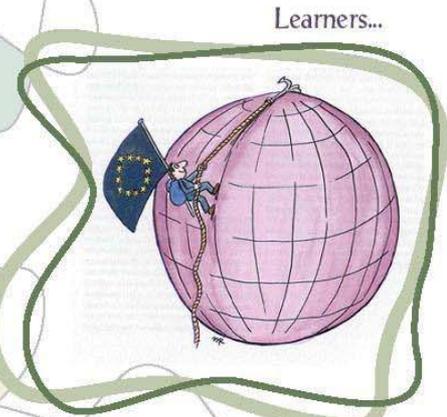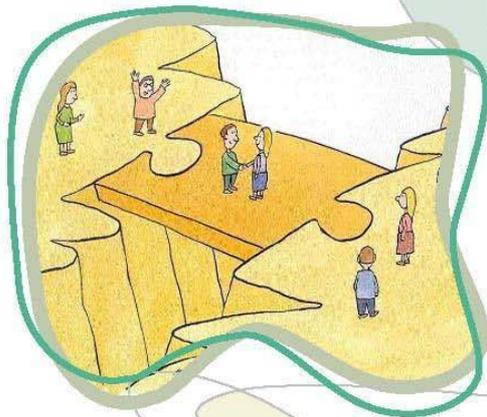Teachers...

Learners...

Educational Consultation
European Comenius Course

Exchange ... Cooperation

Cooperation between

Teachers and

Consultants

A Partnership of
Learning Support Teams from:

* Leuven, Belgium
* Kiel, Germany
* Aberdeen & Norfolk, UK
* Karmøy, Norway

Ostend - Belgium
April, 23-29, 2005

Support

READER : CONTENT

- Introduction

- The Comenius Project on Educational Consultation: Summary, 1 p.

BASIC ARTICLES (see Reader-Basic)

- Benyamini Kalman, The four clients of the school psychologist, 6 pp.

- Meijer, W., Educational Consultation. Discussing pupils in a professional way, 6pp.

- McHardy, Carmichael & Proctor, School consultation. It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing, 13 pp.

- Dens, Bogaerts & Vercammen, Educational Consultation: Effective cooperation between teachers and consultants, 6 pp.

- Wagner, P.,Consultation: developing a comprehensive approach to service delivery, 8 pp.

- Munthe & Midthassel, Peer learning groups for teachers. A Norwegian innovation, 9 pp.

OTHER SUBSTANTIAL ARTICLES (Reader-other)

- Porter & Stone, The inclusive school model: a framework and key strategies for success, 5 pp.

- Van Ham, P., e.a., Implementing a working group on pupil counselling at the school level, 12 pp.

- Meijer & Smit-Wimmenhove, How do we perceive educational consultation?, 5 pp.

- Spiess & Winkler, Helping people to become better problem solvers: a constructivistic and solution focussed process model of consultation, 6 pp.

- Reiser, Willmann, Urban & Sanders, Different models of social and emotional needs consultation and support in German schools, Hannover, 12 pp.

FURTHER READING

- Meijer, Pameijer & van Beukerink, Educational Consultation and Action Oriented Diagnostics: Implementation and Guidelines for choice, 11 pp.

- Deissler, K., Dialogs in conversation. The social construction of reflexive process within therapy and consultation, 17 pp.

Reading Guide for Reader on Educational Consultation

	,	WHY ?	THEORY basics	HOW ? general	HOW ? specific *	IMPLEM. **
	Basic articles: to read before course start					
1982	BENYAMINI, The four clients of the school psychologist				PGS	
1996	MEYER, Discussing pupils in a professional way				P	
1998	McHARDY, e,a, School Consultation, it don't mean a thing, if …					
1999	DENS, e,a, Educ. Consultation, effective co-operation…					M
1999	WAGNER, Consultation: developing a comprehensive approach…					
2004	MUNTHE & MIDTHASSEL, Peer learning groups for teachers				GS	
	Other Substantial articles					
1996	PORTER, The inclusive school model				S	
1998	VAN HAM, e.a., A working group on pupil counseling				S	EO
2001	MEYER, How do we perceive educational consultation?					E
2003	SPIES-WINKLER, Helping people to become better problem solvers				P	M
2003	REISER, e.a., Different models				PGS	CO
	Further Reading					
1998	DEISSLER, Dialogs in conversation				P	
2001	MEYER, Educ. consultation and action oriented diagnostics					MC
	* Specification as to application level					
	P : individual pupil level					
	G : group level					
	S : school level					
	** Specific items					
	M : methodological					
	E : evaluation					
	C : comparative					
	O : organisation/structures					

Questions / Using the reader

WHY ?

Before
1. Why are you interested in consultation?
2. Are you looking for a way to improve your current practice?
3. What do you see to be the main purpose of school support services?

After
1. After reading these articles, does this inspire you to improve your current practice?
2. Have your ideas about the purpose of school support changed? If so, in what way?

THEORY

Before
1. What theoretical frameworks (psychological models) influence your current thinking on consultation?

After
1. What are the assumptions of consultation?
2. How do these models/frameworks compare to your current models/frameworks?
3. If you had to summarize consultation in 3 or 4 words, what would they be?

HOW ?

Before
1. What kinds of problems can we deal with in EC?
2. How would you describe your own way of working?

After
1. How does your way of working compare with other approaches (similarities and differences

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IMPLEMENTATION

Before
1. Sofar, how did you go about developing your way of providing support?

After
1. Which ideas do you now have to improve your work?
2. How can you share and implement these ideas within your environment?

The Inclusive School Model:

A Framework and Key Strategies for Success.

Gordon L. Porter and Julie A. Stone

This article describes how an inclusive environment was created in the school district based in Woodstock, New Brunswick over the past 12 years. After exploring the philosophical underpinnings of inclusion, the article identifies six key areas of effort or initiative that have made a difference. One of them is the development of school-based student services team. The team meetings involved the principal, vice principal, the method and resource teacher. They give indirect service and collaborative support to the classroom teacher. The team tasks are to co-ordinate, to determine the need for teacher support, to clarify student needs, te define priorities, to define the need for problemsolving and to identify the need for district external support.

Background

The neighbourhood school has changed a great deal over the last decade in Canada. One of the most noticeable change is the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classes. This change has attracted attention not only in educational circles, but has also caused a stir in the media and been debated in the courts. In some parts of Canada, considerable conflict has resulted between those who endorse inclusion and those who disagree with it (Porter & Richler, 1990). In many school districts inclusive education has been successfully implemented, while others are still working toward the goal.

Some Canadian school districts have turned to the courts to block parent demands for inclusion. In a most recent high-profile case (Eaton vs. York Region Board of Education, 1996), the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the concept that inclusion should be an ideal of the education system. In this particular case, however, the high court found that it wasn't this child's best option. The implication is that court will view inclusion on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, progress toward inclusion will occur as school after school implements practices that support this model.

The success of inclusionary programs has been well documented. Further growth and development of these methods depends on school districts identifying good practices and sharing them with other jurisdictions. This chapter explores the philosophical underpinnings of inclusion and offers six specific areas of good practice which have emerced in one New Brunswick school district.

The Woodstock Experience

The school district based in Woodstock, New Brunswick, (School District No. 12) has been committed to a "full inclusion" education policy for the fast 12 years. The adoption of the policy followed several years experience with a more conservative approach that was based on a special class for students with significant disabilities. Attempts at integration were based on a student's perceived capacity or skill to learn and the regular class teacher's ability to accommodate the student. Diligent implementation of this approach over several years led teachers, administrators and parents to conclude that we had achieved sufficient success to cross a theoretical line and change our model. Our paradigm shifted and our new approach was based on the assumption of full inclusion for all. From this perspective, regular class placement was the starting point and an alternative arrangement would be put in place for an individual student only when the child's

needs weren't being met in the regular class or if the child was disrupting the learning of other students. (Porter, 1991).

By 1985, schools in the Woodstock area had no special classes and every child was served in an age-appropriate classroom where the challenge to teachers was clear - teach all the students in a diverse, heterogeneous classroom.

In the years that have passed since we initiated this approach, we have learned a good deal about what makes inclusion a success in our schools. Much of this success is related to creating a community of people who are determined to make it work - in the classroom, in the school and in the community. We have seen evidence that our community has changed significantly since we adopted an inclusionary approach to education. It is the aim of this chapter to share some of our experiences.

Partnership for Change

The move to inclusionary programs for students with disabilities resulted from the cooperative efforts of parents, district level administrators, and special education teachers (Porter, 1986) Provided the initial stimulus for the effort several parents were particularly effective in sharing the vision of their children enjoying the benefits of being included in a regular school community. It was clear to the parents, and it became increasingly clear to the professionals who worked with them, that their goals for their children could not be attained through participation in segregated classes or segregated programs. In our case, school administrators and teachers accepted the parental vision of inclusion and agreed to work with them to implement a program to achieve that goal. It was in this context of cooperation and collaboration that we developed our program of inclusion.

Getting educators to support the parent's vision of inclusion was vital to its success. Teachers and administrators have the capacity to 'make it work' or to 'see it fail' depending on their attitude toward inclusion. There was a high degree of acceptance and support for the initiative in Woodstock schools. This support was created by ensuring that the need for a change in practice was communicated to classroom teachers not just by administrators, but also through direct communication with parents. In this way, the parent's concern that their child have an opportunity to be able to learn, play and mature with their peers was made very compelling to members of the school staff.

Framework for Support

Once the commitment to inclusion was made it was the responsibility of the district and school administration to see that teachers had the necessary supports to make it work. Those in leadership positions often struggled to provide what was required. Over time, however, three key assumptions were developed, providing a support framework.

First, we accepted the reality that creating inclusive programs in schools is a major challenge to everyone concerned - students, parents, teachers and administrators. Implementing inclusive education is not like adopting a new language arts program or a new science text. It is a much more profound chance. It challenges the assumptions we have on the purpose of education; the process of education and teaching (Fullan, 1981). As a result the need for teachers to have the opportunity to learn, reflect and discover new ways of thinking and acting is considerable.

Second, to make inclusive education successful, teachers needed to be supported in their development of new and effective practices for their classrooms and their schools. Teaching heterogenous classes of students with diverse needs is not an easy task. It is also not an area that has received much attention in teacher pre-service training. As a result, schools and school districts must compensate by establishing in-service training which focuses on school and classroom issues (Perner & Porter, 1996).

Finally, while we were committed to inclusive education for students with disabilities, we made the conscious decision to declare that we did not purport to have a 'program' or a 'process' that would immediately ensure success. Instead, we emphasized that we expected problems and difficulties to occur, and we anticipated that our staff would encounter situations where they were uncertain of what actions to take. We also committed ourselves to active effort in supporting teachers and identifying problems, and coming up with workable strategies to deal with them (Porter, Wilson & all, 1991).

Key Supports for Inclusion

With these three assumptions to provide guidance, we moved ahead with our effort to serve all our students in age-appropriate classes in neighborhood schools. Over several years, we put effort into many kinds of support, however, as we reflect back on our experience during, the last decade, we can identify six key areas of effort or initiative that we believe have made a difference. We will describe each of them briefly.

Support Form 1 : Develop School-based Student Services Teams

The *School-based Student Services team (school team)* is the key means by which teachers are provided with support in our schools. The need to develop such a clear idea of a team did not emerge in our first few years with an inclusive education program. We knew that staff members had to work together to collaborate and coordinate support to students and classroom teachers. However, we were not thinking about a 'team', in the way we now do as the focal point for a wide variety of functions.

In our district, one of the critical steps toward developing a school team was the creation of the position of a 'Method and Resource teacher' (M&R teacher) to provide a new role for the special education teacher and the resource teacher. While this new position and role will be described in detail below, it is important to make a few aspects of the role clear in relation to the school team. The new role for the M&R teacher emphasized the provision of indirect collaborative support to classroom teachers, not direct instruction to students as had previously been the case. The result was that the M&R teacher(s) spent a good deal of time going in and out of classrooms, checking to see what was happening and whether teachers were in need of more or different supports. Support might take the form of help in planning or strategy development or it might involve provision of para-professional assistance from a teacher assistant. In larger schools, two or even three M&R teachers might be assigned this responsibility.

The addition of one or more M&R teachers, who visited classes and worked with teachers, provided the impetus for the evolution of a school-based student services team. School administrators - the principal and vice principal - were involved in similar activities with teachers, but for different reasons, and with a different focus. As the process went ahead, the M&R teachers experienced a transition in their sense of professional identity and accountability. Initially they were perceived to be 'special education staff' with a role and mandate that was district-based and focused on serving 'exceptional students' and the teachers in whose classes they were placed. Their role and work were recorded by district staff and a copy was sent back to each member of the school staff. These meetings involved the principal, vice principal, the M&R teacher(s) and the guidance counselor. In some schools one or more teacher assistants might attend the meetings if it was deemed appropriate.

During the last few years, a member of the District Student Services Team is assigned a liaison function to each school-based team. Individual district staff members are typically assigned this responsibility for two or three schools. The school team meets weekly and attends to the essential tasks needed to support teachers and students. Table 1. 1 illustrates the concept of the School-based Student Services Team.

In District 12, the classroom teacher provides the direct service to students and everyone else provides support to the teacher and indirect service to the students. Even teacher assistants, who may be in the classroom working with individual students, do so only under the explicit direction of the classroom teacher.

Table **1**
School-based Student Services Team

Direct Instruction	Indirect Service & Collaborative Support
Classroom Teacher ◁-- ◁-- ◁--	School team Para-Professional(s) Direct Staff M&R Teacher Guidance Teacher Principal (VP) Other Teachers

Team Tasks

1. Coordinate efforts of Student Services Staff and School Administration

We soon found that the M&R teacher(s) and guidance counsellors had to work closely with the school administration to get their work done properly. While their role and function varies, each member of the team plays an important part in the support provided to teachers to achieve the hibest possible levels of success with students. Team meetings provide an opportunity to share information and to coordinate their efforts for greater results.

