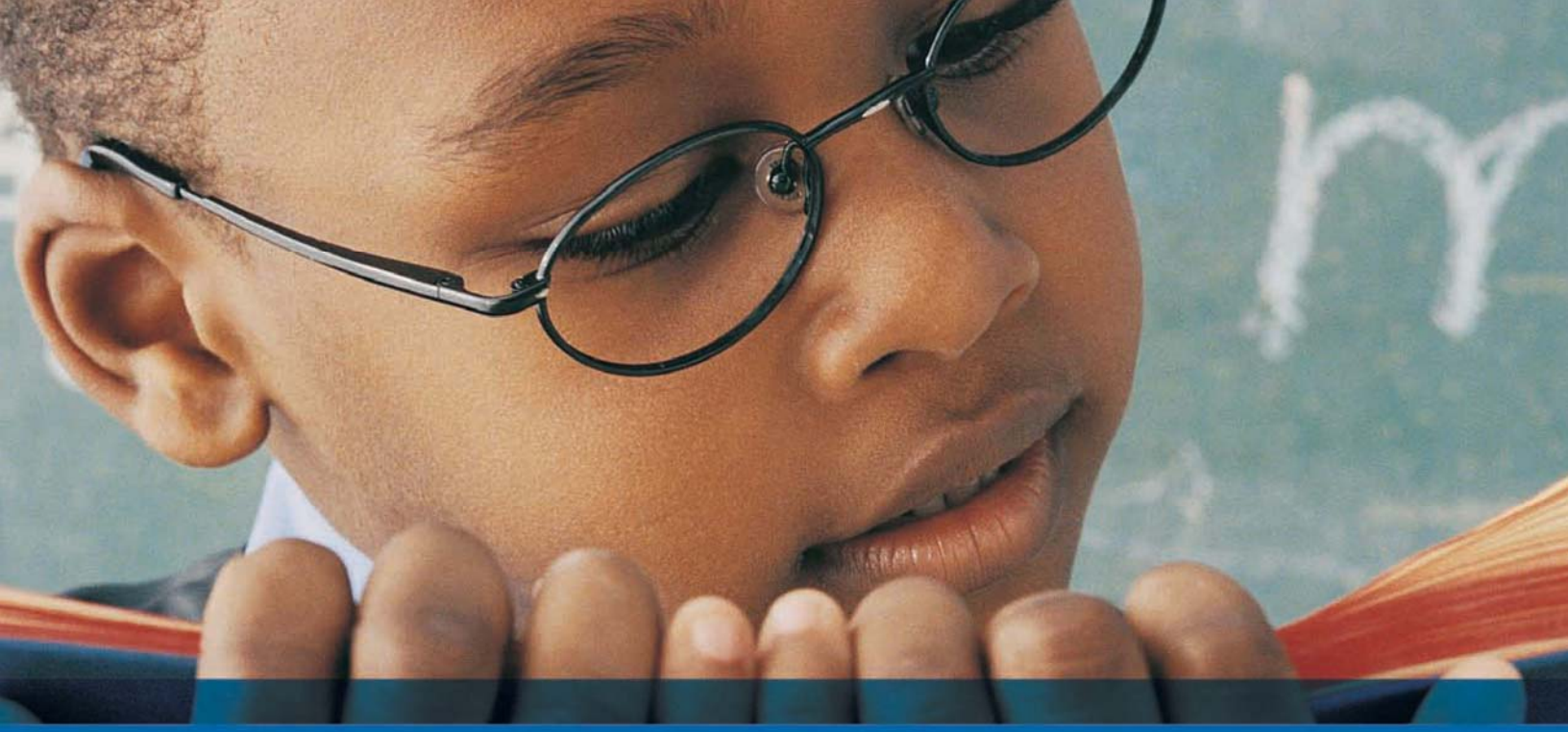

A Deeper Look at Implementation: School-Level Stakeholders' Perceptions of Comprehensive School Reform

Bridget Cotner, Suzannah Herrmann, Kathryn M. Borman,
Theodore Boydston, and Kerstin Carlson LeFloch

American Institutes for Research®

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW | Washington, D.C. 20007-3835 | 202.403.5000 | www.air.org

