

# VESTED™ INVESTMENTS

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KOLAK GROUP INC.

## Hurricane Ike Suspends VESTED™ Research: We're Down But Not Out!

It's one thing that school starts late in the year these days. It's another when a hurricane slams into the gulf coast suspending classes and research—both focused on the academic success of students.

We were really hoping to get out onto participating campuses once school was minimally into the third week of the first six-weeks period to follow-up last year's activities. It is now clear that collaborative efforts between Kolak Group and research participants will not be underway until mid-October at the earliest.

We hope to be able to conduct additional video review sessions this year to empower teachers to reflect on and assess their in-

structional performance for themselves. Our research findings reveal that most teachers found the sessions to be of benefit and enabled them to get a glimpse as to how their students see them in the classroom. Teachers wishing to get feedback from their students may arrange for a classroom video review along with a "mutual recall" of the learning events. This is a process where the teacher and the students review the video footage together to discuss the quality of the instructional exchange between teacher and students after the students and the teacher have had the opportunity to review the footage in separate sessions. Research reveals that this process is not only helpful for the

teacher, but actually works to strengthen the relationship between the teacher and the students resulting in better student attendance, reduced discipline referrals, and greater student motivation to learn (Kagan, 1980).



Video review processes are based on the research of Norman Kagan's Interpersonal Process Recall (IPR) Model.

## Congratulations Brownsville ISD!

Brownsville ISD has been selected for the Broad Prize for Urban Education. This award recognizes the gains that Brownsville has made with raising the academic achievement of ALL of their students. This pres-

tigious award includes a one million dollar prize that provides college scholarships to students in Brownsville ISD.

The four other school districts recognized as finalists and awarded \$250,000 each includes

Aldine ISD in Texas, Broward County Public Schools in Florida, Long Beach USD in California, and Miami-Dade County Public Schools in Florida.

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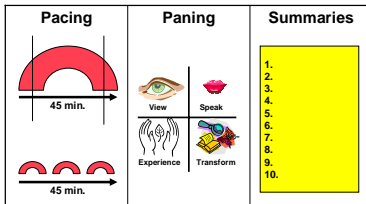
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### Special points of interest:

- Research efforts continue with an emphasis on video review follow-up sessions.
- The Algebra Walk provides a kinesthetic approach to understanding math concepts.
- What will become of NCLB? Little has been put out there for us to be able to anticipate the future of the educational landscape.

## Primacy, Recency, Repetition...

### Pacing and Chunking for Maximum Gains



I lunched with a friend recently to discuss putting an administrative session together for school administrators so they can learn about VESTED™ and how they can provide teacher support. The conversation eventually evolved into the issue of how VESTED™ helps teachers pace and chunk their lessons so as to increase student retention through

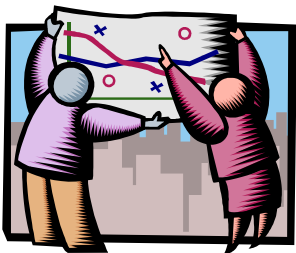
the principle of primacy, recency, and repetition.

We reviewed how a goal of accelerated instruction is to provide the students with more beginnings and endings of academic tasks in the course of lesson delivery...

My friend pointed out that the fewer number of beginnings and endings in the course of class time, the more the instruction can actually decelerate learning. She knew of a campus that volunteered

to pilot and try out block scheduling. The teachers were using the first part of their block for instruction and then letting the students use any remaining time for homework. Unfortunately, in a year's time, the school went from a few students short of exemplary to academically acceptable status. Delivering instruction in chunks simply cannot be underestimated especially when working to help students catch up when they are behind.

## Spotlight Strategy: Algebra Walk



The Algebra Walk is a strategy borrowed from Marney Sorgen's 1995 "Strengthening Student Learning by Applying the Latest Research on the Brain to Your Classroom Teaching." The strategy involves the development of an  $x$  and  $y$  axis in the classroom or outside location. The teacher may use tape or chalk to create the resulting quadrants while carefully marking the units approximately 24" apart.

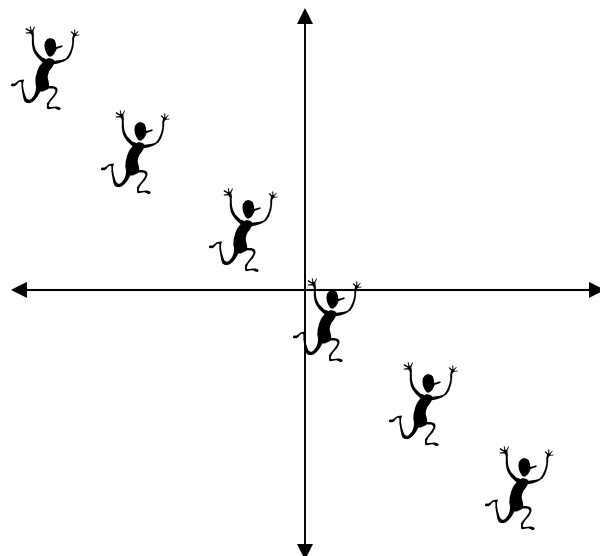
Groups of 7-9 students can then work together create a human graph when asked to stand on units on the  $x$ -axis facing the positive side of the  $y$ -axis. The teacher gives oral directions such as "multiply your number by 2 and add 4." The students then take that new number and move that many units forward or backward on the graph. The rest of the class can

use their math notebooks to record the changes they see in the graph in words and pictures as a result of the teacher's directives.