2. Determine Need for Teacher Support

Administrators, M&R teachers and guidance counsellors spend their time visiting classrooms and thus observe and discuss with teachers a range of issues and situations in which the teacher would benefit from support. The Student Services Team Meeting provides an opportunity for these needs to be considered and for the most appropriate strategy to be developed to assist the teacher. In addition, the member of the team in the best position, by role and function, knowledge and skill, as well as time and opportunity, can be assigned the support role. It also allows each member of the team to be aware of the efforts of other team members and thus permits more efficient use of each team member's time. Teamwork at this level also helps in the identification of issues that are less individual and more systemic in nature. In these situations a more generic plan for in-service, or strategy development for groups of teachers may be the result.

3. Clarify Student Needs

Student needs are determined in much the same way as those of teachers - through day-to-day observations and discussions with teachers in their classrooms. Members of the Student Services Team collaborate with teachers to pinpoint specific student needs, for those already identified, as

well as students whose needs emerge during, the work done together. Team members can share information on the needs of students, as well as the perspectives of parents and teachers during their regular meetings.

4. Define Priorities

In every school the work of supporting staff and students is unending. There is always more work than can be done. In this context, the team reviews actions taken on issues raised at previous meetings and agree on new priorities. They can make decisions on the use of their own time, allocate support from teacher assistants or para-professionals, and make other adjustments to programs and activities to reflect the adjusted priorities. They can also provide recommendations for the use of school funds and other resources that might help with the situation. As a team, the priorities they set may be reflected in a school improvement plan, as well as in proposals for projects designed to improve school effectiveness.

5. Define Need for Problem Solving

An efficient school-based team can help resolve many of the difficulties teachers encounter on a regular basis. When support from an Individual team member does not resolve the issue, the team can direct a more intensive approach to the situation, whether it is student- or teacher-based, or whether it involves a group of students or a particular grade level. A concentrated effort by several team members can often make a difference. In other cases a problem-solving meeting may be called for. A description of the 'Teachers Helping Teachers' process used in District 12 is described below as strategy 5.

6. Identify Need for District External Support

It is important that a school team be as self-sufficient as possible, but the team will inevitably encounter circumstances when the involvement of district personnel, or the personnel of external agencies is needed. This external support will be coordinated by the school team and will be used to enhance the school team's efforts. This type of support may be provided by a psychologist, an educational consultant, or a therapist of some kind. It might also be necessary for team members to advocate for additional school- based resources, for example, a teacher assistant or a student mentor. The support might also be funds to support in-service for several teachers on a matter of significant need.

These are some of the ways that School-based Student Services Teams have become a crucial part of the district inclusive education program. The process of evolution, growth, and change is on-going. We know that collaborative teamwork is a powerful factor in the effort to make our model work well for students and for teachers.

IMPLEMENTING A WORKING GROUP ON PUPIL COUNSELLING
AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

Piet Van Ham (co-ordinator), Lieve Jacob, Wim Jacobs,
Marleen Van de Mosselaer and Joost Vermeersch

The changing society obliges the school to take up counselling. Curative and preventive actions should be structured in a plan of action for pupil counselling. This can only function if the school has the necessary consultation structures and procedures. Such a structure is the working group on pupil counselling (WGPC) who consists of an group of people who think about ways to increase and improve the pupils' relief and who try to stimulate pupil counselling by introducing some actions on both curative and preventive levels. The WGPC consists of permanent members like core and/or master teachers, the principal, the CLB-assistant and the school counsellors. They have all their specific roles and duties. They have regular meetings. Such a WGPC can work efficient and effective when it can realise sufficient information-flow, clear objectives and definition of roles and a well structured framework that suppports the participants.

1. The Working Group: some principles

As an introduction to our comments on some principles, together being the starting-points of this innovative action at the school level in Flanders, we have to comment briefly on the translation of the original Dutch equivalent to "Working Group on Pupil Counselling" (WGPC).

In Flanders we are used to the term "Cel Leerlingbegeleiding". The translation into a fair and reasonable equivalent in English turned out to be not so easy. Some colleagues, f.e. Pirjo Laaksonen from the Education Service at the Provincial Government of Uusimaa in Helsinki, use the term 'Student Welfare Team' for a similar action in Finland. Native English speakers from the United Kingdom felt a little bit uncomfortably with this translation.

'Student' although very popular in the United States for all schoolchildren, refers in particular to the elder pupils. Our focus is on primary and secondary, compulsory, education. Therefore we wanted to exclude higher education students from our focus in this book and have chosen pupil instead of student.

The word welfare also refers to more structural and very broad aspects of social policy, far beyond the scope of our focus. Perhaps our option on counselling focuses not enough on more structural aspects, but the idea of pupils being at the core of our initiatives made us decide in favour of this alternative.

Last but not least there was the choice between team or working group (not working party, for the group being not just a study group). Everything is related to teams and networks today. Teams have to be built up, etc... We have chosen for an alternative focussing on the work to be done, not so much on the team to build. Of course teams and groups only function very well under excellent social conditions, but our concern primarily is for the pupil who needs counselling, guidance and support.

The decision on the translation of the term 'Cel Leerlingbegeleiding' has been made, after consultation, by the editor of this book, not by the authors. The editor takes all the responsibility in case this decision is judged to be arbitrary or incorrect.

1.1. Taking care

From all layers of society, the school is called on to take care of its pupils. Teachers are expected to teach the pupils how to study and how to choose but they should also help them to grow up.

Among PMS / now CLB-staff / (¹), there is a growing awareness that more time should be spent on the pupil with problems and less time on the location of problems. School and CLB should work together to improve the detection of pupils with problems and they should also provide first help.

The CLB will support the school consultatively to provide good relief for all its pupils. It's an integrated form of pupil counselling, in which CLB, school and parents have a shared responsibility. This view forms the background of this chapter on the "WGPC".

1.2. What is pupil counselling?

The changing society obliges the school to take up counselling. The process of growing-up gets more complicated. The media brings the pupils into contact with plenty of information, information they are not always ready for.

Teachers are faced with problems that occur outside the school, like broken families, addictions, petty crime, vandalism, ... Outside the school, youngsters are sometimes treated like full members of society because they often have part-time jobs and, consequently, a lot of money to spend. Advertising companies take advantage of this and the youngsters are considered to be a specific target group. Inside the school however, they are still considered to be youngsters, and not adults. Confronted with this phenomenon, pupil counselling is not free of obligations but demands vision, structure and organisation.

> *The school office of a secondary school was confronted with the complaints of duped pupils. Things such as expensive ball-points, purses, personal stereo, ... were stolen during and between the classes. Because of the size and frequency of the thefts, suspicion rose that it could not be one pupil. The headmaster was informed and he in his turn consulted the head of department and the CLB-assistant. How should a school react to such a theft plague?*

Some schools only act when a problem occurs. They try to adjust the situation after the mischief has happened. It is a kind of first aid by accidents. Curative interventions are the result.

Other schools try to prevent problems from happening; they work preventative. The teachers pay more attention to arising problems. These problems are dealt with immediately. It requires a lot of energy to solve all the problems and to prevent other problems, not only to work curative, but also preventive.

Curative and preventive actions should be structured in a plan of action for pupil counselling, so as to have a clear view of how to improve the welfare and development of the pupil. If a school considers this objective, it can create the necessary conditions and undertake the appropriate actions.

1.3. Pupil counselling in action

In a school, a lot of participants work together on pupil counselling.

First there is the class teacher (or a master teacher). His proximity makes him best classified to pick up the first signals and to pay attention to the individual and group happenings in the class. He tries to solve the emerging problems.

Then the class teacher can fall back on the class council or the (multidisciplinary team). Discussing the problems of a pupil by a larger group of teachers and looking together for proposals to e.g. remedy deficiencies, can be very enriching. Moreover, it can enable the group to divide the tasks and responsibilities.

In some schools the class teacher and class committee are supported by a number of core members who play a very important role in pupil counselling : the principal (and his deputy), the

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(¹) In the original publication: "PMS": Psycho-Medico-Social Centres. Name changed by law in 1999.
Now called: CLB (Centra voor Leerlingenbegeleiding). In this text: "CLB", read: Pupil Support Centres.

remedial teacher, the confidence or green teacher, the head of department, the school counsellor. These core members are confronted with some specific tasks concerning the relief of pupils with problems.

These specific tasks concerning pupil counselling can only function if the school has the necessary consultation structures and procedures.

In reality, a lot of schools already have these structures. We think about structures having different names, but focussing on similar projects: the confidence group, the prevention council, the pastoral committee, ... These groups can both have curative or preventive tasks. Most of these groups work on pupil counselling: they deal with the individual problems of pupils. The prevention council however, refers to consultation at the school level: they organise preventive actions in the whole school, aimed at all the pupils.

The CLB works together with the school to improve school counselling, so that the school does not stand on its own in this respect. They hold a very specific place in the school life. They work autonomously but support the school with their supplementary expertise on psychological, pedagogical, medical and social issues. The school has to ask the CLB to provide the necessary expertise and both parties should aim at cooperation to improve the pupil counselling. The support can only work if there is harmony between the different participants, a complementary collaboration. The teacher is responsible for the primary care but is supported by the school team and CLB. This collaboration can be realised in what we call the WGPC.

This WGPC consists of a group of people who think about ways to increase and improve the pupils' relief and who try to stimulate pupil counselling by introducing some actions on both curative and preventive levels.

1.4. The Working Group on Pupil Counselling

The WGPC consists of permanent members and has regular meetings.

In primary schools the primary focus is on consultation among the principal, the class teacher, the remedial teacher, the school counsellor and the CLB-assistant. Later, this core group can be extended with some other teachers to deal with problems that exceed individual or class problems.

In secondary schools the WGPC co-ordinates pupil counselling activities as well. It takes initiatives to improve the learning strategies of pupils, it helps the pupils to choose study subjects and it helps pupils with socio-emotional problems. The Working Group consists of the headmaster, educational staff and the CLB-assistant. Sometimes, depending on the topics on the agenda, pupils, parents or MST staff can participate as well.

This consultation brings together the expertise of different authorities and provides continuing systematic attention for an integrated pupil counselling. The first aim is to find solutions that reckon with the situation of the pupil. School and parents together can solve many problems. It is of primordial importance that help at school and at home are integrated.

Some pupils can be referred to a CLB-expert. He will then take up the counselling, in close consultation with parents and teachers and with the necessary respect for the privacy of the pupil.

In the WGPC, the members decide whether it is necessary to involve external assistance. These instances can be f.e. a Centrum voor Geestelijke Gezondheidszorg (Centres voor mental health care), a Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn (Public Centre for Social Welfare) (OCMW), a Comité voor bijzondere jeugdzorg (Committee for special youth care) (CBJ), Vereniging voor Alcohol en Drugsverslaving) (Association for Alcohol and Drugs Dependency) (VAD). The CLB can have an important bridging function.

The CLB has a profound knowledge of these instances. The ultimate aim is to optimize pupil counselling. On a curative level, they are concerned that the external counselling of the individual pupil is closely related to school life. On a preventive level, the CLB can appeal for

the know-how of external instances, taking into account the individual character of the school. Doing so does not mean that school and CLB are relieved from the task of prevention.

The WGPC concentrates on three areas for special attention. Both during and after the classes, they should pay attention to the act of studying, the choice of study subjects and the socio- emotional development of the pupil. The counselling of difficult classes, for instance, is situated in this last field.

Deliberation upon pupils' behaviour and development and discussing school-related topics should not be strictly separated. Pupil deliberation about a specific problem can soon lead to the notion that this problem is not an isolated case and that class or school measures should be taken to solve the problem. Signals from the pupil deliberation should get enough attention during the consultation over school-related issues in the WGPC.

> *In every school there are pupils who bully or are bullied. Even if some of them are taught alternative behaviour by the CLB- assistant in counselling sessions, it is very likely that other pupils will take their place and become in turn also victims. If the pupil deliberation only deals with individual pupils, it is like carrying water to the sea. School deliberation should take measures on class and school level. Bullying is often the result of an unfavourable class atmosphere, negative group rules, a lack of agreements between teachers and the presence of areas with a lack of supervision.*

In reality, it is possible that the WGPC starts with discussing pupil-related issues and in time will spend more and more time on school-related topics.

> *The topics that are dealt with in the school deliberation can be very diverse. One can wonder whether it is worthwhile to start with a confidant teacher. If the answer is yes, the definition of his task and the way in which he can be supported by the CLB-assistant should be investigated, as well as the material support he needs. Another possible theme deals with personal development and sex education. Is it not advisable to include relational and ethical education while doing sex education? How do we deal with drug prevention? Is it enough to inform the teachers and pupils about the existing products or should we teach the pupils how to handle stimulants? Does the introduction of Leefsleutels (literal:. Keys for living) have a positive influence on the class climate? Does it improve the situation of the individual pupil in our school? If so, are we willing to sacrifice more periods and curriculum time to these Leefsleutels? The WGPC should ask itself questions like these: Which teachers would be best suited to take up these extra tasks? How can we involve parents from the very beginning? How can we inform the participating teachers?*

When the consultation on school-related topics deals with this diversity, the need grows to develop a long-term vision. The different projects should also be assessed to be sure the objectives are reached. All this should result in a delineated plan for pupil counselling.

The presence of a CLB-assistant in the WGPC is beyond all doubts necessary and useful. External professionals need a lot of time and energy to find out the specific situation and needs of a certain school. The CLB-assistant is already familiar with these and hence is better placed to supervise a certain project. The assistant is the best person to look after the feasibility, the evaluation and the follow-up of the project.

