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Iowa Behavioral Initiative

IBI

Iowa Behavioral Initiative

*Meeting the social,
emotional and behavioral
needs of Iowa's students
and young children.*



*A comprehensive initiative by the Iowa Department of Education
on behalf of all Iowa students*

3-1685

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Preface

The Iowa Behavioral Initiative (IBI) was developed in 1994 by the Iowa Department of Education. The Initiative is a school improvement change initiative intended to increase the capacities of Iowa schools, families and communities to meet the increasingly complex social, emotional and behavioral needs of students. A concept paper was widely disseminated in 1994 outlining the need for the Initiative as well as the conceptual framework.

The Iowa Department of Education has reflected on the successes of the IBI in selected school buildings over the last two years and has made a commitment to continuing and broadening our support for this initiative in the next 5-7 years. In May 1996, a draft informational paper was disseminated to selected constituents to obtain input on proposed future IBI activities. These activities were designed to promote a shared responsibility among families, education agencies and community agencies to develop the attitudes, skills and systems necessary to ensure that each student leaves public education with the social and academic competence appropriate to the individual regardless of ability or disability.

As a result of that input, the original concept paper and the draft informational paper have been revised to create this new concept paper which articulates both the conceptual and operational model of the IBI with timelines leading us into the 21st century.

The Iowa Department of Education will continue to not only support the IBI financially, but also through the alignment of other existing state and local resources that are necessary to ensure the social competence of Iowa students, thereby positively affecting their ability to learn. On behalf of the following staff representing the IBI Core Committee, the Iowa Department of Education, in conjunction with the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, we invite you to join us in this exciting adventure.

Mary Bartlow
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Iowa Behavioral Initiative

The Iowa Behavioral Initiative (IBI) is a school improvement systems change initiative implemented through the collaborative efforts of the Iowa Department of Education, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center, Area Education Agencies, local school districts, families and communities. The initiative is intended to increase the capacities of Iowa schools, families and communities to meet the increasingly complex social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and young children. The purpose of this paper is to present a summary of the IBI vision, beliefs, characteristics, conceptual model and goals, along with an overview of the operational model which describes the process that will be used to implement the initiative over the next five-year period.

IBI Vision, Beliefs, and Philosophy

Education should not and cannot be only for those who, without direct assistance, are able to be academically successful and socially acceptable to peers and adults. If we are to meet the high standards of education reform, we need to evaluate and change our beliefs about students who are behaviorally challenging. We need to invest in the development of systematic and proactive curricula, instruction and services, as well as staff who are committed to ensuring the social, emotional, and behavioral preparedness of all students and young children.

These sentiments are reflected in the IBI **vision** statement:

Iowa schools will embrace the shared responsibility for ensuring the social, emotional and behavioral success of all children and youth regardless of ability or disability.

The following **beliefs** guide the design and implementation of the IBI:

- The education of the total child includes a balanced focus on both academic and social achievement.
- School has an important role in developing personal and social competence as it is the one institution touching the lives of all children.

- Student discipline is best achieved through instruction rather than coercion; desirable behaviors are best taught in a planned, proactive and systematic manner.
- Services should focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Services for students and young children with behavioral disorders are best provided within the context of a larger building-wide commitment to the social, emotional and behavioral development of all students.
- The creation of a positive climate capable of meeting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and young children begins with a strong instructional leader and the care and concern of a professional staff.
- There are no social, emotional or behavioral problems that the school, family and community together cannot address.
- The child is a part of a family with complex needs and strengths. Parents, families and schools should be partners in planning for students and young children.

The **philosophy** of the IBI is to support the use of varied approaches to meeting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and

IBI Vision, Beliefs, and Philosophy (Continued)

young children with the recognition that no one approach will comprehensively meet these needs in all schools and in all communities. Particular theoretical orientations and practices will vary and be determined locally as schools act on needs assessment data and develop action plans. In the selection of a particular approach, three basic questions must be addressed. First, does the

approach respect the rights and dignity of students and young children and their families? Second, is the approach demonstrated to be effective? Third, does the approach positively affect the students' ability to learn? If these three questions can be answered in the affirmative, the approach being considered can be viewed as consistent with the IBI philosophy.

