Welcome to *Hidden Sparks Without Walls*. We will be starting shortly…

- If you are using a speaker phone, the rest of us will hear everything going on in the room you are in. Speaker phones can also cause echoes and other extraneous sounds. Please avoid using them if possible. If that is not possible, make sure you are in a quiet room, and keep electronic gadgets as far from the phone as possible.

- While we are waiting to begin please practice using the chat feature by sharing your name, school and location. Activate chat by clicking the “Chat” tab below the attendees list on the right of your screen. Enter your communication and click on “Send.”

- If you have any clarifying questions about the format or the topic, you may click on the “Q&A” tab below the presenter list and enter your questions. Feel free to use the hand raising feature, by clicking on the little yellow hand on the right side of the screen.

- Don’t hesitate to engage as active, full participants. Your contributions may help others.

- Be aware of your air time.
Transitions: Creating a Smooth School Day

with Andrea Rousso

December 9, 2009
Welcome & Conference Etiquette

- Below are some tips that will help make this conference call successful.

- **Use the right phone.** - Cell phones can be included in conference calls, but some can also cause static on the lines. Try to use a landline phone if possible. Speakerphones pick up a lot of background noise. If you use one, mute it whenever possible.

- **Participate in a quiet, undisturbed room.** – Background noise can be heard through the phone and will disturb others in the conference. If you can’t find a quiet room, use your phone’s mute button until you want to speak – and avoid distracting noises such as humming, scraping chairs, tapping a pencil, etc.

- **Never Put a Conference Call on Hold!** - Participants will be forced to listen to your on-hold music or they will not know that you have stepped away and may continue to address you while you're gone.

- **Call Waiting** - The sound of your call-waiting beep can be disruptive and confusing to conference call participants. Quite often the Call Waiting function can be temporarily suspended by touching *70 prior to the call.

- **Identify Yourself** - When you first enter the call and when you ask a question please identify yourself by name and school or state on-line.

- **Chat Room & Question/Answer Box** – Those participating on line may use the chat room and question/answer box on the lower right of their screen to enter questions and comments at any time. We will offer regular opportunities for those joining by phone only to participate as well.
Andrea Rousso has taught in New York City public schools for 33 years. As an educator of children with special needs, she taught grades K-6 in a day treatment center in collaboration with clinicians from the Jewish Board of Children and Family Services. Using the skills she acquired in that position, she became a teacher-trainer for special education. In that role she consulted with new and experienced teachers of self contained special education classes and collaborative teams in inclusive classrooms. During that time she led workshops for new and experienced teachers, taught classes at the graduate level and tutored children with learning disabilities. For the last nine years, Andrea was a special education teacher in a kindergarten collaborative team classroom, a part time consultant for teachers in her school and a certified facilitator for the Schools Attuned Program from All Kinds of Minds. Currently, Andrea is a consultant for two elementary schools and she is collaborating on a special project with Hidden Sparks and The Churchill Center.
TRANSITIONS are happening in and out of the classroom all day long. Tonight we will consider transitions, first from a broad or general prospective. Then we will consider specific transitions that occur within every school day. Within both of those structures we will view the teacher’s role in creating smooth transitions and the student’s role around developing independence.
Session Goals

- To develop the concept of ‘transition’
- To appreciate the effect that smooth transitions play throughout the school day
- To consider:
  - the components of most transitions
  - the role of teacher and student
  - specific transitions that occur throughout the day
- To become aware of resources for further study and for problem solving.
Thinking about Transitions

- Transitions are happening all the time.
- Transitions challenge us.
- Most transitions do not come with preparation.
THINK: What unknowns have you experienced while going through a transition?

THINK: How are you affected by ‘the unknown’?

THINK: What could have helped make your transition smoother?
UNLIKE REAL LIFE...

- A classroom offers opportunities for ‘planned and efficient’ transitions.
- We can help students clarify their roles and increase their efficiency while in the midst of a transition.
- Classroom transitions can be ‘conducted and orchestrated’.
- A teacher-guide is available.
Smooth Transitions = A ‘Finely Tuned Machine’

Observable Behaviors:

- More time on task
- More time for instruction
- Fewer disruptions and disruptive behaviors

Results:

- Increased comprehension
- Increased sense of competency and independence
- Accountability
CONSIDER:

• Transitions are **LESSONS** occurring before, during, after, in-between academic lessons.