The CLB-assistant can fully employ his consultative function. He is not just charged with troubleshooting, but is, together with the others, responsible. All the members should build up their level of expertise in order to divide the efforts and to avoid the strain of some.

2. Implementation of the Working Group

(for this section: see pages 49-59 of the book)

3. Functioning of the Working Group

Every school has its own vision and culture. This vision influences the way in which this school deals with problems. A new structure cannot be enforced from without, but should be introduced in the existing school structure. The schools vision and culture should be respected.

Everybody has his own opinions and values. We can think that every teacher should be able to deal with individual problem behaviour of the pupils. From this point of view, it is clear that the confidence or green teacher is very valuable. If we enter a school with this idea, but that school does not have the same opinion, we burden the teachers with the idea that they are wrong. In our attitude towards a school, these opinions are not of primary importance. On the other hand it is very important that we first investigate the values and opinions that live in the school.

A better approach would be an inquiry among the teachers. A WGPC should evaluate and adjust the projects continuously so that teachers and pupils always find themselves in them. In this opinion a school is considered to be a basis for personal development. The school develops its care enhancement from cognitive to socio-emotional emphasis. This means that the school has to provide a good study and work climate, where teacher and pupil feel at home.
Pupil counselling should always be related to the world pupils live in and should teach them to take up responsibility.

In the next paragraphs two aspects will be commented on: the composition and functioning of the WGPC as a group (3.1) and the position of the CLB-assistant (3.2).

3.1 Group members and their behaviour

Pupil counselling is teamwork, hence the quality of (social) relations between participants will be fundamental to success. We focalize in this paragraph on three major aspects: the composition of the Working Group, the involvement of the core or master teachers and of the principal.

3.1.1 Composition of the group

The best way to start is with some core or master teachers who are willing to work together on the reform project. Not everybody wants to cooperate on such an innovative project.

A core group also makes it easier to organise the meetings. This core group exists of the core and/or master teachers, the principal, the CLB-assistant and the school counsellors or co-ordinators. Other staff members can also take part, as well as temporary members, depending on which subjects are dealt with. In primary education, the remedial teacher and/or the special needs teacher) can also be involved in the project. They can all participate in the development of ideas and the project.

Consultation and communication are essential in all phases of the decision-making process: the analysis of the starting situation, the selection of the proposals and the taking of a concrete decision. A majority of people should agree on a certain project. The professional secret and the personal integrity should always be guaranteed. Only if all members feel responsible and if they are supported in their ideas, a team spirit, which is necessary for success, can be developed.

Regular meetings with a set agenda are necessary. The chairperson and the secretary should see to this. The division of the tasks is also very important and the interests and proficiency of the members should be taken into account.

3.1.2 Involvement of the core- and master teacher(s)

The WGPC mainly consists of teachers. Their participation is not free of obligations, here are some consequences. Colleagues will inquire for more information and they should attend all the meetings.

The composition of a WGPC shall be looked at critically by the other teachers. Reactions can be either positive or negative. The other teachers will regard the participation of a popular teacher as positive. Other participants will be highly respected because they have already proven that they can add something to a group. Other teachers feel passed over and they will distance themselves from the project. They will try to minimise or ridicule the project.

It is therefore important that the Working Group gets the authority from the whole group, officially or unofficially. This does not mean that all the teachers have to agree with the appointment of all members. Support and agreement of the principal on the other hand is necessary. The participating teachers have a history in the school: they stand for a certain point of view that is alive in the school.

When the WGPC has introduced a set of ideas, it is quite normal that a difference of opinion will arise. Sometimes the contents of the proposals are adapted, because some teachers criticise the participants, rather than looking at the contents of the proposals.

> *The WGPC decided unanimously to give a special test to pupils who were treated for dyslexic problems. The special needs teacher was asked to introduce this idea, with all the practical consequences, to the teaching team. The test involved that the pupils would get help in reading the written tests. A lot of teachers couldn't agree with this proposal because the principal of equality was violated. The remedial teacher was the scapegoat: "He should have studied speech therapy", was a common remark.*

It is obvious that reactions can be aimed at people, rather than the contents. It is therefor important that all the members of the Working Group support each other. Shared responsibility is necessary because if you want to introduce innovations, you sometimes have to touch some privileges in a school, which is not without risks.

Being a member of a WGPC is often a hard and difficult job. The members have to deal with subject-related matters, values, cross-curricular topics, pupils, the school, the parents, and other teachers. A core member is also part of the school, so objectivity and neutrality are not possible; a core member is not an observer.

> *A WGPC is working on a vision about the educational project of the school. After some time, this results in the setting up of some projects that afflict the organisation of the school. Certain privileges are touched and they have to reconsider the division of certain tasks to make it clear for both pupils and teachers who is responsible for what. The loss of privileges and the redistribution of tasks create a difference of opinion. The teachers are going to discuss the project from the point of view of their own objections. The discussion becomes personal, the contents of the projects and the innovations are put aside. Teachers who are not immediately involved, also have their influence. Either they feel neglected or their opinion does not fit the opinion of the majority.*

You have to take the feelings of these people into account. It is not wise to neglect them. Their critical objections have an influence on the innovation itself, as well as on the speed to proceed with the project effectively.

3.1.3 Involvement of the principal

The principal has the final responsibility for new initiatives. Without his lasting support, innovations stand no change to be successful within a school. His involvement, recognition and steering are of primordial importance.

> *The WGPC of a small primary school in a rural environment is convinced of the need for some projects concerning personal development and sex education towards the pupils of the higher forms. The principal is, with cause, worried about the good reputation of the school. He knows that the local community is not ready yet for an open discussion about aids. He expresses his concern and it is accepted by the other members. They are looking for other ways to deal with the problem.*

One of the most important aspects of chairing a WGPC is about taking care of the continuity in the activities and discussions and the continuance of thought: meetings have to be scheduled at regular intervals, good notes have to be made, engagements may not be broken. Group discussions can be helpful as long the atmosphere is open and decision-making can be unanimous. The principal will have to co-ordinate the execution of what has been decided.

Special attention has to be given to core or master teachers and other co- coordinators who are confronted with the resistance of other teachers. Resistance always has to be debatable. An authoritarian rejection will hamper a successful implementation of change in the end.

Four areas for special attention are to be focalized on. First of all there is the content of the action.

> *Core members were fascinated by the a proposed programme on aids prevention as such, but they had forgotten the consequences of the proposed action on the workload of other teachers. Other teachers argued, predictable, the programme was just not going to fit within the constraints of the curriculum. The level of concern among the teaching staff apparently had been underestimated.*

Here the second area for special attention comes into play: the teachers. One never can detach the content from the behaviour of those who have to do the job.

The third area of concern is the school as an organisation.

> *Participation in the process of innovation will lead to necessary re-arrangements of tasks and curriculum periods. Inevitably this will affect the organisational climate in the school.*

And last but not least, special attention has to be given to the organisation of support for teachers, including in-service training or discussion groups at school.
These four areas are closely linked together. They are interwoven in such a way that a change in one area automatically is going to influence the others.

3.2   The position of the CLB-assistant as a counsellor

A WGPC is the best working instrument to keep the pupil counselling under constant attention. If the school wants to improve the care enhancement for the pupils, they need the availability of a core group of people inside the school who are willing and able to organise and develop certain activities. The CLB-assistant is one member of this group.

> *The CLB-assistant, who knows the in and outs of the school, can stimulate a school to look for teachers who are willing to take up responsibility to improve the initiatives on pupil counselling. This is the first step if the school has not yet taken any measures to start a WGPC. Sometimes other groups already exist, e.g. about career choice. In this case it can be considered make the responsibility of this group converge with the pupil counselling initiatives.*

The CLB-assistant is co-responsible for the improvements of pupil counselling and should guard the quality of the innovations. The WGPC is responsible for the objectives attached to the innovations. They also have to develop the strategy to achieve these objectives and they decide which activities will be organised. These activities will then be evaluated and adapted where necessary.

The WGPC on the other hand should create the necessary conditions so that the CLB can do its work on a preventive and curative level.

The responsibilities of the different counsellors - the CLB-assistant not necessarily being the only one - can be very diverse. It goes without saying that everybody gets the tasks he is best educated for. This does not mean however that certain tasks cannot be done by more people. The WGPC decides who takes up which responsibility. Not only the expertise but also the function of the participants in the school can play a role in the division of the tasks. The core or master teacher, a coordinator or a head of department, the principal and the vice-principal, the remedial teacher and the special needs teacher, administrative and auxiliary staff, ... are more likely to be assigned some tasks.

The role of the CLB-assistant however is very specific: he is more independent from the school and the principal compared to the other core members involved. This makes it easier for him to act as an advisor, a chairperson, a problem solver, a confidant, etc. On the other hand, he is less well placed to carry responsibility for the concrete actions towards the pupils. However, he should have co-responsibility for the evaluation of the concrete actions. In the next paragraphs, we discuss the tasks of the CLB- assistant in the WGPC.

Four aspects related to the profile of the CLB-assistant as an external change agent will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

3.2.1   Source of inspiration

His training and practical experiences enable the CLB-assistant to bring forward new ideas that can help to solve emerging problems.

> *In the third grade of a primary school the teacher experiences that he has difficulties in detecting learning problems of some pupils. It seems to him that it would be more efficient if he would know about these problems at an earlier stage, so that he could revise the subject matter individually. This problem is dealt with in the WGPC. The issue is how to improve the information-flow from one form to the other. The CLB-assistant suggests to analyse the existing system of individual pupil riling cards. Should the contents be changed so that there is more space for the description of learning difficulties? Would it be useful to organise a meeting at the beginning of the school year so that all teachers can comment orally on the written cards? How can we involve the principal and the remedial teacher in this process? What about the nursery school teachers? During the discussion it is agreed that the CLB-assistant together with the remedial teacher will alter the filing cards and that they will put forward their proposals at the next staff meeting so that all teachers have the possibility to comment on them. The principal formulates a proposal to organise a few meetings on the subject.*

3.2.2   Support from a change agent

In a WGPC people are looking for ways to optimize the quality of pupil counselling activities in a school. During this process, problems between individuals can arise. The CLB-assistant should build up enough proficiency to indicate and deal with these types of problems. He should not only stimulate the cooperation, but also keep an eye on the changing mentalities of the individual and the group.

> *In the third grade of a primary school, there seemed to be a bullying problem. The principal received complaints from parents whose children were bullied. This problem was taken up in the WGPC and after some consideration it was decided to deal with it indirectly by means of specially planned class activities. The problem was that only one out of four teachers of the sixth form was involved in the discussion, so the question remained. How can we motivate the other teachers to take part in the anti-bullying program? If these teachers would have been involved right from the start, the problem would have been avoided. The willingness of these teachers to do something about this problem could have been measured, they could have had their say in the discussion and they could have decided together what to do about the problem.*

Innovation requires consideration and communication, both inside the WGPC and towards the other people involved: teachers, parents, and pupils. The consideration inside a WGPC needs to be well structured.

> *Apparent unimportant details can seriously disturb the good functioning of a WGPC. Why does one of the members not show up at a meeting without giving notice? Has a date been set for a next meeting? Is there an agenda for the next meeting? Who makes the report and is it distributed among the members? Is there a clear division of the tasks? Are all the problems and feelings uttered so that they are not going to lead their own lives? Have all the action points of previous meetings been realised or followed up?*

Evidently, the involvement of other external social services should be considered for consultation and support on specific problems or initiatives. However, the focus always has to be on (or to start from) the school's agenda, not the one from the external agencies.

3.2.3. Providing expertise

Through his training and practical experience in counselling pupils and their parents, the CLB-assistant has reached a certain form of expertise: he can deal with certain problems, both on curative and preventive levels. Problems concerning health, behaviour, social relations, family.... are dealt with from different angles. This expertise can help to improve the pupil counselling in the school.

> *In a secondary school the WGPC decided to install a primary care team. This team consisted of three salaried teachers who were responsible for the individual and personal reception of pupils with problems. The pupils could see the teachers in confidence. The problems these teachers had to deal with were very diverse: relational problems with teachers and fellow students, special needs, family problems and so on. In a weekly team meeting the CLB-assistant supported these teachers by giving advice, suggesting ways to deal with certain problems, the construction of a plan of action, the preparation of a 'bad-news-talk' with parents.*
> *If a problem was beyond the possibilities of the teachers and a more professional approach was necessary, the CLB-assistant took over and dealt with the problem himself.*

3.2.4. Referring to external assistance

The CLBs are very closely related to the schools. This does not mean that individual curative counselling of pupils and parents is ex- eluded. To do so, the centres have developed cooperation schemes with other social services and they know were to go with which problems. So, the CLB-assistant can be a link between the school and external instances. He also has a better idea about the kind of counselling that is necessary, the length and frequency. The external counselling can be both curative and preventive. The cooperation can be with a juvenile psychiatrist about the pathological problems of a youngster or with an INSET Agency (in-service-training) about training for certain teachers.

> *In the WGPC, it was noticed that the class councils did not function very well because the elementary conversation techniques were lacking. Some teachers did not say a word, other teachers did not keep to the point, the discussion was very chaotic and it was impossible to come to a structured solution of the problems. The cell decided to discuss this problem with the class teachers, who had to lead the class councils. The solution was that the interested class teachers had the opportunity to follow extra training in leading techniques so that they could better structure and lead the discussions.*

It could be very enriching if the CLBs developed closer links with the INSET Agencies. Their experiences could give interesting ideas about the topics that should be dealt with. The Council on the other hand could communicate their solicitudes to the CLBs, so that they could keep these in mind.

The above discussed job description is of course not compulsory. Personal preferences and proficiency of the assistant can also have an influence on his task.

