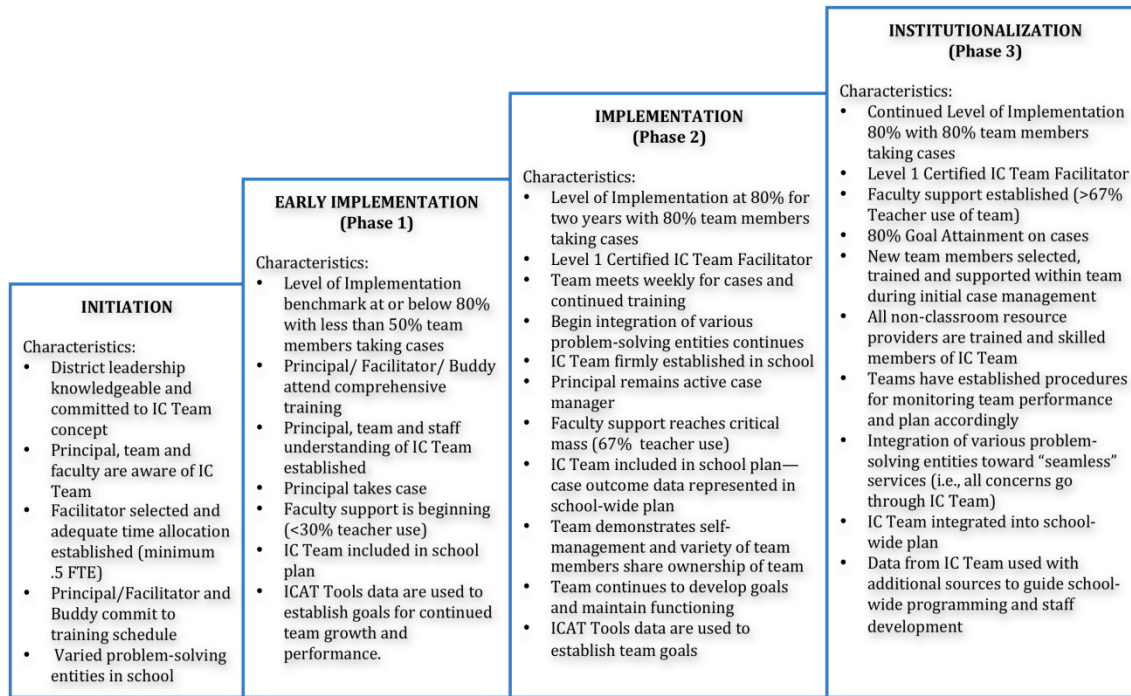
Next, ICAT looked at *outcome* results, which examined student performance-related changes and teacher changes after collaborating through the IC Teams model. Overall,

students who were involved in the IC process were less likely to be referred for special education evaluations and subsequently placed in special education. Additionally, teachers reported learning skills and strategies that they were then able to generalize in later years, including how to use data to plan instruction and support students who struggle.

Finally, the ICAT Center examined the *impact* of Instructional Consultation Teams. Overwhelmingly, this data supports decreased referrals to and placements in special education. IC-implementing schools demonstrated a statistically significant gain in overall student reading scores. Also, educator effectiveness and collaboration increased in the second and third years of implementing IC Teams.

Sustainability

IC Team school development is categorized in phases rather than years. Change is a process that takes time, usually 5-8 years. As we know, there are many factors that influence the implementation and institutionalization of an initiative. The involvement of district leaders is critical to implementing and sustaining any change effort. When district leaders communicate the importance of the change effort and foster a sense of importance it is evident that they value it.



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While some schools in Livingston County are still in Phase 2 many are in Phase 3. As we move forward we know that we need to be thoughtful and intentional about sustaining this initiative. At the County level we are beginning to focus on sustainability. Even though the training is rigorous, time intensive and sometimes frustrating, implementation is a much more difficult task. Ongoing support is provided to schools and/or district. After the two-year training sequence, facilitators are part of a networking group locally, regionally and statewide. Networking is a way to enhance facilitator skills and problem solve challenges that they are facing in their building as well as learn from others that are doing similar work. Schools and districts are encouraged to use a sustainability rubric to help plan for the upcoming year. The rubric addresses these areas:

- **Personnel** – Ensure key resources are trained as team members
- **Time** - Ensure time is available for teachers and team members to meet, assess student performance and set measurable goals.
- **Skill** – Ensure sufficient number of resources are well-trained in the application of IC Team skills.
- **Accountability** – Ensure that ICAT Tools data are used within school improvement planning.
- **Philosophical**-- Ensure that all staff understand and actively support delivery of quality instruction within the classroom

As with any process or program Instructional Consultation cannot be one person dependent in order to sustain itself. Efforts are made to develop the skills of other team members so that they can share the responsibility of the team and be able to take over

the role of the facilitator. Staff members from LESA are in the process of being trained as case managers so that they will be able to support the local schools and the delivery model that they use to support students and staff will align with the beliefs and process of the Instructional Consultation Model.

Instructional Consultation Teams is not a program. It is a well-designed, research-based process that impacts schools, teachers and students. It is a systemic change that redefines the way we approach students who are not meeting the expectations of the curriculum. The work and learning is ongoing and additive. Gene Hall, professor from the University of Nevada, summarized it well in his paper, **Reflections About Assessing Implementation of IC Teams: The Nevada SIG2 Project,**

“ At this time I, and the External Evaluator, see IC Teams as a powerful approach to developing all of the professionals within a school. The output is improvement of instruction for all students. The input is strong training and professional development for teachers, teacher leaders and school leaders. An output is teachers (regular and special education) implementing research based instructional strategies. I see implementation of IC Teams as being well worth the investment in time (and dollars). This is regularly heard when teachers and principals are asked “Is it worth it?” Nearly all respond that what they are gaining is powerful and they continue to use with all their students and across the years.” (Hall 2011)

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