Once a group has had 3-4 chances to move around, a new group can then stand on the  $xy$ -coordinate system and

move around based on the teacher's directives.

The Algebra Walk serves as a great way to incorporate an "experience" that requires a full-body investment in learning. The physical movement itself works to create a great



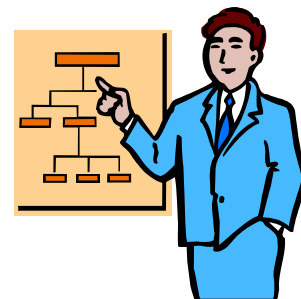
## Kolak Group to Present VESTED™ at TABE and TexTESOL in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex this Fall Season

Kolak Group will be presenting a session entitled "Conveying Academic Content for Secondary English Language Learners" at both the Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE) and Texas Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages (TexTESOL) that features key tenets of the VESTED™ Instruc-

tional Approach. The TABE session will take place in Arlington on October 23rd, 1:30-3:00 p.m. The TexTESOL session will take place in Richardson on November 7th, 3:15-5:00 p.m.

Kolak Group's presentation has also been wait-listed for the national conference for the Council for Exceptional Children for

early April 2009. We will pass any information about this session as details are made available to us.



## We Want Your Stories and Ideas!

Kolak Group would like to share your tales out there on the front lines! It is through the sharing of our challenges and successes that the rest of us can benefit. We hope our newsletter can work to keep all in touch with one another as we all work to provide the best instruction for all students.

As we have opportunities to observe you and visit

with you, we will be looking for great successes and ideas to share with others through this publication. So, if you do not toot your own horn, we will do it for you!



## Special Shout Out for Michael Baldwin of Brownsville ISD!

We would like to extend a special shout out to Michael Baldwin of Brownsville ISD. Michael has been consistently incorporating VESTED™ into his lesson design for his biology classes. With more visuals at the onset of lessons using resources such as Brain-Pop video clips and a greater focus on vocabu-

lary support, Michael reports VESTED™ has impacted his lesson design.

Michael's lesson plans are very detailed and reflect the use of a variety of research-based methods and techniques including a focus on strong questioning techniques such as Core, a focus on

inquiry-based processes using the 5 E Model and integrating the SDLOC strategy (Same, Different, Label, Operate, Combine).

Michael's work truly reflects the complimentary nature of VESTED™ with other models of instruction.



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Learning Inside a Kaleidoscope  
**KOLAK GROUP**

It's important to note that the VESTED™ Instructional Approach was born out of the need to provide teachers with specific guidelines for conveying and delivering content area instruction to English language learners, especially at the high school level. After careful consideration and lengthy discussions with experts in the field, Kolak Group Inc. expanded the approach to address the needs of all students —ELLs, GT, Special Ed., mainstream— since VESTED™ works to provide both inclusion and accessibility to curriculum goals for all. Kolak Group Inc. is currently collaborating with districts to continue to expand and refine the theoretical underpinnings of this instructional approach with continued quantitative and qualitative research efforts.

**We are on the web!**  
**[kolakgroup.com](http://kolakgroup.com)**

Point to Ponder: What will become of NCLB?



"No Child Left Behind really put us in our place," shared a central administrator from an Indiana school district. "We cried foul and were upset about goals we thought were unattainable, but we learned that we were wrong. If it weren't for the tough rules that the law laid down, we wouldn't have reached the students we are actually reaching now. We were proven wrong when we thought certain kids couldn't live

up to our standards. We see it so differently now. We'd hate to see NCLB go. Sure, some of the rules need to change, but we need not totally do away with the focal intent of the law and that is to ensure access to a rigorous curriculum for all students."

No one really knows what will become of NCLB. Currently, both candidates for the U.S. presidency have shared little about their intentions with NCLB other than reinforcing beliefs in accountability and schools of choice, including greater investments in charter schools.

Even so, earlier this summer, there was political buzz about possibly adopting national standards for English language profi-

ciency (Education Week, June). Both presidential candidates have been talking a lot about change, but adopting national ELPS could cause tidal waves of change here in the Lone Star State!

Then there is that issue related to a little mishap with some greedy banks... No one really knows how the financial status of our country will impact our educational system. Most people argued that NCLB was greatly underfunded... Will our new leaders be able to show us the money? Let us hope that at least common sense as well as research-based practices guide our new leaders as they make important decisions that will impact all of our students.