IBI Goals

The broad goals of the Iowa Behavioral Initiative are:

- **GOAL 1**
Iowa educators will have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students and young children.
- **GOAL 2**
Iowa schools will utilize valid and effective practices to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students and young children.
- **GOAL 3**
All Iowa students and young children will demonstrate social, emotional and behavioral success.



WHAT IS IBI?

Characteristics of Schools That Effectively Meet Social, Emotional and Behavioral Needs

Meeting the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students and young children is a complex challenge. No single factor or characteristic can explain the qualities of an effective service, program, or school. There is, however, a growing body of knowledge and experience available on school-based approaches that seem to effectively address many students' and young children's needs. The following describes the attitudes, skills and systems most likely to lead to students' and young children's success and a positive school climate. The IBI supports the development of these attitudes, skills and systems.

Attitudes

Unconditional positive regard for students and young children. Effective schools create a nurturing climate in which all students are viewed as capable and deserving of support and assistance regardless of their behavior. Each student's and child's uniqueness is recognized and valued, and student strengths are used in developing supportive assistance.

Positive and proactive focus. Effective schools promote the concept that behavior is learned and therefore can be taught. Positive approaches to teaching social competence are used rather than negative or punitive approaches.

Responsibility and self-efficacy. Staff in effective schools take responsibility for producing positive changes in student behavior and feel able to produce these changes. Staff also perceive students and young children as teachable and worthy of their attention and efforts regardless of the presenting problem or behavior.

Affirmation of high, success-oriented student expectations. Staff in effective schools believe that all students and young children can master basic social, behavioral and academic objectives. Staff also provide the ongoing encouragement and support that is needed for students and children to meet high expectations.

Skills

Match of instruction and services to individual students' and young children's needs. Effective schools provide interventions, services and programs that are driven by the needs of students and young children. The nature and severity of the individual's problems determine the type and amount of service needed.

Proactive curricula. Effective programs and services define positive behaviors and create learning opportunities to achieve them with an emphasis on **empowering** students and young children to acquire positive social skills and take responsibility for changing their own behavior.

Validated instructional strategies. Successful programs for students and young children with social, emotional and behavioral needs include a solid foundation of successful instructional practices - a preplanned and enriched curriculum, clearly defined learner outcomes, clear and focused lesson delivery, a high rate of student engaged time, and ongoing progress monitoring.

Systematic data-based interventions. Effective schools support the implementation of interventions in a systematic fashion over time making data-based decisions regarding the effectiveness of interventions. Systematic interventions also include opportunities for practice of new skills through modeling, rehearsal and guided practice.

Characteristics of Schools That Effectively Meet Social, Emotional and Behavioral Needs (Continued)

Support of strong leaders. Effective school leaders build a positive school climate by setting expectations for success, modeling this emphasis on appropriate student behavior, generating consensus on disciplinary policies and procedures, and using feedback to reinforce the school's positive behavioral emphasis.

Systems

Provide an array of services. Effective schools provide a comprehensive array of services to meet varied individual students' and young children's needs including specialized interventions such as social skills instruction, teaching anger control, counseling, and family support.

Engage families. Effective schools recognize that the support of families is essential to successful efforts to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students and young children. Research and experience indicate that no one approach to capitalizing on this support has been shown to be most effective. Rather, families need to be involved in many different roles over time.

Collaboration with a variety of caregivers. Effective schools design and implement a multi-system approach which coordinates the efforts of multiple services in and outside of the school. This collaboration is essential in addressing the complex needs of students and young children with social, emotional and behavioral problems.

Schoolwide approaches. Effective schools design mechanisms for all education programs to collaborate in developing strategies to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students and young children, including those identified as behaviorally disordered.