4. Efficiency and effectivity

Summarising our experiences outlined under the previous sections we now concentrate on four aspects of efficient and effective work: the information-flow, the content of the discussions in the Working Group, the perception of effectiveness as well as on some pitfalls in the process of implementing a Working Group.

4.1. Information-flow

During processes of renewal it is important that, in addition to the core members, those directly concerned are kept well informed regarding the content and progress of the renewal. Good reporting is essential for passing on information. Ideally, a system should be adopted in which

those directly affected are able to respond to the reporting and make any adjustments that may be necessary. No-one must have the feeling of being 'governed' or ignored. In this way, those directly affected become active participants in the renewal process.

The participants in the WGPC must take full account of the views of those directly affected. Sensitive areas should not be treated too lightly. To ensure the success of a renewal project, the majority of those affected by it must be able to agree to it.

In this respect the views of silent thinkers, and any criticisms they may have, can be constructive. Defensive behaviour can act as an early warning and lead to adjustment of the renewal process. Resistance should therefore be interpreted in a positive light.

While it is not essential to involve everyone on the teaching staff in a renewal project, it is necessary to inform the other teachers about the operation and scheduling of the project.
This can be achieved either through written notices or by informing them verbally at staff meetings. The problem with posting messages on notice boards is that they are sometimes read too late, or not at all. Not all information vehicles are equally effective.
A newsletter is time-consuming and labour-intensive. Passing on information verbally is highly effective, but the accessibility of some sections of the teaching staff has to be borne in mind very closely. For preference, the broadest possible information channels should be used. Examples include magazines, letters, working group meetings, staff meetings, verbal transfer, etc.

A school is not an island. Every renewal project will ultimately be felt beyond the school walls. Parents are brought into the process and informed at the earliest possible stage. The impact of some of the actions taken will also be felt in the pupils' families.

Other schools in the vicinity will also look beyond their own walls. Other organisations facing similar problems will at the least try to follow the course of the project with interest. This may result in a discussion, following which a group of schools and organisations may decide to pool their strengths.

> *Say a secondary school starts a project to tackle dependency. A number of activities are undertaken aimed collectively at the different school years and designed to encourage pupils to adopt a healthy attitude to work and to life. The parents are informed of the project via the school newspaper. The local parents' association responds enthusiastically. It feels that the proposed project should be followed up and deserves broader public support. It gives the impetus for the setting up of a regional meeting with other secondary schools in the area, the municipal youth welfare organisations, the police and the local alcohol and drug abuse centre. A report is complied on the school project and correspondences are sought between existing initiatives with the aim of combining the efforts and creating a more coherent approach to the problem in the future.*

4.2. Content of the discussions

Discussion of the objectives envisaged for the long, medium or short term can be a good starting point in seeking to optimise the pupil counselling process. Long-term objectives are important as a general goal to which all efforts are ultimately directed. In the medium term, a plan can be formulated setting out the goals for the ensuing years. These goals are more concrete than the long-term objectives. Short-term goals are the tangible actions taken now in the field.

> *The long-term objective of the WGPC is that pupil counselling should be geared to developing pupil independence. To promote that independence, attempts will be made over the next three years to place the emphasis on the counselling of class groups. The aim will be to develop the pupils' social and relationship skills. One of the tangible actions that will inevitably have to be taken will be to encourage class teachers to follow a training programme. After all, they are the ones who feel they lack all the skills to deal with groups of pupils. They want to be able to supervise and motivate the class as a group more effectively.*

A WGPC can also start from the basis of existing policy activities. First an inventory is made of all activities; these activities are then analysed to see whether they fit in with the aimed-for objectives. Based on their feasibility, usability and effectiveness, a view is formed as to how these activities can be deployed more effectively.

In practice, attempts to optimise pupil counselling are most frequently based on problems and bottlenecks; an urgent problem is identified and taken as the starting point. It is important here that the problem is carefully analysed and clearly formulated and that the solution is a systematic process. Creative and achievable solution methods are naturally preferred. Knowing what we want to achieve stimulates creativity.

4.3. Perception of effectiveness

It is useless to try and solve all problems at the same time. If a selection has to be made, there are a few criteria that could make it easier to choose: feasibility, available time and proficiency at hand. Also the participants and their extra training should be considered. Next, the moments of evaluation should be set.

The participating teachers should feel that they are supported by a solid, well-structured framework. This support is necessary to let them feel that the actions can be successful.
Such a well-structured framework is often missing: some individuals have to pull the cart. This means that these people are under a lot of pressure, which jeopardises the feasibility of the project.

In an early stage, CLB-assistants can be very successful in organising new projects. In a WGPC, they first should be supported but later, their tasks should be divided among the other members.

The response from pupils and parents can be very motivating: positive reactions are very supporting. Activities that guarantee a perception of success, should be stimulated. Immediate result gives people the idea that what they do makes a difference. These positive reactions, no matter how small they are, should be directed towards the participants: it gives them a good feeling.

> *The WGPC advises to embellish the playgrounds (new benches, new and more plants and trees). Both pupils and teachers agree that it is an improvement because now it is more pleasant to use them. The school climate has improved.*

4.4. Pitfalls

In a WGPC, different people have to work together: interested teachers, principal, CLB-assistant, co-ordinator, etc.. Every member of the group has his own ideas, his own responsibilities in the school, his own function. Misunderstandings between these people, or a lack of clarity about the tasks can lead to conflicts.

> *The principal wants a more systematic approach of the pupil counselling to increase the quality. This is discussed in the WGPC. In the past, pupil counselling was the responsibility of the internal pedagogical counsellor, who had his own ideas about education and counselling. So far he was left completely free by the principal, but this does not mean that all the members of the WGPC will agree with the ideas and actions of the internal counsellor. Some members of the Working Group might have different ideas about education, the tasks and responsibilities in the school. This should be talked through first, before the Working Group can deal with this problem.*

It is also important to realise that not everybody is open to change and innovation.
Some teachers might be afraid of innovations. Other teachers feel too uncertain to add to the process. Other teachers might be afraid to lose their privileges, advantages or power and oppose the proposed innovations. Still others might have a different opinion about what a school should be and they might feel suspicious of the innovations.

Because of his training and practical experience, the CLB-assistant will be better situated than the average teacher to do pupil counselling. If he feels that his experience and proficiency are wanted in a school, it will increase his self-image. The danger then is that he will be considered to be the only person in the school who actually is able to solve problems with pupils.

The CLB-assistant feels consolidated in his task and will forget about teaching other teachers how to deal with problems.

> *A CLB-assistant is very good at introducing learning principles to the pupils, both individually and on classical level. He has managed to improve the learning strategies of some pupils so that their results have increased considerably. The teachers consider him to be an expert on this matter so every time such a problem appears, the pupil is sent to the assistant. The assistant has to put more and more time in this counselling, so he has not got any time left to do other things in the school. In the WGPC, it could be discussed how the proficiency about Leren leren (Learning to learn) of the teachers can be increased so that in the future they can deal with this problem themselves.*

It is therefore important to pay attention to consultative pupil counselling, whether it is about learning to learn, curriculum-related or socio-emotional problems. The first question then should be how to improve the knowledge and skills of the teachers, parents and pupils, so that they can solve problems themselves. The CLB-assistant should support the teachers by providing knowledge and skills.

It would also be very useful if a WGPC would think about the objectives in the long term. This will lead to discussions about what pupil counselling should be. A confrontation between different opinions and values is inevitable. This discussion should not be endless, it is necessary to concretize at an early stage and to develop a vision so that concrete activities and an assignment of tasks can be planned. If this vision is missing, it is impossible to come to an integrated project.

> *The WGPC is programming an educational seminar. The discussion is about the topics that should be dealt with, who could be asked to give a lecture, how to make this day more attractive to the teachers, how the teachers can be more involved, etc.... The objectives are not discussed, neither is the type of evaluation that should be used afterwards or the way in which the topics could be handled later. The question whether the educational seminar **fits** in the vision on pupil counselling is not asked, simply because there is no vision.*

The introduction of innovations by the WGPC goes in phases. First a WGPC should develop a vision and set the objectives, then some innovations are introduced and executed by the teachers. Finally, the innovations should be placed within the framework of an overall plan for the school.

The average time to institutionalise an innovation is estimated to be five years. This is not surprising because communication is very important and a consensus should be reached. Consequently, not all objectives can be realised at the same time so priorities have to be set.

> *To optimize the career choice in primary education, a team of nursery school teachers and teachers of the first form work together to realise a plan to break down role patterns in the choice of subjects. Some class activities are developed and planned over the years. On the next staff meeting, all the involved teachers are informed. The influences of the project on the higher years are discussed and it appears to be rather difficult to come to a consensus because some teachers think that breaking down role patterns is rather a task for the family. If at this moment a decision is forced, it will be very difficult to come to a coherent project because some teachers will feel aggrieved and their motivation will decrease.*

To improve the well-being of the pupils means that you have to deal with emerging problems immediately, but also that you try to avoid problems with preventive actions. The WGPC has to pay attention to both aspects, curative and preventive actions should be in perfect harmony.

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How do we perceive Educational Consultation?

Wim Meijer and Jeannet Smit-Wimmenhove
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Summary: *In this report Wim Meijer and Jeannet Smit-Wimmenhove report about an inquiry among teachers and internal consultants into their experience with and appreciation of educational consultancy (EC). Further they examine to what extent teachers and internal consultants find the short term and long term objectives of EC as important as do the external consultants of the educational consultancy service (ECS). The results are relevant for the ECSs that want to introduce EC.*

1   The teacher is central

In educational consultancy the teacher action is increasingly central. The teacher is seen as a key figure for achieving reforms not only in large-scale projects of educational reform but also in the approach of pupils with difficulties. In consultancy this notion led to adjusting the diagnostics and the nature of consultancy itself. The concept of 'action oriented diagnostics' refers to the ambition of making diagnostic examination lead to practical advice which the teacher can go along with. In order to attain this objective there are two things that matter: question oriented working as well as a good cooperation with the teacher.

'Educational consultancy' is a method in which the cooperation between teacher and consultant, though starting from principal grounds, is worked out as a step-by-step consultancy path. This path can be characterised as follows. From start to finish we keep in mind the problem which the teacher has with a pupil; most likely diagnostic examination will be a part of the path. It aims not only to systematically tackle the problem with a pupil in the short term, but also - in the long term - to professionalise the teacher. With EC unnecessary examinations and waiting lists are made redundant, and justice is done to the socioscientific character of the process of consultancy.

The notion 'consultancy' in EC refers to the manner in two professionals cooperate during the process, i.e. the consultant and the teacher. The term 'peer-to-peer consultancy' is used when emphasis is placed on the equal input of both partners in the course of the process. However, when we consider EC as it is carried out by the ECSs, the input of the consultant is partly determined by the pledge which ECSs made towards schools, which is education improvement. We therefore wish to stick to the term 'educational consultancy' instead of 'peer-to-peer consultancy'. A consultancy path consists of a number of steps, being concluded only when the outcome is given a positive assessment.

Educational Consultation (EC)

Various papers show that a number of goals are borne in mind with EC.
-       EC contributes to solving such problems as may occur between teachers and pupils in an educational setting *('solving pupil problems')*
-       EC contributes to teacher *professionalisation*
-       EC results in a close cooperation between consultant and teacher.
The teacher-consultant cooperation will for many teachers and consultants imply a change of the accepted operational procedures. Initially the mere development of the cooperation itself is an objective which will require a lot of attention and commitment from the participants.

Later on the cooperation will strive for two goals: the solving of pupil problems and the contribution to professionalisation. From the management perspective we can add a fourth objective: better integration of pupils in a standard elementary school community, and *reducing the referral* to special-need schools of elementary education.

2   Educational Consultancy in Practice

Consultants working along these lines try to correctly interpret the different ways in which teachers express the problems of working with pupils, and try to find solutions. Whether diagnostic examination will take place, the way in which intervention is made appropriate, the way this intervention is carried out, all these aspects are not just determined by the 'corpus of pupil problems', but also by the need of consultancy as expressed by teachers. In addition the existing body of internal pupil-oriented care within a school community will be taken into account. In this way each consultancy path is given its unique features.

In this process both consultant and teacher have their proper parts. The consultant plays the double part of diagnoser and consultant. He will implement his own knowledge of children and of education, but also his expertise as a consultant. He will not automatically perform diagnostic investigation in order to come up with advice, but will ask the teacher to specify the problems as precisely as possible.
The teacher on the other hand is mainly viewed as the person daily interacting with the pupil. The experience and practical skills are expressly relied on when it comes to joint diagnosing and problem solving.
In this context the consultant will try to get the teacher to look for solutions himself, as far as possible, and will discuss how these solutions can be worked out in practice. Consultants sometimes experience a tension between their diagnostic and their consultative role, the emphasis being alternatively on the pupil problem solving and on the teacher professionalisation. The twin objective of the cooperation process demands a high amount of flexibility.

In general consultants themselves have chosen to follow this method. Literature shows that consultants are relatively satisfied about this procedure. But how do teachers see this procedure? And what do the internal consultants think about this? In the day-to-day context they will indeed make up the third party concerned. Some internal consultants do the consultancy to its full extent. Others offer assistance to the group teacher (such as setting didactic tests) or to the external ECS consultant. In practice there is a range of variants when it comes to specific task assignment. In a number of cases the internal consultant acts as intermediary between the teacher and the external consultant, which obviously affects the mode of operation of the EC.

3   Purpose of investigation

Three topics of investigation are dealt with. The first inquiry concerns the previous experience teachers and internal consultants have with the ECSs. How often have teachers gone through the process of consultancy, and to what extent are the various phases of the consultancy path effectively activated? What hitches are encountered in practice?