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A paper prepared for the annual meeting of the
American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada, April 11–15, 2005

Bridget Cotner, University of South Florida
Suzannah Herrmann, American Institutes for Research®
Kathryn M. Borman, University of South Florida
Theodore Boydston, University of South Florida
Kerstin Carlson LeFloch, American Institutes for Research®

The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the United States Department of Education (PR/Award Number R306S000012). The contents, however, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

NLECSR

Contents

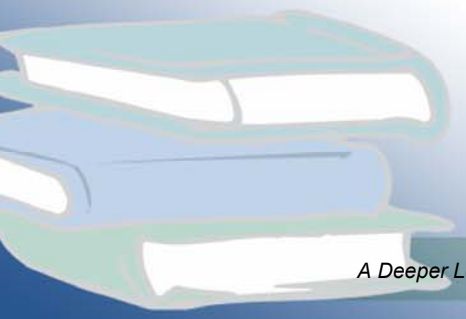
List of Figures

List of Tables

A Deeper Look at Implementation: School-Level Stakeholders' Perceptions of Comprehensive School Reform

Abstract

This qualitative, comparative case study examines how school stakeholders understood comprehensive school reform (CSR) implementation, and how contextual factors influenced the process of CSR model implementation. We rated school stakeholders' perceptions of the comprehensiveness and schoolwide nature of their CSR model. Comprehensiveness reflected stakeholders' perceptions of the multicomponent nature of the CSR model, and schoolwide understanding reflected the degree to which stakeholders perceived that the reform was implemented across grades and classrooms. We found that, across the model schools, stakeholders understood CSR model implementation as a schoolwide phenomenon. However, across the model schools, stakeholders varied in their understandings of CSR model components. We found five contextual factors to explain the variation among model schools: the challenge of getting buy-in by teachers new to the model, principals' leadership activities supporting the implementation process, the alignment of the model with ongoing programs, the quality of developer support, and policies that influence stakeholders' decisions to implement model components.



A Deeper Look at Implementation: School-Level Stakeholders' Perceptions of Comprehensive School Reform

Introduction

The process of implementing comprehensive school reform (CSR) at the school level is perhaps best understood by taking into account the perceptions of school-level stakeholders. At this critically important phase in the lifecycle of CSR, school stakeholders have undertaken the adoption process and embarked on the implementation of the selected model. As a complementary analysis to the quantitative National Longitudinal Evaluation of Comprehensive School Reform (NLECSR) inquiry into the implementation process, this paper examines in detail CSR processes and focuses on school stakeholders' perceptions.

The qualitative, comparative case study described here (for further details, see Borman, Clarke, Cotner, & Lee, 2005) examines how CSR implementation is understood by school stakeholders. We investigated teachers' and school leaders' understandings of CSR components and how contextual factors influence the process of implementation. First, we determined school stakeholders' perceptions of the comprehensiveness and schoolwide nature of the CSR model in question. Comprehensiveness reflects stakeholders' perceptions of the multicomponent nature of each CSR model. Schoolwide understanding is the degree to which stakeholders perceive that the reform has been implemented across the entire school. Next, we uncovered contextual factors that stakeholders identified as influencing CSR model implementation.

The guiding research questions are:

- How do teachers and school leaders understand CSR model comprehensiveness?
- How do teachers and school leaders perceive CSR models to be implemented schoolwide?
- What contextual factors do stakeholders perceive that influence their understanding of CSR models and ultimately the decisions that they make to use model practices?

To answer these questions, qualitative data were collected during semistructured in-depth interviews with school administrators and teachers in 24 schools that had adopted CSR models. We organized and analyzed the data by using a rubric that arrayed data from each interview along two key constructs—comprehensiveness and schoolwide use of model components. Coded interview data were also analyzed to determine the contextual factors that stakeholders perceived as influencing model implementation.

In this paper, we discuss school stakeholders' perceptions of CSR in relation to both comprehensiveness and the schoolwide use of components. The contextual factors described were identified by school-level stakeholders as hindering or facilitating model implementation in these schools. Two qualitative school cases are presented to illustrate how stakeholders negotiate school factors and how their actions and activities influence implementation of the model.

