

BEST in CLASS

Principal Investigators: Drs. Maureen Conroy, Kevin Sutherland
Project Director: Dr. Angela Snyder

BEST in CLASS is a federally funded grant and a collaborative project between the School of Education at VCU and Henrico Public Schools designed to develop and evaluate a classroom-based curriculum model targeted at promoting social, emotional, and behavioral competence in young children at elevated risk for or with emotional/behavioral disorders in early childhood classrooms. The project, funded by the Institute of Educational Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, began May 1, 2008 and will continue for 3 years.

Across the 3 years of the project, the project staff will work with 60 early childhood teachers (20 per year) and 120 PK children (40 per year) who are at high-risk for chronic problem behavior in Henrico County. The proposed curriculum model will teach early childhood teachers effective instructional strategies for ameliorating these young children's chronic problem behaviors including the following key instructional practices: (1) pre-correction, (2) increased opportunities to respond (OTR), (3) increased rates of praise, (4) teacher feedback, (5) development and implementation of classroom rules, and (6) home-school communication and collaboration.

Teachers and staff within the school district will directly benefit through direct ongoing instruction and consultation on model components. Children and parents served through the project will benefit from receiving effective instructional practices implemented by the teachers. At the end of the project a comprehensive early intervention classroom-based model that is manualized and can be further tested and evaluated to facilitate young high-risk children's social, emotional, and behavioral competence will be developed.