Staff development for school improvement. Effective schools mobilize change efforts through awareness and self-assessment. They commit to long-range, sustained efforts which include training and implementation of practices identified as essential to meeting students' and young children's social, emotional and behavioral needs.

Ongoing program evaluation, professional and organizational growth and development. In effective schools, evaluation takes place in order to design and support professional and organizational growth and development. Monitoring whether assistance is being provided as planned and whether such assistance is having the intended effect is essential for making informed decisions.

The IBI Conceptual Model: A School Improvement Process for Meeting the Social, Emotional and Behavioral Needs of Students and Young Children

The conceptual model of the Iowa Behavioral Initiative is illustrated in Figure 1. It is significant to note that families, schools and communities are at the center of this model. System change efforts must focus on the needs and resources of families, schools and communities in striving to better meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and young children. The best results will come from the collaborative efforts of families, educators, and members of the community.

The attitudes, skills, and systems described above are also an important element of this model. These characteristics of effective schools are an integral part of developing collaborative systems in the Iowa Behavioral Initiative.

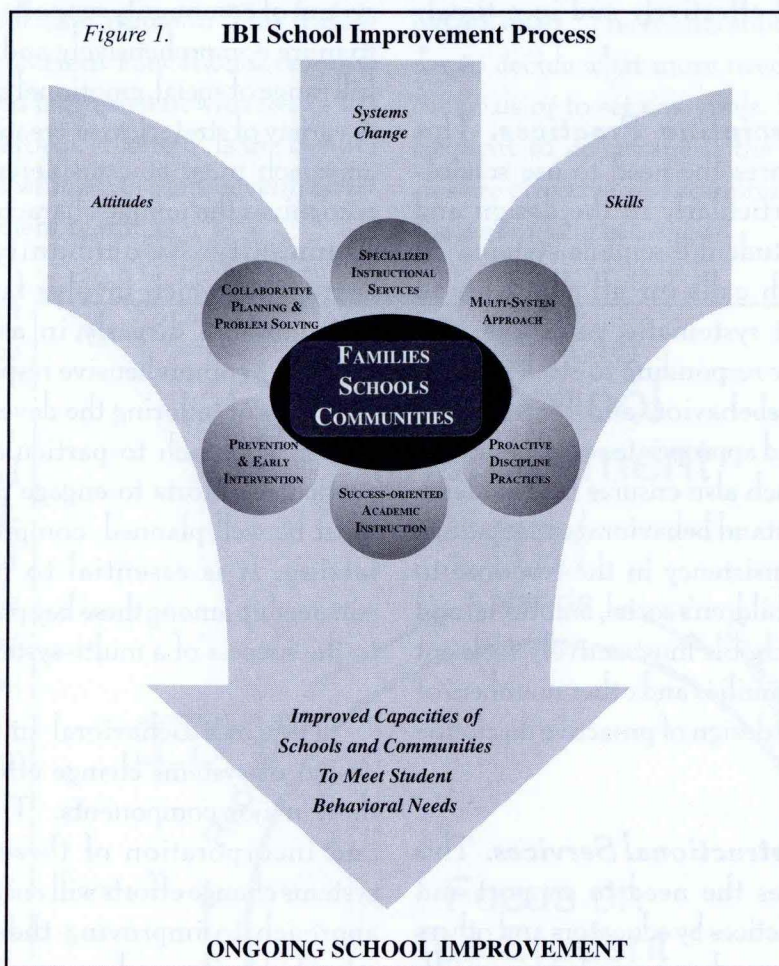
The model also includes six major components. These

components are essential ingredients of comprehensive systems change efforts and include success-oriented academic instruction, prevention and early intervention, collaborative planning and problem-solving, proactive discipline practices, specialized instructional services, and a multi-system approach. Families, educators and community members are all key players in the design and implementation of these components.

Success-oriented Academic Instruction.

This component recognizes the need to create school environments in which there are high expectations for students' academic success. Curricula should be designed and delivered in a manner that actively and meaningfully engages students and young children in the learning process, thereby minimizing misbehavior associated with inattention and poor academic performance. Schools must actively seek out the support of parents and other members of the community in the design and implementation of success-oriented instructional approaches.