• Transitions contain **SKILLS** to be mastered.

• Transitions must contain the best **COMPONENTS** from good lessons.
A ‘Transition Lesson’:

COMPONENTS from the best lessons:

- Purpose
- Engagement
- Clear, explicit instruction
- A sequence of events
- Rehearsal, repetition and feedback
An 8 Step Recipe for Smooth Transitions

1) Teacher’s skills, insights and experiences
2) Students’ needs and developmental stages
3) Purpose and Preparation
4) Pacing
5) Explicit language
6) Available space
7) Student helpers
8) Practice, repetition and feedback
The teacher must develop skills that enhance the teaching of smooth transitions.

One needs to **SELF-EVALUATE** for:

- Your own **executive function and previewing skills**
- Your ability to:
  - **sequence the steps** of a task
  - **use clear and explicit** language
  - **tolerate activity and noise level**
The Teacher is the Key!

Your ability to:

- observe objectively
- assess intentions behind behaviors
- sense uncomfortable level of activity
- modify on the spot

Your willingness to seek support and use resources
A Demystification of YOU!

- ATTENTION
- LANGUAGE
- ORDERING SYSTEMS
  (Temporal, Sequential, Spatial)
- SOCIAL COGNITION

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Your Learning Profile and Transitions: Use a “Schools Attuned” Approach

ATTENTION:
✓ Previewing, Alertness, Mental Energy, Production, Processing

LANGUAGE
✓ VCR (volume, rate, complexity), Familiar Language, Explicit Language, Length of Sentences

ORDERING SYSTEMS (TEMPORAL/SEQUENTIAL AND SPATIAL)
✓ Time, Natural Sequence of Steps, Paths of Traffic, Layout of Furniture, Placement of Materials for Use and Storage
SOCIAL COGNITION

✓ Sense of chaos/productive activity/smoothness as they effect interactions, cooperation, teamwork, helpfulness

✓ Recognition of how ‘A -B-C’ (Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence) is effected by bumpy vs. smooth transitions

✓ Reactions to positive vs. negative language used for feedback
Analysis of Any Transition

✓ Who?
✓ How many?
✓ What happened before?
✓ What will happen next?
✓ Purpose of the transition?
✓ Materials?
✓ Amount of space?
✓ Number of steps?
✓ What kind of ‘narration’ or ‘cues’ or ‘signals’ or ‘feedback’ will be needed: verbal vs. non-verbal?
✓ How often have the students practiced?
✓ What routines are embedded into the transition?
✓ Is amount of time realistic?
A Formula for New Transition Success

- EXPLAIN
- MODEL
- TEACH THE STEPS
- CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING
- PRACTICE
- REINFORCE WITH SUPPORTIVE FEEDBACK
School Day Transitions

- Beginning and ending the day
- Entering the classroom
- Lining up to leave
- Moving through the halls

- Beginning and ending lunch and recess
- Between lessons
- Within lessons such as collecting materials
- Moving to/from large and small group activities
ARRIVAL

- ‘FLOW OF TRAFFIC’
- Create a series of STEPS/PROCEDURES
- Imagine… TRY IT YOURSELF
- TALKING/SHARING/CHECKING IN
- POST STEPS TO FOLLOW
- PLAN ACTIVITIES for more efficient students
- TEACH AND PRACTICE ON THE FIRST DAY
SMALL GROUP TO LARGE GROUP INSTRUCTION

- PREPARE MATERIALS
- Teacher is IN PLACE
- Call each small group, ONE AT A TIME
- DESCRIBE what to do with materials
- Utilize STUDENT HELPERS
- NARRATE as they move
- Offer FEEDBACK
- REFER TO THE LESSON content as students arrive
LARGE GROUP TO SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION

- PREPARE MATERIALS
- Use STUDENT HELPERS
- Students know ASSIGNED SEATS
- Review and clarify EXPECTED BEHAVIORS
- CALL A FEW STUDENTS at a time
- NARRATE/GIVE FEEDBACK
  - what to do with materials
  - goals of small group work
  - plan for conferencing/circulating
- OPTIONS for EARLY FINISHERS
- STAY IN TOUCH with random feedback

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LINING UP TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM

- **DESTINATION** is scheduled
- Allow for **TIME** to get ready
- Rely on a **DAILY, CONSISTENT PLAN** (Ex: Call partners. Use a timer. Silent cues. Tape on the floor. Two perpendicular lines meet as parallel lines)
- **NARRATE**
- **STUDENT HELPERS** support those who struggle with spatial ordering and attention
- **FEEDBACK** as class moves through the hall
- Be sure to **STOP EVERY FEW YARDS** to make sure the class is moving together; offer feedback
Interventions and Supports for Smooth Transitions:

- ‘Ripple effect’
- ‘Proximity control’ (circulate, be ‘in touch’)
- ‘Redirection’
- Objective feedback
- Teach as ‘step by step’ procedures
- ‘Wait time’ when teaching/modeling a new transition
- ‘Warning system’ for the beginning/end of lessons
- THE TEACHER IS WATCHING, GUIDING AND NARRATING THROUGHOUT THE TRANSITION AS IF IT IS A LESSON
Ideas for Encouraging Independence

Use a timer and compare to other times.

Announce: ‘Today will be a silent transition. I will only give silent signals and instructions.’

Announce that student buddies will help each other.
Encouraging Independence cont’d

Collect ‘chips’ or ‘marbles’ in a jar when the students have moved to the next area/activity within a given time frame.

Use a chime or bell to signal the beginning/middle/end of a transition.

Use visuals/graphics as prompts and guides.
BE SYSTEMATIC in pulling back on how you support transitions; ANNOUNCE when you will do/say less than usual. Example: “Yesterday I called partner’s names to line up. Today I will not call partners. I will expect you to watch the line up so that you will know when it is your turn.”

NOTE: Even when the students have achieved independence, the THE TEACHER IS WATCHING, SMILING AND BEING NON-VERBALLY SUPPORTIVE
Assess for Independence

- **EXPLAIN** it is time to see how much they can **DO ON THEIR OWN**
- **EXPLAIN** that you will be **DOING/SAYING LESS**
  
  **SUGGESTION:** Begin by eliminating some verbal directions.
  
  Example: “**It is time to move to our small group tables.**
  
  **Group One:** Please move to your table and follow the usual plan for getting ready to work.”

- **GIVE FEEDBACK**

- **PRACTICE** for student levels of independence often

- And… **KEEP IN MIND:** It is **ALWAYS THE TEACHER’S JOB** to continue to be present, aware and to offer feedback. You can appear as if you are not watching, but **REMAIN AWARE** of what is happening. In this way you still actively engage in the transition process.

- Always be **PROACTIVE AND ACTIVELY ENGAGED.**
Resources and References

- Mackenzie, Robert, **Setting Limits in the Classroom**
- Powell, Angela, **The Cornerstone: Classroom Management That Makes Teaching More Effective, Efficient and Enjoyable**
- Wong, Harry and Rosemary, **The First Days of School**
- [www.fredjones.com](http://www.fredjones.com)
- [www.BehaviorAdvisor.com](http://www.BehaviorAdvisor.com)
- [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org) (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support)
- Various books about classroom transitions published by Scholastic
Hidden Sparks is a non-profit fund whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks develops and supports professional development programs for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for teaching to diverse learners.

Guided by a philosophy that by helping schools meet the needs of children with learning and behavioral differences, ultimately all students will benefit. Hidden Sparks’ programs combine professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, guided classroom observation and one on one coaching. The Hidden Sparks model and program is currently in 21 Jewish Day Schools/Yeshivot in New York and 7 in Boston, through a partnership with Gateways: Access to Jewish Education.
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<th>Date</th>
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| Tuesday, February 16, 2010 | Is This Typical? Understanding Variations in Child Development, with Dr. Rona Novick  
Primary School Session |
| Tuesday, February 23, 2010 | Is This Typical? Understanding Variations in Child Development, with Dr. Rona Novick  
Secondary School Session |
| Wednesday, March 3, 2010  | Core Classroom Practices in Judaic and General Studies that Reflect an Appreciation for All Kinds of Learners in the Classroom, with Judah Weller, Ed.D. |
| Wednesday, March 17, 2010 | Helping Students Discover How They Learn, with Kelli Pollock            |
| Wednesday, April 14, 2010 | Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction: Enhancing Understanding of Text, with Jane Gertler, Ph.D. |
| Monday, May 3, 2010       | Cooperative Learning: A Way to Differentiate Your Instruction and Enhance Your Students’ Engagement, with Harriet Lenk, Ph.D. |

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