In second position comes the inquiry into the EC appreciation. Is it true that teachers and internal consultants effectively experience the positive qualities of EC (such as cooperation), as mentioned in literature? What objectives are aspired for by the EC in their view?
It was shown that teachers are satisfied with the traditional ways of pupil monitoring. It is therefore useful to know how the EC is validated in comparison with the more traditional approach.

The third scope of inquiry refers to the differences of EC appreciation between teachers, internal consultants and external consultants. We assume that teachers and internal consultants are mainly interested in the short term objective (i.e. finding solutions for the problems they encounter with pupils) and much less so in the other objectives of EC. External consultants, on the other hand, are expected to be rather more interested in teacher professionalisation.

If *'solving pupil problems'* is deemed an important aspect of the cooperation the following statements will be approved: teachers are able to get started soon; the executability of the jointly decided measures is better; with this approach more pupils can be helped, etc.
If *teacher professionalisation* is given high ratings, then obviously statements are approved that express the participation of the teacher in all phases of the process, those that claim that teachers are better able to report, diagnose and offer assistance, as well as those that refer to increased self-confidence of teachers.
If *the process of cooperation itself* is seen as a primary objective, this is expressed when teachers see the work of the consultant as a good complement to their own, and when they give both parties an equal footing. They will not view the time and dedication required from themselves as too extensive.
The fourth objective, *reduction of the number of referrals*, goes without saying.

4   Results

What experience do teachers and internal consultants have with EC?
The experience varies from person to person. Internal ocnsultants on average have gone through 3 times as many consultancy procedures as have the teachers, they consequently are more familiar with this approach than the teachers.
In practice not all phases of the path appear to be carried out in a structured way. Problem analysis (the exact problem specification) and the search for solutions constitute the core of the consultancy talks. The coaching and the approach activities assessment are clearly less acute aspects.

How do teachers and internal consultants evaluate EC?
EC evaluation is mainly positive. Teachers and internal consultants perceive different advantages to the EC approach. They particularly consider it rewarding to look for solutions together. Both teachers and internal consultants highly value a personal input to the consultancy process. In this way similar problems will better be met in the future. Teachers and internal consultants also feel that their [external] consultant is strongly concerned with the teacher job problem and that his advice is well geared to the action scope of the individual teacher.

EC is also rated more positive than the traditional way of monitoring. A significant majority considers it a positive trend to move from a pupil-oriented to a teacher-oriented approach. It was shown that a large group of teachers and internal consultants appreciates helping to do some thinking and look for possible solutions. The majority does not only expect some research to be done into child factors, but also for the consultant to move into the group and observe interactive processes.

What objectives are held by EC in practice?
Most teachers and internal consultants (91%) feel that EC contributes to *solving pupil problems* in the educational setting. Two-thirds even call EC more effective than another manner of approach. But effects are also seen with respect to their own *professionalisation*; they learn to better deal with problems in educational settings (over 85%). The quality of consultancy is improved by the EC approach, in particular when fast acting is concerned, and complementing the teacher action scope. Opinions are divided on the topic of *reducing the number of referrals*.

About half the respondents expect pupils to be less soon referred to schools of special-need education.

Hitches
Apart from all the positive experiences two important problems are mentioned, namely that not every problem can be solved with EC, and that EC sometimes causes the whole monitoring process to slow down. This has to do with the practical EC execution as part of the ECS range of activities. It has been agreed with the schools that only those pupils that 'have or have been in consultancy' can go in for diagnostic screening. EC is especially seen as less suitable for serious and complex behaviour problems and problems at home. One third of the respondents points out that EC requests certain skills not within their capacities. Only a small minority state EC involves too much time and preparation.

Connection of experience and appreciation
Wimmenhove (2000) also checked if there is a co-reference between the number of consultancies experienced, and the measure of EC appreciation. In order to compute this connection all items investigating the EC appreciation have been added up to establish a new variable. The correlation between this variable and the number of consultations (corrected for the variable internal consultant) is low but significant (1999/2000: r = .16; p<.05; 1997/'98/'99: r = 23; p<.01). It may therefore be concluded that teachers and internal consultants will be more positive towards EC as their experience increases.

Differences between teachers, internal and external consultants
To what extent do we see agreement about the objectives aimed at in EC? Table 1 reveals that the differences between the three groups are small.

Table 1 - Appreciation of objectives: median and standard deviation per objective, per group

	External consultants		Internal consultants		Teachers	
EC objectives	M	sd	M	sd	M	sd
professionalisation	52.0	5.46	49.8	6.50	47.6	7.65
pupil problem	38.0	5.48	35.1	7.52	32.9	7.17
cooperation	38.1	4.09	38.0	4.71	36.5	5.94
fewer referrals	12.1	3.43	11.6	3.57	11.9	3.46

The scores of respondents differ for the objectives of professionalisation (F 3.36; p<.05) and for the solving of pupil problems (F 3.37; p<.05). The differences between groups for the two other objectives are not significant. Groups do not differ in meaning concerning the importance of coog cooperation, and about the question on reduction of referrals. Professionalisation is most highly rated as a main EC objective by the external consultants. This agrees with our expectations. What disagrees is the fact that external consultants also score higher than internal ones and teachers for the objective of solving pupil problems.

5   Discussion

Since EC was introduced in schools as part of the ECS activities scope, it has been rather well implemented. Not all phases are structurally activated in every consultancy path. It is a general fact that teachers and internal consultants who have experienced EC are satisfied about this approach (Wimmenhove, 2000). They note various advantages, also in comparison to the current manner of approach. The more they have been familiar, the more positive their attitude will be with regard to the [new] method. This is an important finding for ECSs that wish to introduce EC

in schools: what you know is what you like. Also worth mentioning is the finding that experiences are diverse. Evidently teachers are less familiar with EC than are the internal and external consultants. For the long term objective (professionalisation) this is a major limitation. This variety of experience among teachers (and schools) means that ECSs must and can adapt the concrete application of the method after a certain time. A case in point is the rule that pupils should first have 'gone into consultancy' before they are eligible for diagnostic screening. At first this rule can be an element for EC to become accepted. But as all parties have gained more experience with it, one can better estimate whether screening is required, and then this rule is no longer needed.

The external consultants score better than the internal ones for two of the four objectives, and the latter in turn score higher than the teachers. For the approach to succeed it has to be stressed that the different parties should aim at the same objectives. Brown et al. (1998) indicate how important it is to outline right from the start of each consultancy path from which perspective the parties concerned view the problems at hand. For instance, a learning or behavioural problem is seen by some as a mismatch between educational activities presented and the pupil expectations. Others will see it as a management problem. In fact both are right.

Since EC considers a number of objectives at the same time, the risk exists that participants with different objectives will also put the stress on different aspects of the consultancy path; as a result the process may fail to be optimally conducted.
However, we fortunately note that no basic assessment differences are found between teachers, internal and external consultants. Unlike our expectations it seems that teachers do not single-mindedly opt for the short term objective (i.e. looking for solutions for the pupil problem), but they also see professionalisation as a major objective of EC.
The conclusion will be that professionalisation as an objective does not interfere with the process of finding solutions for pupil problems. EC does appear to have killed two birds with one stone, as was intended from the start.

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Helping people to become better problem solvers:
A constructivist and solution focussed process model of consultation

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Abstract: *What can we do if we want to become more effective in the way we consult with teachers, parents, students, other persons as well as with boards of institutions? - We have at least two options which we may combine: We try to get feedback on the effects of our actual consultation work and improve our action from there. We search for existing process models that tell us how to proceed. Starting from those considerations, it was the first author's quest, to develop a process model of consultation, that scored high on standards of efficacy as well as of ethics and morality. The choice of the "Menschenbild" was on the "coping man" and the qualities of "good problem solvers". The objective was "empowerment". For the didactic approach some elements of brief therapy concepts appeared useful. Thus a practical guideline for the process of consultation was developed. If we follow this guideline as a heuristic, chances are that we become more effective and (morally) "better" in doing consultation.*

What can we do as professionals if we want to become more effective in the way we consult with teachers, parents, students, other persons as well as with boards of institutions?

Theoretically, we have at least two options:
- We try to get feedback on the effects of our actual consultation work and improve our action from there.
- We search for existing process models that tell us how to proceed. Then we explore which one of these would help us the most, to become more effective.

Practically, we may combine the two strategies.

How can we figure out the process model that would help us the most to become more effective?- You may say: The model has be evaluated in terms of effectiveness. It has to accrue to my personal beliefs and values. It must fit to my personal style of working and it has to be "practical".- To the extent that the economic pressure affects our daily work, additional conditions may affect our working organization: effectiveness, efficiency.

A brief developmental history of the process model

Starting from those considerations, it was the first author's quest, to develop a process model of consultation, that scored high on standards of efficacy as well as on standards of ethics and morality.

High standards of ethics could be – besides a certain "Menschenbild" - defined as a high degree of informed consent and as a high degree of client(s) satisfaction.

High standards of efficacy could be defined as achieving high standards of ethics with a small degree of expenditure of time for the client(s) as well as for the consultant. A special aspect of efficacy could be seen in the effect that consultation would – in addition to the help with regard to the specific actual concern – also enhance the client competencies of coping in situations he or she will encounter in the future.

The basic assumption in terms of a "Menschenbild" was that of a "coping man" or "coping woman". What people perceive as problems represents their attempts to cope with difficult situations in everyday life. From that perspective, research on human problem solving concerning problems of living and working appeared to be useful:

Apparently good problem solvers show two competencies (DÖRNER 1989) which bad problem solvers do not have to that extent:

- They develop a concrete idea of how things will be after the problem has been solved.
- They analyse what had been effective in the past and maintain it while introducing changes.

Considering these competencies of good problem solvers: How could we assist people in such a development? - Searching within the context of pedagogy as well as psychology I discovered various techniques that appeared potentially useful within the approaches of Milton Erickson, of the Mental Research Institute (Palo Alto), the Mailand school and the Milwaukee Brief Family Therapy Center (BFTC).

In the sense of a methodical eclecticism I employed these various techniques in my ongoing consultation work. By means of the feedback I obtained from my clients I tried to get hints as to which ones were useful to them and which ones were not. As an example: The professionals at the BFTC used to give tips to the clients as a standard procedure in their consultation sessions. I took over giving tips – until I had some clients who showed me that they did not want to have any tips, because they had the solution already. So I started asking my clients towards the end of the session whether they wanted to have tips or not. About every forth declines. That saves my time as well as their time. In addition it is more ethical because I do not impose on them. Instead it may increase their beliefs of self-efficacy because they realize that it was them who found a way towards the solution of the problem.

A group of professionals whom I had trained proceed(ed) the same way. From time to time we exchange(d) our observations and experiences. Based on those "guesses" I selected the "best of …" amongst the techniques of consultation and therapy that I had found in the literature or I had learned from collegues. I put the techniques together to a "constructivist solution focussed and developmentally oriented model of consultation". By that way the model remains open for further development.

At this time (July 2003) and based on hundreds of consultations with teachers, parents, adolescents and boards of institutions the following combination of techniques emerged to be the most ethical as well as efficient to me:

A constructivist solution focussed process model of consultation

The following description of the process model is in the form of a guideline that I use in my training workshops as well as in my research . It has been judged useful by the participants. Some of them use it as memory card in their consultation sessions. The use of this guideline by itself without participation in a training as described below appears not to be a sufficient condition for "good" consultation.

The guideline "names" the phases and – for some of the phases – the kind of induction which has proven useful in helping the client to get into a certain productive mental as well as emotional state. That is to say that the choice of words is not arbitrary but the net result of little experiments with different formulations.

1. Welcome and "setting the stage"

2. Expectations towards the process and the results of the present
consultation session and ratification of the working contract

What would have had to happen until (fixed end of the consultation session) so that you could say: "I have profited from it!" –

If you agree to that: *I will try to guide our conversation towards that direction, but I cannot guarantee how far we will get.*

3. Presentation of concern

Would you please start indicating your concern …

4. Imaging the desired future

- Miracle induction: *At this point I would have I little mental experiment for you!?* If the client does not show indications of decline*: Image for a moment: We continue on with our consultation session. We will arrive at* (cf. expectations towards the results). *You leave and go your way. Evening arrives. It gets dark. You become tired and go to sleep. (Pause) And while you are asleep a miracle happens. (Pause) What will be the first indication which tells you that the miracle has in fact happened?- What will be the next indication which tells you that the miracle has in fact happened? …? –*

- Solution induction: *"How will you first notice that your concern*(or however the client names it) *has gone?"*

5. Search for present moments of a desired future

When you think of the last weeks: Were there moments, in which the things you have just described, were already present to some extent?

If so:
What was different then?
Were there additional moments …? *(Continue until the client stops naming those.)*
When you think of a scale: 10 means the future as you have just imagined. 1 means the opposite of it.
- Where on this scale are you right now?
- Where do you want to be at what point of time?
- How would you notice when you will have gotten there?
- What would have to happen so that you get from (x=scale right now) to (y=where the client wants to be)?

If not:
How did you manage to sustain (*key word for the description of the concern*)?
= (coping question)
From where did you take the energy to sustain?
= (resource question)

6. "Last call" for important information
Now, I would like to take a little time, to let your words pass my mind again, so that I can see what strength you already have and tell you that. Before I do so I would like to ask you: Is there anything that you think I should at any case know before we make that little break?
If the client adds some information, just listen.

7. Pause for individual reflections
8. Acknowledgement of strengths, recalibration of norms, reinterpretations
9. Suggestions *Would you like to have some suggestions?* If the clients does want to have some: *Well, I have some ideas of what might be helpful in general. See whether there is something to it that is suitable to you and to your situation. You may try it , you may modify it – or leave it! Okay?*
10. Best wishes Immediately after the question about suggestions or immediately after having given the suggestions, you may rise, offer a hand-shake and say to the client: "*Toi, toi, toi und gutes Gelingen !*".