Prevention and Early Intervention. This component addresses the need for families, schools, and communities to create a system which values and



invests in prevention and early intervention. This includes procedures for screening and early identification of students and young children who have unmet health, social or educational needs, and the delivery of services that respond to these needs in timely, efficient and effective ways. Successful prevention and early intervention efforts are cost effective.

The IBI Conceptual Model (Continued)

Collaborative Planning and Problem-solving. Planning to address the challenging behavior of students and young children with social, emotional and behavioral needs must occur collaboratively among key players, i.e. families, special and general educators and communities. A collaborative ethic must be established in which planning takes on a problem-solving orientation, one which seeks to systematically and purposefully prevent problems, and in which services are designed to respond effectively and in a timely manner.

Proactive Discipline Practices. This component underscores the need to use school-wide approaches particularly in the design and implementation of student discipline systems. A schoolwide approach calls for all educators to collaboratively craft systematic, proactive, and positive strategies for responding to students' and young children's misbehavior, and for teaching social competence and appropriate social behavior. A schoolwide approach also ensures that students and educators understand behavioral expectations and that there is consistency in the response to students' and young children's social, emotional and behavioral needs. Schools must actively seek out the participation of families and other members of the community in the design of proactive discipline practices.

Specialized Instructional Services. This component addresses the need to support and promote effective practices by educators and others who serve students and young children with moderate to severe social, emotional and behavioral needs. Schools must have a full array of specialized instructional services to meet the more intense needs of these individuals. These specialized instructional services will be most effective when integrated with schoolwide efforts to meet students' and young children's social, emotional, and behavioral needs and when developed in collaboration with families and other members of the community.

Multi-system Approach. The most comprehensive and promising approach to meeting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and young children is to coordinate and integrate the efforts of schools, families and communities. This approach rests on the assumption that complex personal and social problems cannot be adequately addressed by schools alone. It is imperative that families, schools and communities design and implement a collaborative system of community supports and services in order to more comprehensively and effectively meet the full range of social, emotional and behavioral needs. A variety of strategies for creating this multi-system approach must be considered in a manner that recognizes the unique characteristics of each local community. Community-based planning approaches which involve families, schools and communities directly in assessing needs and designing comprehensive responses to these needs are a way of tailoring the development of a multi-system approach to particular communities. In particular, efforts to engage parents and families must be well planned, comprehensive, and long-lasting. It is essential to nurture a spirit of partnership among these key players as this is critical to the success of a multi-system approach.

The Iowa Behavioral Initiative supports the design of systems change efforts which integrate these major components. The full development and incorporation of these components into systems change efforts will ensure a comprehensive approach to improving the capacities of Iowa schools, families and communities to meet the full range of students' and young children's social, emotional and behavioral needs and will lead to the accomplishment of the IBI goals.

In an effort to broaden the scope and impact of the Initiative, the Iowa Department of Education is in the process of developing a long range plan to carry out its commitment to the conceptual model of the IBI. Success depends upon the commitment

IBI Operational Model

of not only the Department of Education, but on the part of all school districts, area education agencies, families and communities.

Connecting School Improvement in Iowa is a collaborative effort of the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa's 15 area education agencies and local school districts. Through this collaborative effort, a philosophical framework has been identified which integrates a model process for connecting the various elements of school improvement. This framework is grounded in current educational research and change theory and is consistent with Iowa's focus on local school reform. Figure 2 is the School Improvement Model which has been developed by the School Improvement team.

