

Time factors

The task force explored how time is used in classroom activities from three perspectives: allocated time, the time scheduled for a specific activity such as reading or arithmetic; time on task, or the amount of time needed to achieve progress in learning, which may vary from subject to subject; and academic learning time, the time within an allocated period during which the teacher is actually interacting with the students. The following effective schooling practices were identified:

1. Content and skill areas comprising the curriculum have been considered in terms of priority, and instructional time allocations for each content and skill area have been designated.
2. Housekeeping matters — collecting lunch money, et cetera — are organized in such a way that they infringe upon instructional time as little as possible.
3. Additional instructional time (which is interactive in nature), with the teacher actively teaching, is allocated for low ability, low achieving students.
4. The certificated staff evaluation system used to evaluate teacher performance has as one of its focuses the assessment of:
 - a. Use of positive teacher feedback.
 - b. Use of interactive instruction.
 - c. The provision for occasional student selection of learning activities.
 - d. The degree to which student diagnostic data and academic history are used in planning instruction.
 - e. The degree to which a wide range of instructional materials is used.
5. Student activities are scheduled at times other than those set aside for academic instruction, where possible.
6. Instructional time is regarded as valuable; schedules for assisting students with special needs are arranged so that instructional time devoted to basic skills and required courses is disrupted as little as possible.
 - a. Village schools may wish to utilize a flexible-modular schedule in order to accommodate visits by specialists such as speech therapists without disrupting basic academic learning time.
 - b. In scheduling services of itinerants to two or more schools, building programs of all schools concerned should be coordinated with the itinerant services.