The 10 phases of a constructivist solution focussed consultation session (cf. Spiess, W. (Hrsg.): Die Logik des Gelingens. Lösungs- und entwicklungsorientierte Beratung im Kontext von Pädagogik. Dortmund: borgmann 2000)

Some comments on each one of the phases may be useful:

Phase 1: I try to help the client to feel comfortable and at ease. I refer to the (last) contact we had and the time we had allocated for this session - in order to create some sense of coherence.

Phase 2: I want the client to develop concrete ideas about the state, he wants to arrive at towards the end of the session, as well as about the process, that he believes to be helpful to him or to her. This could be seen as a first animation towards becoming a good or better problem solver.

Phase 3: I follow a social script by giving the client a chance for a (brief) "talking cure": as short as possible and as extensive as necessary for him. I just listen attentively. But since I do not need this information for helping the client to develop ideas towards a solution, the focus of my attention is more on the way he presents his concern than on the content. I do not have to formulate hypotheses about the etiology of the problem. I do not reflect on his emotions. Neither do I give a summary of what I beleave to have heard since this may be seen as a confirmation of the problem, i.e. if somebody else sees it the same way it must be objectively so.

Phase 4: In a second and major "move" I animate the client to develop ideas of how situations or interactions will look like when the problem was solved. It appears that providing a framework in terms of a chronological order (what would be the first thing, … the next thing …) makes it easier for the client to go on developing a "vision" of a life without that problem. The degree of "resolution" in which the client develops his ideas seems to be related to the effectiveness of the work in this phase: The more details of how the client acts verbally and non-verbally, the greater the "self-fulfilling prophecy", i.e. the transfer to and changes in the actual situations.

I built up the so called miracle question (which seems to have been "discovered" by BERG (cf. HARGENS 2000)) into a relatively extended induction. That seems to make it easier for the client to dissociate from the problem talk and get into the mood for creative thinking about new options.

Phase 5: It incorporates what I call "the logic of success". Instead of searching for conditions that may "cause" his problem, the client looks for present moments of a desired future. That is not simply looking for so called "exceptions". This strategy may also be useful.

However it is probably not as efficient, since the "exceptions" are not necessarily identical with the desired future: When do children not show "bad" behaviours? Most of them do not, when they are asleep.

If the clients "discovers" present moments of a desired future: What is the context in which that happens? In terms of good human problem solving, analyse what works – and maintain it or expand on it!

If the client cannot identify any present moments of the desired future, he or she may become very sad. Those moments may be difficult for us to bear. But if we ask the client: "How could or how could you in the past and can right now you bear that?", the client may be helped to become more aware of his resources from which he or she derives strength.

Phase 6: Asking the client about any information gives him or her a chance to get rid of things he or she had wanted to say but had not found an opportune moment so far. On rare occasions clients do add something. But so far, I do not have enough experience form my own consultation work or from my students to formulate a rule as to deal with this information.

Phase 7: The idea of taking a break stems from family therapy training where it was found to enhance the effectiveness of consultation. I experimented with that break and recommend: Tell the client that you want to use about 10 to 15 minutes of time to meditate about the "words" which you have learned from the client; in order to find out, what assets may be discovered to be part of the feedback after the break. We invite the client to stay or walk around while we leave the consulting room for a walk.

Phase 8 and 9: The rules we have developed for these phases are beyond the scope of this introductory text.

Phase 10: We wish "Gutes Gelingen!" (That has connotations of self-efficacy which go beyond "Good luck!").

3. Context of usefulness

So far, professionals have worked in orientation of this process model consulting with
  - teachers, parents and pupils in the context of behavioural and learning difficulties
  - teachers, psychologists and other professionals in the context of organisational development.

The low level evaluations up to date indicate that these clients perceived the consultations as "pleasant", helpful, efficient and morally "good".

There are two variants to this process model for other contexts:
  - where the teacher has a concern and initiates the consultation session f. e. with the parents of a pupil or with the pupil himself
  - where a person wishes consultation without having a presenting problem. In the context of business this may be called coaching. In the context of schools this may be called "Lernberatung" (cf. SPIESS 2001).

English publications of these variants are in preparation (cf. homepage listed below).

4. A didactic approach and a curriculum for the training in the use of this process model

In the development of a training model and curriculum for the process model, I employed the same assumptions, attitudes and techniques - including the zeal for efficiency and ethics.

The basic didactic approach is inductive (instead of deductive, as preferred in the context of academia): participant observation – description of observations and experiences – construction of relations among these aspects.

The curriculum consists of 5 modules comprising approximately 100 hours of course work including "consultation for consultation"; in addition approximately 100 hours of independent reading, practising and reflection in peer groups.

Module I
You get to know the consultation model by participating at live consultations (behind the one way screen) and by afterwards analysing the consultation process together with the other participants.
By that way you can arrive at a judgment whether this model fits to your person as well as to your working context. Through your home studies you acquire knowledge about other models of consultation that you discuss within the group of other students.

Module II
You get to know the consultation model by self-experience. To that end you participate in 2 sessions while presenting some complaints from you working or private life. You observe yourself between these 2 consultation sessions and keep a diary to that respect.

You reflect the process as well as the product with the consulting person.

Module III
Admission requires proof of a certain knowledge about the consultation model. The standards are set by a catalogue of question which need to be answered correctly.
You participate at a specific training of the various steps. You can choose between exercises with another person (tandem) or within a small group (cf. standard training in the client centered model). At the next level you may want to practice the whole sequence of steps using the multi-brain – slow-motion method, studying transcripts, audio- or videos from consultation sessions

Module IV
Admission requires proof of sufficient skills in orientation by the model. The guideline may be used. The competencies necessary for the implementation of each step have to be demonstrated (f.e. by means of the multi-brain – slow-motion method). The jury consists of the trainer and the other students.

You begin practicing consultation with students attending modul II while being assisted through a seminar titled "consultation for consultation".

Module V
Admission requires that the "clients" (participants of Modul II) to judge the consultations with you at least "satisfactory".
You do your consultations within the context of our „*compaed*" office or at your working place while being assisted through "consultation for consultation".

Certification

Certification is based on the quality of the structure, the process and the outcome of two consultation sessions that you have documented by audio or video and presented to a jury. Details of this procedure still have to be developed.

5. Further work on the process model

Research is currently going on or is being planned to go into two directions:
- Outcome and process studies to evaluate and improve the efficacy as well as the ethics of the process model
- Exploratory studies to find out whether there are other contexts in which this process model may be useful in its present form or for which it needed to be adapted.

Outcome and process studies

Since fall of 2002 Nina WINKLER has joined as research assistant working towards her doctorate. She prepaires to explore questions like: How do their thinking and working patterns change when professionals participate in the above mentioned training curriculum and follow the constructivist solution oriented process model in their daily consultations? What changes can be observed in the thinking and working patterns of the persons who consult with these professionals? How do the behaviour patterns of pupils change as the thinking and working patterns of their teachers change?

Previously Heike BERKLING has begun the work of her dissertation. The question, she is about to answer, is "Does expertise knowledge when used within that consultation model augment the efficacy of consultation?" If expertise knowledge on for example learning difficulties or behaviour disorders does not have such an effect, the training of professionals could be much more efficient by sparing the corresponding courses.

New contexts for the application/adaptation of the process model

Vocational guidance: Currently a graduate student uses the process model to enhance the problem solving competencies of high school students with respect to finding a good fitting vocation. This consultation does not include giving information about jobs, careers etc.
ONLINE-consultation: Another graduate student explores under what conditions and to what extent elements of this process model way be useful for the online consultation with high school students.

DÖRNER, D. : Die Logik des Misslingens. Reinbek 1989

SPIESS, W. (Hrsg.): Die Logik des Gelingens. Lösungs- und entwicklungsorientierte Beratung im Kontext von Pädagogik. Dortmund 2000

http://www.uni-kiel.de/erziehungshilfe/index.htm

Different models of social and emotional needs consultation and support in German schools

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ABSTRACT

The paper reports on a qualitative, empirical study of different forms of social and emotional needs consultation and support (Beratung für Erziehungshilfe in der Schule, BES) in German schools. The study focuses primarily on consultation services offered to teaching staff at regular schools by trained special education teachers. One of our aims is to give the reader a basic overview of the different forms and models of BES in Germany. The other is to correlate the initial results of the study to the different organizational forms and localization models of BES. The different models of BES were selected according to their differing organizational structures and their localization. Based on descriptions of the respective concrete consultation practice, derived from interviews with the main persons involved in BES (consultants/special education teachers and recipients of consultation services/ teachers requesting consultation), different real types of consultation practices in BES are sketched.

INTRODUCTION

In the Federal Republic of Germany there are numerous forms of consultation on behalf of students with special educational needs, providing various services for regular schools. The services offered range from mobile special needs to permanently integrated forms of consultation. One segment of this range of special needs consultation services specializes in dealing with emotional anti behavioural disorders ~ we call this 'social and emotional needs consultation and support in schools' (Beratung für Erziehungshilfe in der Schule, BES). One aim of these consultation services is to enable regular schools to integrate students with special social and emotional needs into the school community. The other is to take direct intervention measures to support such students. In both BES areas school-level consultation and individual student support - a wide variety of concepts and forms are employed in Germany. We present below six different forms of BES, classified into three localization models according to their concrete situation and integration in the school system.

The emergence of social and emotional needs consultation services in German schools can be seen in terms of two lines of development. On the one hand, we have developments at the global level of changes in society as a whole; and on the other hand, radical transformation processes in the area of special education as one of the key providers of social and emotional needs consultation and support in schools (BES).

This latter phenomenon reflects a global paradigm change in special education in the mid-197Os: in the wake of the integration debate, the increasing expansion of institutions for students with special needs - the extension and enlargement of a special school sector catering for a variety of disabilities - was seen to be questioned, and the previously accepted tenets of a special education policy based on segregation and exclusion were rejected.
The results of this discourse were reflected in a new self-appraisal of special needs support and the development of new forma of such support.

The effects of these far-reaching changes are still being felt, a fact also evidenced by the discussion on the way the profession of the special education teacher has changed. The emergence 'of a new professional profile for the special education teacher has been described (Reiser, 1996a, 1997, 1998; Wocken, 1997), indicating a change in the way this profession sees itself and a basic trend towards client orientation, the provision of services for special needs students being viewed as working *for* rather than merely **with** children. This basic idea, with its service orientation and strong element of social work, questions the classical diagnosis and support of special needs and, at the same time, adds a new dimension: offering consultation as help for professionals.

The question as to the new professional profile of the special education teacher is ultimately linked to the professionalisation debate among German educational scientists (e.g. Combe and Helsper, 1996).

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study constitutes a first attempt to make a comparative analysis of the various existing consultation and support models for social and emotional needs in German schools. It sets out by asking where in the educational system the consultation system is located - i.e. which system or subsystem the respective consultant belongs to, how he/she is integrated into the system structures and to what extent there is networking with the relevant surrounding systems. Referring to these criteria (position and structural integration of the consultant), we speak of **localization.**

No empirical findings are yet available on the relations between organizational structure and consultation practice in the different specific forms of BES in Germany. From this starting-point, we built a research sample covering a wide range of existing BES models in Germany.

The design of the present explorative study follows the Grounded Theory method (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) and aims to take initial stock of the situation in Germany. The study is divided into two phases. In the first phase, consultant teachers and teachers requesting consultation were interviewed, the focus being on the perspective of the consultants whose professional skills facilitated access to the domain being studied. The second phase focuses on the perspectives of those receiving the consultation. The use of questionnaires to reconstruct case details will also allow individual cases to be referred to directly and supplementary interviews to be conducted with the principals of the schools concerned. This paper will present initial results of the first phase of the study, now in its final stages.

The database of the study's first phase was generated using various data collection methods (expert interviews, guideline-based individual interviews, group discussions). During this phase, a total of 40 interviews were conducted with consultant teachers and teachers requesting consultation (consultants and recipients of consultation services) from six different forms of BF-5 and coded with computer support following the Grounded theory (Willman 98). The results of the coding process were used to develop a key category, which localizes the studied BES consultation practices in a continuum *of assistance ranging between consultation and support.* What is proposed here is differentiating the consultation work in BES principally according to which specific concept the consultants follow, and whether their work here tends to be more teacher orientated (consultation) or more student orientated (support). The category can thus be used to map the whole range of consultation work in BES.

Finally, by analysing the consultation practices described in the interviews, different real types of consulting activity in BES were created using sociological typing methods, in order to highlight the different approaches and strategies employed by the consultants. We now go on to present the different forms and models of BES and describe their essential characteristics. This is followed by an examination of the study's theoretical implications.

The six forms of school-based consultation presented here can be paired off to form topographical localization models based on homologies in terms of their organizational

structures. Localization model A (internal) refers to *consultation using regular schools' internal resources.* The position of the Beratungslehrer (BL) and the special education teacher in elementary schools is system-internal; in both forms, the consultants are themselves part of the system in need of consultation.

Localization model B (system-interfacial) refers to *consultation at the system interface between regular and special school.* The two model B forms of consultation and support - the Lotte-Lemke-Schule 'and the Mobile Service fox Social and Emotional Needs Support (Mobile Erziehungshilfe, MFH) - can be localized at the system interface. In terms of their organization, both forms are based on the educational support centre offering mobile services to the regular schools in their catchments area. Unlike localization model A, here the consultation service does not form part of the regular school itself, hut is provided by an educational support centre as a separate element of the school system.

Localization model C (external) refers to *consultation through independent consulting institutions.* Both the Centre for Social and Emotional Needs Consultation (Zentrum für Erziehungshilfe, ZfE) in Frankfurt am Main and the Regional Service Centres for Consultation and Support (Regionale Beratungs- und Unterstützungszentren, REBUS) in Hamburg are independent consulting institutions, which are affiliated to (ZfE) or integrated into (REBUS) the school system, but which are independent of the regular and special schools, providing consultation and support services only. They do not have their own permanent school classes.