The Principles of this model include the following:

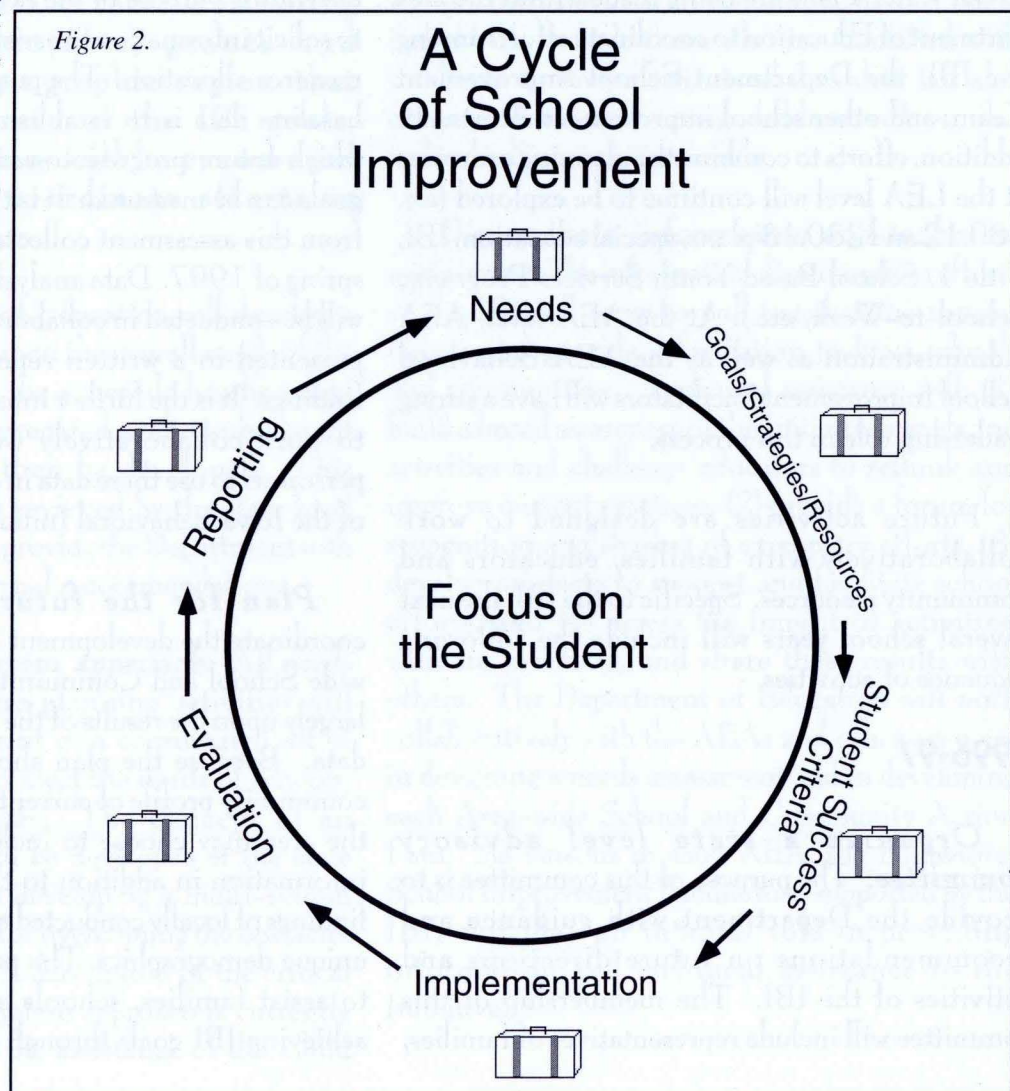
Needs Locally and collaboratively developed statements of student learning needs should be the driving force in the development of the district's School Improvement Plan.

Goals/Strategies/Resources Identified and validated learning needs should be translated into clear statements of expectations for student learning. Strategies for student achievement should be defined with adequate district and school resources allocated to the effort.

Student Success Criteria Criteria must define student success in incremental levels and should be clearly defined with appropriate assessment strategies.

Implementation Action plans should be used to achieve the goals developed in the plan. These plans should be developed at both the district and building level.

Evaluation The results should be analyzed in order to decide what more needs to be done to meet the goals or to set new goals. Evaluation should be frequent to determine if the implemented strategies are effective and comprehensive to know if the goals are being achieved.