Review of the Literature

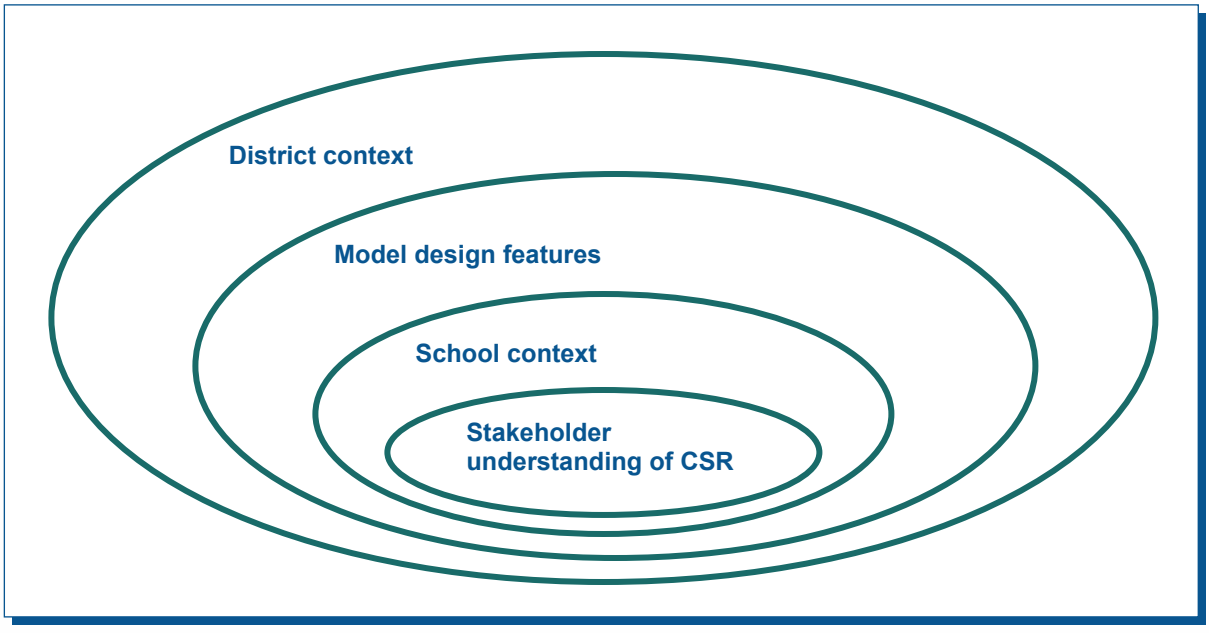
After successful adoption of a CSR model, school stakeholders face the next phase of the CSR lifecycle: implementing change. To implement change through school reform, we argue that it is essential to account for the school, model, and district contexts. Research studies investigating the implementation process suggest that implementation varies not only within but also across schools (Desimone, 2000) in

large part because of school culture and contextual influences. Guided by theory of the "street-level bureaucrat," we argue that school stakeholders respond to unique factors in these contexts that affect their understanding of CSR and ultimately their decisions to use model practices.

The role of the street-level bureaucrat is critical in the process of implementing services in general and reforms in particular. Understanding the actions and perspectives of the street-level bureaucrats can assist in analyzing the variance, noted above, in CSR implementation. Michael Lipsky (1980) was among the first to use the term *street-level bureaucrat* to refer to individuals employed by large, multilayered organizations to render public services. The theoretical framework of Lipsky and others emphasizes roles taken by individuals working in public organizations as they make policy decisions and take into account constraining conditions and other contextual factors. Lipsky argued that "decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures effectively *become* the public policies they carry out" (Lipsky, 1980, p. xii). This is a useful characterization of how teachers and principals engage in implementing CSR, because these individuals interpret the meaning of specific aspects of the reform as the reform is implemented. In addition, teachers and principals are caught up in an organizational context that may either support or undermine reform.

The conceptual framework guiding this study depicts the organizational contexts of the school, model design, and district influences on school stakeholders' (principals and teachers) understanding of CSR and ultimately their decisions to use model practices (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Contextual Factors That Influence CSR Understanding



Our qualitative study builds on street-level bureaucrat theory by investigating school stakeholders' understanding of CSR and the influence of contextual factors on the stakeholders' understanding and decisions to implement CSR. Some of the contextual factors that may influence understanding and implementation of reform are described below.