LOCALIZATION MODEL A: CONSULTATION USING REGULAR SCHOOLS' INTERNAL RESOURCES

The Beratungslehrer

The introduction of the Beratunsslehrer (BL) into the regular school system, an extension of the teacher's role to include special counselling (students and parents) and consulting (colleagues) functions and duties, emerged as an element of educational policy in direct response to the 'counselling boom' of the 1970s. The BL is a home-room teacher who has received supplementary training. Depending on the size of the school, the BL is assigned a limited number of periods for the counselling and consulting duties, on average, some five per week. This number is deducted from the average of 28 periods teachers are required to give per week (the statutory number of periods varies from one federal state to another).

The BL is a regular member of the teaching staff, and thus a part of the system he/she is meant to serve as counsellor and consultant. The localization of the BL can therefore be described as maximally internal.

On a general level, the BL can be seen as primarily performing a relief function at the school he/she serves. In particular, the group that makes most use of the consultation service - the other members of the teaching staff - see cooperation with the BL as relieving their workload. A frequent problem here is the desire of other members of the teaching staff to exclude troublesome students from classes, at least temporarily. This desire for immediate relief is often based on the idea of the BL 'repairing' the troublesome student, as well as on a tendency to delegate problems.

The concrete duties and activities of the interviewed BL cover the areas outlined in the ministerial directives: school career counselling, individual support, and consultation with the school and the teachers. In everyday consulting practice, these directives are fleshed out by the individual BL in different ways, and with different priorities. However, our empirical research results also indicate that there are BLS whose activities clearly exceed the limits of internal school consultation, consciously extending into the area of parent counselling (Willmann and Hüper, 1999).

In the interviews, BL did not attach particular importance to the area of school career counselling; they saw their main duties in the domain of individual support and consultation with

teachers. Here it is mainly school-specific factors that determine the respective orientation of the services offered by the BL. The principal factors are, on the one hand, the respective school philosophy and staff culture, which define both consulting needs and expectations, and on the other hand, the individual consultants with their own personal skills, convictions and any additional qualifications. Both factors shape the form cooperation takes in everyday school consulting practice.

The maximum internal localization of the BL proves to be something of a mixed blessing. The strength of this form of BES lies in the low level of inhibition regarding taking advantage of the consultation services: the BL, as a member of staff, is known to all the other teachers, is permanently based at the respective school and is therefore available at all times. By the same token, the consultant knows all the other members of staff and most of the students from everyday school life. This situation puts the BL, as an internal consultant, in an exclusive 'insider' position which no external consultant can ever attain. But it also means that the internal consultant is part of the very system he/she serves. And it constitutes the blind spot of the consultant's internal localization.

The interviews with the BL also illustrate the fragility of this role structure. The problems associated with the consultant role here can be described in a series of role antinomies which, in turn, result principally from the internal localization and integration of the consultant at the centre of the system being served. These antinomies are reflected in paradoxical dimensions, such as contradictory interests and goal setting situations and the conclusion of contracts with several parties (e.g. schoolteacher- student-family/parents), who pursue differing, sometimes diametrically opposed, interests. The special and exclusive position of the BL also results quite frequently in a competitive situation with respect to the colleagues seeking advice (during consultation on the colleagues' teaching conduct) and, on occasion, with the school principal (e.g. in cases relating to something like the school's 'pedagogical leadership'); a detailed treatment can be found in Willmann and Hüper *(ibid.)*.

Special Education Teachers in Elementary Schools

In terms of localization, there is a strong structural homology between the special education teachers in elementary schools (Sonderschullehrer in Grundschulen) and the above-described BL. Both types of consultant teachers are, in their capacity as consultants, also members of the very systems they are meant to serve. This instance of what might he called 'inequality among equals' is, in the case of special education teachers in elementary schools as compared with the role of the BL, additionally evident in the different kind of (and compared with other members of the teaching staff, more specialized) training as special education teachers.

The origin of this model can he traced back to the Small Class Ordinance issued by the federal state of Hesse (cf. Reiser *et al.,* 1984). In pursuance of its overall goal of integration, the concept is meant to follow a preventive approach. Here the consultant special education teachers tend to he deployed in social trouble spots. Their range of duties is similarly broad to that of the BL, encompassing consultation with other members of the teaching staff on teaching, learning and support issues, individual and small-group support, networking with institutions outside the school and, to a certain extent, parent counselling as well.

However, given the special skills required in the special education sector, such teachers enjoy a much higher formal expert status as consultants than can he attained by BL in their brief training for counselling and consulting duties. Ideally, the special education consulting work and the cooperation with regular school teachers should provide an input of special education skills into regular schools. Such skills are manifested, for example, in changed perspectives, by adopting an approach orientated to the individual child and his/her specific situation (rather than an approach to teaching based on the fiction of a supposedly homogeneous group of learners), and, consequently, in a more profound understanding of the concrete problems and difficulties of the individual student, as well as in a different observer perspective (resulting from the

performance of a different function in the concrete teaching situation and a more specialized professional training based rather on observation).

In practice, the same antinomies and processes of dependence and counter-dependence sometimes occur as described above for the BL. The latent desire to compete with the colleagues they are meant to consult with for what they believe to be the 'better' reaching methods can make cooperation with them difficult or even impossible. Overlapping competencies between the consultant teacher and the school principals result from the proximity of the consulting work to a type of educational leadership function, thus also holding considerable potential for conflict.

Basically, the consultants' specialization and a conceptualization of the services they offer - i.e. the defining of specific concrete consultation and support services - would appear not only to have a positive effect on their role satisfaction, but also to increase the transparency of the services offered for the potential clients. In other words, if the consultation and support services offered contain clear contracts on concrete forms of work, all the parties involved are able to make a proper assessment of the consultant's role and function. If, on the other hand, consultants have no clear idea of their own function or if they give the impression of being responsible - and equipped with the necessary skills - for almost everything, there can be some confusion about the concrete services offered. Drawing up agreements (with the school principals, the other members of the teaching staff or for individual concrete cooperation processes) helps to clarify the consultants' position and the services they offer.

Synopsis of Localization Model A

Integrating the consultant teacher as closely as possible into the regular school's teaching staff enables, for both forms of consultation, above, the services to be provided directly on site. Such consultants have a permanent workplace and are, theoretically, always present and available to their colleagues. The consultants' proximity to - or better, direct integration with - everyday school life makes these two kinds of consulting service very popular with colleagues. It does, however, give rise to some problems concerning the roles they play.

A feature that applies to both forms of consultation is the individual consultants' freedom to set their own priorities in the work they do. Their field of duties is, of course, limited depending on the resources available (roughly divided into consulting with colleagues and counselling parents, offering individual student support, networking), but the individual consultants are responsible for the concrete implementation and weighting of the tasks. There are no procedural directives at the institutional level. The consultants' work context is defined only by the regular school itself. With no procedural directives to refer to, consultants enjoy a great deal of scope in interpreting and fleshing out their roles, though this situation can engender a sense of uncertainty and confusion about such roles.

LOCALIZATION MODEL B: CONSULTATION AT THE SYSTEM INTERFACE BETWEEN REGULAR AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Mobile Service for Social and Emotional Needs Support

The Mobile Service for Social and Emotional Needs Support (Mobile Erzichungshilfe, MF-H) is an integral element of the Mobile Special Education Services in Bavaria, and is based on either a special school providing support for social and emotional development or an educational support centre.

In characterizing the particularities of the Mobile Special Education Services in Bavaria, Hillenbrandt (1999) points to two important aspects: on the one hand, these services have established integrative support as a standard state-wide feature of regular schools; but on the other hand, there are considerable regional differences in the way it is organized and the number of periods allocated for this purpose. Our study confirms substantial differences between local

variants of MEH, but also shows that the blanket implementation of integrative schooling for students with special social and emotional needs, accompanied by mobile support through MEH, only exists on paper. With most of the special education teachers engaged in MEH concentrated in a small number of schools from their own catchment area, the services they offer are by no means reaching all students.

Generally speaking, MEH is organized as follows in Bavaria: one or two teachers provide mobile services - accounting for a not permanently fixed portion of their regular workload - at an educational support centre or special school providing support for social and emotional development, serving a city or rural district. Local differences in the MEH services offered depend on a number of factors. Apart from the policy of the special schools' principals, the supervisory authorities and the regular schools cooperating in the scheme, the main factors here are the personal skill and interest profiles of the special education teachers involved - teachers who, in addition to their basic training as special education teachers, have completed a wide variety of further training measures. Specific local conditions have given rise in practice to highly diverse forms of MEH, leading in each case to a particular form of cooperation with the respective regular school. This large number of special variants of MEH can be roughly classified according to whether it is still based on the original idea of providing intensive pedagogical-therapeutic support to the individual student, or whether priority is given to perspectives and forms of intervention that take into account the situations and conditions in the respective school and are based on a solution-oriented approach.

There are great similarities between the concrete working methods of consultants who follow traditional student-oriented intervention practices, After receiving a formal written explanation of goals from the regular school and obtaining a declaration of consent from the parents, consultants begin their concrete case work by making a detailed diagnosis. Here the special education teachers themselves make use of a wide variety of test methods (cf. Schor, 1994), besides drawing on diagnostic information collected by BL or other institutions like the youth welfare service of the child and youth psychiatric support services. The diagnosis and the initial consultation with the regular school teacher, which sometimes involves classroom observation, serve as a basis for deciding on appropriate support for the child in question. On the one hand, this entails ascertaining whether the regular school itself can provide the support needed, whether the child's weaknesses in terms of learning and performance are such as to necessitate its transfer to a special school providing support for learning problems or whether MEH constitutes the most suitable form of support. And an the other, it means developing an individual educational plan based on the diagnosis. Generally speaking, the student will receive this special support on a one-to-one or, in some cases, a small-group basis for one or two periods a week over a span of one to two years. Very frequent use is made here of behaviour modification programmes and various other pedagogical-therapeutic techniques. Two main objectives can be defined for the work with the student: solving a specific behavioural problem and generally stabilizing the development of the child's personality. The primary goal of cooperation with regular school teachers here is to involve them in putting into effect behaviour modification programmes. A secondary goal may also entail a limited amount of consultation with teachers on the teaching methods they use or the way they deal with students they consider difficult. The special education teacher's work with parents focuses on arranging additional support services from other institutions. It may occasionally involve direct counselling on pedagogical matters as well. Mediation between parents and school on the key task - in both qualitative and quantitative terms - of supporting the individual student.

The situation is a different one with MEH because it has ceased to focus exclusively on the individual indicated student: a school-related perspective has been added here, extending the overall objective. These variants of MEH seek to use consultation to also effect a long term change in and broadening of the regular school teachers' perspectives and scope for action, as well as a general extension of the respective school's capacity for integration.

This objective is to be attained by spending less time on individual student support. Instead, more resources are invested in consultation with regular school teachers and in primary prevention in the form of further training of teaching staff, the moderation of conferences on relevant issues and the launching of specialized school projects. Not surprisingly, solution-oriented and systemic approaches play a greater role in these forms of MEH.

Educational Support Centre for Social and Emotional Needs
Consultation: Lotte-Lemke Schule

The mobile service offered by the Lotte-Lemke-Schule in Braunschweig is similar to MEH in terms of in organizational structure, in that it is based *in* a special school which makes part of its resources available, for the mobile service. In the case of the Lotte-Lemke Schule, however, the entire teaching staff are involved in consulting work at regular schools, this accounting for a small portion of their regular workload. Unlike the forms of MEH practised in Bavaria, this project dispenses entirely with individual child support. The distinctive feature of this mobile special education service is its exclusive focus on consultation, the service having been developed on the basis of a systemic concept. Accordingly, all members of the team at the Lotte-Lemke-Schule have received supplementary training in systemic therapy, which, for the type of work they are doing, is probably more important than their respective basic training as teachers, special education teachers or social workers. Since 1994 the LLS has been operating as an educational support centre serving elementary and junior high school classes at regular schools in Braunschweig.

Some of the work is standardized; the concrete methods used depend on the respective requirements in each case. However, it can generally be said that great importance is attached to goal setting. Questions relating to the precise definition of the goals, as well as to the estimated time it will take, are actually contained in the application forms, and also form part of the initial consultation with the teacher. This makes it possible to reject goals like excluding a particular student and transferring him/her to a special school. At the same time, the attempt is made to adopt a solution-oriented approach from the start.

Subsequent work on the case, requiring relatively little time - on average, some 20-30 hours - focuses on contextualizing and processual diagnosis. The student's problemized behaviour is analysed with respect to its contextual relationship with the teaching and class situation, as with family processes. The provisional interpretations - primarily generated through consultation with the home-room teacher, and occasionally by classroom observation as well - either serve, themselves, to perturb the home-room teacher's construction of the problem or function as diagnostic hypotheses, from which intervention options can be developed for the home-room teacher in the course of consultation. In the choice of interventions, classical methods of systemic therapy are largely drawn on - e.g. paradoxical interventions, symptom prescriptions, positive connotation, reframing, etc. The aim of such interventions is to irritate the systemic conditions in which the problem develops at some point so as to stimulate new self organization processes which lead – in the perception and experience of the persons involved - to improvement and relief. Diagnosis, hypothesis building and perturbation are conceived here as a circular development process that can lead to a case being wound up if the school seeking consultation is itself able to cope with the problem - either by developing new action options or changing perspectives - of if the parties involved agree that this will not he possible within the confines of the regular school.

In addition to working with the individual teacher, other parties are, also addressed to differing degrees and with differing frequency. In the whole context, several teachers can be brought together to make explicit the differences in their perceptions of one and the same student. Other measures with a strong preventive orientation are organizing conferences on relevant issues or further training programmes for the entire teaching staff.