IBI Operational Model (Continued)

Reporting The various publics shall be periodically informed of the district's progress toward meeting student needs.

As stated in the introduction of this paper, the IBI is a school improvement systems change initiative intended to increase the capacities of Iowa schools, families and communities to meet the increasingly complex social, emotional and behavioral needs of students and young children. The school improvement aspect of the IBI is not intended to replace or be separate from the Connecting School Improvement efforts. Rather the IBI is designed to address the social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students and young children and is considered to be one part of current LEA, AEA and Department of Education school improvement efforts in our state. Plans are being made within the Department of Education to coordinate efforts among the IBI, the Department School Improvement Team, and other school improvement efforts. In addition, efforts to combine the planning processes at the LEA level will continue to be explored (e.g. 280.12 and 280.18 plans, special education, IBI, Title 1, School Based Youth Services Programs, School-to-Work, etc.). At the AEA level, AEA Administration as well as the AEA Behavioral School Improvement Facilitators will have a strong leadership role in this process.

Future activities are designed to work collaboratively with families, educators and community resources. Specific to the IBI, the next several school years will include the following sequence of activities.

1996-97

Organize a state level advisory committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide the Department with guidance and recommendations on future directions and activities of the IBI. The membership of this committee will include representatives of families,

early childhood education, local school districts, area education agencies, institutes of higher education, community service agencies and other stakeholders.

Collect baseline data. The 1996-97 school year is designated as a planning and development year that will lay the foundation for expansion of the IBI. During this time, the Department will make available to each AEA \$10,000 for the purpose of participating in a statewide needs assessment related to social, emotional and behavioral issues and to help establish baseline data on key indicators of behavioral success (developed directly from the IBI goals). The data from these assessments will provide insight into statewide needs, but can be disaggregated at the AEA and LEA levels. The overriding purpose of the needs assessment will be to solicit information to assist in prioritizing future resource allocation. The purpose of collecting the baseline data is to establish benchmarks against which future progress toward accomplishing IBI goals can be measured. It is the intent to have data from this assessment collected by the winter/early spring of 1997. Data analysis and summarization will be conducted in collaboration with AEAs and presented in a written report documenting the findings. It is the further intent of the Department to work collaboratively with AEA and LEA personnel to use these data in expanding the impact of the Iowa Behavioral Initiative.

Plan for the future. Each AEA will coordinate the development of a three year Area-wide School and Community Action Plan based largely upon the results of the collection of baseline data. Because the plan should be considered a community profile of current resources and needs, the area may choose to include other sources of information in addition to the baseline data, e.g. findings of locally conducted research, focus groups, unique demographics. The purpose of this plan is to assist families, schools and communities in achieving IBI goals through the identification of

IBI Operational Model (Continued)

needed resources and assistance. This plan must be developed by a planning committee representing special education, general education, community services and families. The plan must address the six components of the IBI School Improvement Process as a means to achieving IBI goals:

- Success-oriented academic instruction; designed to meet identified student learning goals
- Prevention and early intervention
- Collaborative planning and problem solving
- Proactive discipline practices
- Specialized instructional services
- Multi-system approach

Planning committees will be invited to reach out to other community and school efforts in the development of the Area-wide School and Community Action Plan. **If there are existing action plans, projects, grants and initiatives in a geographic region that address one or more of the IBI goals, planning committees will be encouraged to combine and coordinate efforts to prevent duplication.**

The Department of Education will develop a three year plan based upon the overall needs of the state. The results of the statewide baseline data collection will be aggregated and a subsequent statewide plan will then be developed. This statewide plan will be reviewed by the state level advisory committee to provide the Department with input and to make formal recommendations.