Another important aspect is networking with other institutions, particularly with the young welfare authorities. This can involve both organizing or participating in helper conferences, with a view to inter-institutional transparency and coordination, and arranging concrete help for the families. In the case of communication problems between parents and school, mediation between the two sides can play an important role.

Synopsis of Localization Model B

The consultation and support models presented in the context of this localization model are based on the organizational form of an educational support and consultation centre within special schools; they are therefore localized inside the school system and outside regular schools. The picture is more complex in terms of the specific work forms used. Here the same organizational structure allows quite different ways of establishing connections with regular schools.

The typical work form of MEH in Bavaria is that of an enclave: special education teachers working in regular schools can be seen as the temporally limited and microcosmic entry of the special school into the regular school.

The Lotte-Lemke-Schule practises a contrasting work form that see networking as a stimulus to schools' enhancement and transformation. Here the support service, remains outside the regular school to the extent that it does not directly assume any educational duties in the latter, but rather enables the school/home room teacher to deal with their educational problems themselves, either by individual consultation with teachers or by school-related empowerment.

LOCALIZA'TION MODEL C: CONSULTATION THROUGH INDEPENDENT CONSULTING INSTITUTIONS

Centre for Social and Emotional Needs Consultation

The Centre for social and Emotional Needs Consultation (Zemtrum für Erziehungshilfe, ZfE) is an organization combining two institutional elements that are normally separated from each other: the Youth Welfare Office and the Special School. This integration in a single unit is unique in Germany. Its aim is to improve the overall conditions for cooperation and collaboration between the two systems (Reiser, 1996b).

The institution is organised decentrally, with several stations distributed throughout the city. Every station has its own interdisciplinary team, consisting of special education teachers and social workers, who join forces to form a new, so-called 'tandem' for each case. The division of labour within the tandems follows the specific requirements of the individual case.

The ZfE works on a purely mobile basis and has no student body of its own. Only students of grades 8 and 9 have the additional option of attending a Lernwerkstatt ('learning workshop') at a municipal youth centre. The centre's overriding goal is the integration of students with special social and emotional needs.

At die ZfE inquiries are processed according to a standardized procedure consisting of the following steps: information/orientation, goal setting, diagnosis, support and case conclusion. The standard procedures for case work and clarification of goals were established to create a framework for the development of technically sound, process-controlled work routines. Mandatory steps and activities such as standardized documentation and discussion procedures serve to ensure the transparency and quality of case work.

An initial orientation interview is designed to show the client the potential and limits of the ZfE's work, but also offers all opportunity to discuss the conditions attached to it and possible alternatives. If the centre takes on the case, a new phase of goal setting begins, consisting of individual consultations with the parents and teachers to clarify what the concerns are. Acceptance of an assignment is confirmed in writing by the ZfE. Then follows a diagnosis phase designed to guide the parties through a dialogue-oriented and communicative process to an

exchange of views on the problem and how to set about solving it. At the end of this phase, a common understanding of the problem should have been reached and a consensus emerged of proposed support measures. Consultations are held with the teachers, the parents and the student. Round-table talks involving all parties are designed to bring together the different perspectives and provide a platform for the exchange of views and ideas. By sitting in on classes, making home visits and establishing contact with social services and other relevant parties, the tandem gains a detailed insight into the problem. If the case requires, inquiries are also made about die student's academic progress.

The results of the negotiation processes conducted during the diagnosis phase are recorded in a written help and support plan and serve as a basis for the subsequent support phase.

In the support phase, extending over a maximum period of two years, the help and support plan is constantly reviewed and modified to take account of current needs. The tandem provides the teacher with support in the classroom. If necessary the student can be temporarily supported in a small-group context inside or outside the school. Parallel to this, consultation with all parties continues. The initiation and coordination of further measures - e.g. establishing leisure-time contacts for the student - is an interim strategy designed to foster and secure additional support.

A distinctive feature of both the ZfE (Frankfurt) and the following model (REBUS) in Hamburg), which is described in the next section, is the extensive use of quality assurance measures. At the ZfE quality assurance, is an established feature: in addition to opportunities to reflect on the case work within the tandem and the team as a whole, each case is detailed in a case report. And if required, there is the additional option of consultation on the case with the school principals and of supervision. Initial research results are reported in Reiser (2001).

Regional Service Centre for Consultation and Support

Like the ZfE, the Regional Service Centre for Consultation and Support (Regionale Beratungs- und Unterstützungsstellen, REBUS) in Hamburg is an independent consulting system with no student body of its own. The REBUS is an organizational unit of a department of Hamburg's Office for Schools, Youth and vocational Training (School Office).

The REBUS was designed to provide help to students who are in danger of being excluded from existing educational programmes or who can no longer he reached by traditional educational services. Like the ZfE, the REBUS works from decentrally organized stations, distributed throughout the city, which are intended to provide, coordinate and guarantee consultation and support services for particular areas of the city. Implicit in the REBUS concept is the idea of improving the schools' long-term problem-solving capabilities through the services it offers. The establishment of the REBUS in Hamburg brought with it the closure of various existing institutions, including the special schools for children with behavioural disorders. In 2000, after a three-year test phase, the consultation model was extended to cover the whole city.

In addition to teachers with various specialisations, the REBUS is also staffed by school psychologists and social workers. Interdisciplinarity was made a key feature of the concept in order to take account of the multiple factors influencing the problems experienced by students with behavioural and learning difficulties. The services offered by the REBUS are aimed at teachers, students and parents, with a view to tackling problem situations in the school context. To avoid their exclusion from school, students are to officially remain in their regular schools during the process of consultation.

If it appears meaningful to illuminate the problem from a number of perspectives, or if help and support are needed in designing and implementing support services, several members of the REBUS staff contact the parties involved and interdisciplinary teams are formed.
In many instances, it is not until during a case that the need arises to call in additional help to assume various support duties, to work with the different parties involved or to assist team colleagues as reflecting partners during work on the case.

The initial interviews with the person that has consulted one of the REBUS stations are designed to pinpoint the concerns and clarify what further steps are to be taken. If the problems do not fall within the scope of the REBUS, the clients are referred to the relevant institutions and agencies.

The scope of the REBUS activities is similar to that of the ZfE: diagnosis (sitting in on classes, making home visits, learning diagnosis, etc.), providing support, counselling parents and consulting with teachers, and arranging the support of other services in consultation with the parties involved. It also includes activities not directly related to specific cases, such as close cooperation and collaboration with the general social services and networking with other institutions (Pape and Köberling, 1999, p.91). In addition, there are specific priorities set by individual embers of staff, extending the range of services offered. These include both pedagogical-therapeutic services (e.g. group work) and preventive work in schools by adopting projects and further training measures or providing support to teachers at school conferences.

Like Frankfurt's ZfE, the REBUS also apply various measures to ensure the quality of their own work routines. At the REBUS, each case is detailed in a case report following a standardized procedure. In addition various optional quality-assurance tools are available: there are a wide variety of ways in which members can exchange ideas and reflect on the case they are dealing with, or seek specific advice or support from colleagues not involved in the case or from the head of a REBUS station. At regular weekly meetings of fixed groups, so-called "sub teams" , cases are examined in more detail by asking concrete questions. And, at irregular intervals, external supervisory services can be consulted.

Synopsis of Localization Model C

The two presented models constitute independent consultation systems, which, being external institutions, are no longer a part of the systems they serve. This external localization of the ZfE and the REBUS affords the consultants a certain neutrality, which in specific cases may make it easier to mediate between parents and school. The specialization in consulting work opens up new fields of activity for special education teachers, differing considerably – where such activity takes the form of cooperation with other professions in the consultant institutions' interdisciplinary teams – from their classical field of duties: neither traditional teaching nor classical test diagnosis play an important role. Instead, the consulting and support activity involves a wide variety of tasks requiring other "new" skills. So far, though, professional training here has been geared only to a very limited extent to imparting such skills as conducting interviews and the ability to successfully cooperate, coordinate and moderate with the result that in many cases these skills have to be acquired on the job (Reiser 2001).

To a substantial degree, the described areas of activity are covered by the different professions in the same way, resulting in a convergence here in the content of their work. This, in turn, frequently gives rise to the need for awareness of the specificity of one' s own work within the team (cf. Loeken 2000). In addition to this convergence of task profiles, the special education teachers face changes in the overall conditions affecting their work. For instance, there has been a convergence in terms of labour law through a harmonization of working hours and vacation regulations (Reiser 1996b, Pape and Köberling 1999).

Working together in interdisciplinary teams is a new experience for all the professions involved and can lead to synergies. An essential aim of both institutions is to provide the best support options and the most promising location for the support work in each case. They therefore remain in constant contact with local support institutions to ensure regional networking and promote exchange and cooperation among them.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY
Sociological Typing in BES

Analysis of the interviews with special teachers providing consultation services enabled different aspects to be determined that are relevant for understanding the way the various models and forms of BES work. Some of these aspects can be described in analytic categories:

- localization (position and structural integration of the consultants)
- organizational structure (internal organization and functioning of the consulting institution/s)
- recipient of the special-education service (recipient and recipient-specific aims)
- specific support services (i.e. concrete activities of the consultants in the areas of support and consultation)
- kinds of intervention (type and form of the interventions in the problem system)

By analyzing the interdependence of these categories, it was possible, in the present study, to highlight different approaches and strategies used in the consultation work, which we describe in terms of a typology of *"empirically based" real types* (on the method of empirically based typing, c.f. Kluge 1999 and 2000). Here, the category "recipient" served as the major category. The data analyses yielded four different real types of consultation practice in BES. The typology is likely to be extended as a result of the study' s next phase.

Type I: "Sustained consultation provided to the teacher by an external consultant"
(teacher-oriented)

The inner logic of this variant lies in the aim of sustained, skill-enhancing consultation being provided to the regular school teacher by the special-education consultant. This form of consultation was able to be reconstructed in the model of external localization (with a tendency for the consultation work to become independent of and separate from the special school/special-education support centre).

Type II: "Student support by an internal counsellor – "classical" student support
by offering personal commitment and through relationship work" (child-oriented)

With this concept, the support work focuses on the "classical"/"traditional" special-education support of students, consultation with the regular school teachers playing a much less important role. Working intensively with the student (for a limited period of time), the special-education teacher offers personal commitment, thus supporting the student by enhancing his/her social skills (relationship work).

Type III: "Student support coupled with teacher consultation in the form of
cooperation between colleagues" (child-teacher-oriented)

The two opposites "consultation with the teacher" and "support of the student" are by no means mutually exclusive in empirical reality. Some of the interviewees describe practices that combine both forms. The third type is thus a hybrid form combining Types I and II. Here, the enhancement of the regular school teacher's skills results from the latter' s collaboration with the special teacher in certain areas of everyday school life and through the mediation of special-education expertise. This variant emphasizes an aspect called *"collaborative consultation"* in discussions in the literature on consultation (e.g. Idol, Nevin and Paolucci- Witcomb 1993).

Type IV: " Mediating consultation between school and parents"
- Consultation as moderation or " mediating between the different worlds"
(teacher-parents-environment-oriented)

This type sees its principal task in mediating between school, parents and environment (e.g. institutions and services performing social work) in the case of communication breakdowns and problem situations. The establishment of a forum brings the different sides together and the interrupted communication is restored. The consultants moderate the process from a neutral and independent position. With this type, direct support of the student plays a lesser role. The different support variants classified in real types are *not* representative of a specific model or organizational form of BES. Instead, in some models several of these different types can be described, while in another only one single type can be reconstructed. The different models of BES thus exhibit differences in terms of the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the consultation practices described. Different factors affect the occurrence of a certain type in a certain model.

As regards the consultant's localization, the present study shows that external localization is more conducive to Type I and/or Type IV consultation. Another remarkable finding is that with these types of consultation there is also a tendency toward the consultation becoming independent of the organizational structure of the school system.

If, on the other hand, the special-education support system provides classical support (Type II), only a small portion of the teacher's mandatory number of periods is left for consultation work: intensive personal commitment to the student is relatively time-consuming. Consequently, the consultants following this concept can only deal with a very limited number of cases; they often work at only one or a few schools.

This restriction also applies to Type III; Type III is principally practiced to promote students' academic skills and appears suitable for this purpose, but less so for counselling in the case of behaviour problems. Type III appears especially suitable for combined support by internal counsellors in the case of learning and behaviour problems; however, as Type III does not suffice to solve the problems, the consultants would also have to perform Type IV consultation/counselling. On the individual level, this requires reconciling contradictions in role definition.

In practice, the " repair" function of special education (Type II) is often in demand. Here, teachers are keen to delegate responsibility for the indicated student to the special teacher (they order a "repair job", so to speak), hoping in this way to reduce their own workload. This situation frequently prevents teacher oriented consultation. Teachers who call for BES with these expectations are mostly not "amenable" to Type I and IV consultation. In such cases, the teacher's request to the consultant must, if possible, be changed in the contracting phase.

A reduction in the special-education services provided often occurs as a result of the special teachers' meeting this request. Special teachers who have no training as consultants confine themselves to classical individual student counselling an remedial work. The more the special teacher's range of duties includes both promoting students' academic skills and dealing with behaviour problems, the better suited is Type III support; the more the support is focused on social and emotional development, the more need there is to develop Types I and IV.

Trends within the consultation and support concepts studied suggest that, according to BES logic, Types I and IV are particularly effective and important for the future. This view leads us to plead here for special-education services at regular schools which, besides supporting individual students, also see the provision of consultation services for teachers as an essential element of social and emotional needs consultation and support in schools. The sustainability of such services is thus viewed not only from the perspective of supporting individual students with special needs, but also underlines the need to provide professional assistance through consultation to the individual teacher and the school.

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