Build multi-system approach. All needs assessment and future planning activities will address the development of a coordinated set of community services to meet the needs of schools, children and families. The concept of an Interagency Cadre will be developed at the state level to assist areas in developing a multi-system approach as a strategy for overcoming the obstacles to service provision. A description of the critical elements of a multi-system approach is currently being developed with the assistance of the Child

and Family Policy Center in Des Moines. This detailed articulation of an effective and efficient multi-system approach will be used in constructing instrumentation for the IBI needs assessment process and may also be used in the form of a self-assessment instrument which will be useful to those wishing to identify system change goals and charting progress toward accomplishing these goals.

Build specialized instructional services.

All needs assessment and planning activities will take into consideration students and young children who have moderate to severe social, emotional and behavioral needs. In order to assist in planning, a Behavioral Disorders Network has been established to address the ongoing training and support needs of educators and others who work or will work regularly with students and young children with significant behavioral and emotional needs. These individuals include those who are identified with moderate to severe behavioral disorders but also other students and young children with similar individual intervention needs.

Disseminate information and technical assistance.

The information dissemination efforts of the IBI will serve to pull together the various efforts and provide information to Iowa schools and communities. Technical assistance will: (1) build a broad awareness of the Initiative's goals and activities and challenge educators to rethink and improve current practices, (2) provide a forum for recognition and sharing of exemplary efforts, (3) develop products to support and facilitate school efforts, and (4) assess the impact of activities, validate practices, and share these results with others. The Department of Education will work collaboratively with the AEAs and other agencies in designing a needs assessment and in developing each Area-wide School and Community Action Plan. As liaisons in each AEA, the Behavioral School Improvement Facilitators, supported by the IBI, will play an integral role in providing information and technical assistance to the Initiative.

IBI Operational Model (Continued)

1997-98 & 1998-99

Implementation. These school years will be devoted to the implementation of the Area-wide School and Community Action Plans as well as the overall statewide plan. Technical assistance from the Behavioral Disorders Network, Interagency Cadre, AEA Behavioral School Improvement Facilitators and coordination with other school improvement efforts will continue to be provided at both the local and Department of Education level. The Department will also continue with its information dissemination and technical assistance activities.

1999-2000

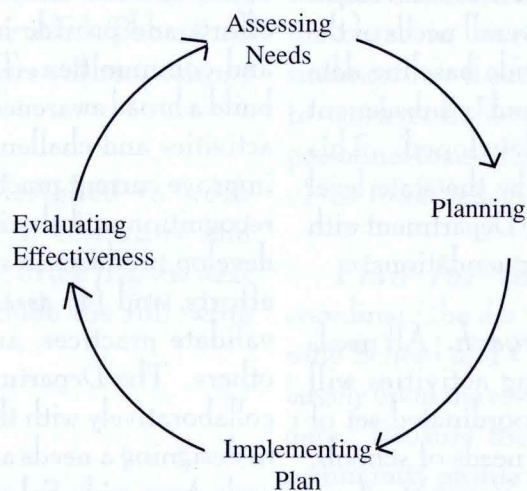
Determine effectiveness. The baseline evaluation activities conducted during the 1996-97 school year will be repeated to determine the effectiveness of IBI activities to date. As with the baseline data collection, key indicators of

behavioral success derived from the IBI goals will be measured. Progress towards accomplishment of the IBI goals will be determined by comparing assessment results from the 1996-97 school year to those generated at this time. Once again, this information will be aggregated to determine effectiveness on a statewide basis. At this point, another needs assessment will be conducted, similar to the one conducted in 1996-1997, and priorities for action will once again be examined in the context of the IBI conceptual model.

As pictured below in Figure 3, the operational model of the IBI is planned to operate in a cyclical pattern of assessing needs, planning, implementing plans, and evaluating effectiveness. This makes IBI aligned not only with the School Improvement Model (Figure 2) but with other school improvement efforts currently being implemented in AEAs and local school districts across the state.

Figure 3.

IBI Operational Model



Summary

Meeting the social, emotional and behavioral needs of **all** students and young children is a difficult challenge—but one with positive results for schools, communities, and families alike.

Through the IBI, the Iowa Department of Education joins with others in offering the leadership and resources necessary to meet this challenge.

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