Contextual Factors That Influence Understanding and Implementation

Research on the social organization of the school has identified numerous factors that are critically important in either impeding or supporting educational change. These factors, associated with the school, the model, and the district, may either undermine or support key actors' activities in conducting reform. School factors include faculty commitment/buy-in and school leadership activities. Model factors encompass the type of support offered from the developer as well as design features of the model, including efficacy and perceived "goodness of fit" between the school's needs and programs and the characteristics of the reform (Berends, Chun, Schuyler, Stockley, & Briggs, 2002). District factors include policies and programs that are mandated and may conflict with CSR implementation efforts. These three factors—school, model, and district—are discussed below.

School Factors

Faculty Commitment/Buy-In

Teachers' understanding of curricular reform centers on their own ideologies and experiences in the classroom (Datnow, Borman, & Stringfield, 2000). In other words, teachers interpret a reform on the basis of their pedagogical beliefs and adapt the reform accordingly. Therefore, variation in implementation is inevitable as teachers (like street-level bureaucrats anywhere) adjust policies and programs to match their pedagogical views. The process of reforming classroom instruction is facilitated by teachers' understanding and accepting the changes they are being asked to make (Hawkins, Stancavage, & Dossey, 1998). Supovitz and Turner (2000, p. 974) found that "teachers with more sympathetic attitudes toward reform used inquiry-based practices significantly more frequently and had more investigative classroom cultures than did more skeptical teachers." To lessen the teachers' skepticism about a reform program that aims to change their practice, teachers need to be reassured that the reform can be implemented in their classrooms. Cohen and Ball (1999, p. 1) explain,

> When school improvement interventions introduce new curricular materials or provide teacher "training," they rarely create adequate conditions for teachers to learn about or develop the knowledge, skills, and beliefs needed to enact these interventions successfully in the classroom.

Without support for understanding a new program and the skills needed to implement it, teachers are left to their own devices for implementation.

Moreover, teachers adapt policies and curricular reform to meet what they perceive as student needs (Datnow, Borman, & Stringfield, 2000). When teachers do not believe that the changes required in their instruction are necessary for improving student outcomes, resistance to implementation results (Desimone, 2000). Therefore, teachers' buy-in to the need for reform as well as the suggested practices is essential for successful implementation.

School Leadership

Consistency of implementation across classrooms is an important consideration in implementing CSR designs. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing reform, and it is critical that both the school principal and teacher leaders emphasize collaboration, communication, and responsibility among teachers in achieving coherent implementation of the model (Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001). Teacher leadership is the process by which teachers influence their colleagues, administrators, and other members of the school community in improving teaching and learning to enhance student achievement (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The school principal also plays an essential role during the implementation of CSR designs by providing teachers with opportunities for selecting a CSR model and monitoring model implementation. CSR may require new or expanded leadership activities. Researchers have described an expansion of

leadership functions among street-level bureaucrats or school stakeholders as *distributed leadership* (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Spillane, 2005; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004; Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001). Spillane (2005) describes distributed leadership as the interactions among leaders and followers that create reciprocal interdependency. Leadership practices can be stretched over leaders through time, be coordinated among leaders, be seen as situational, and be dependent on relationships that can enable, constrain, or transform. Research has indicated that increasing teachers' roles in leadership activities is an important aspect of successful school reform (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003).

For example, during the implementation process, reforming urban schools is coupled with an expansion of teachers' expectations both of their students and of their own responsibilities for student learning. Diamond and colleagues (2004) argue that teachers' responsibilities for student learning are connected to their beliefs about students' academic abilities. Through organizationally embedded expectations, described as *organizational habitus*, these beliefs may be used by teachers either to justify continued relations of domination or to facilitate transformative practices. Diamond and Spillane (2004) also argue that high-stakes accountability, typically associated with implementation of CSR designs, can have differing effects in high- and low-performing schools. The context of schools on probation dramatically shaped how policies were enacted during the course of reform. Probationary schools' response to high-stakes accountability focused on getting off probation, partially by convincing outsiders that school staff members were engaged in major restructuring and change efforts as opposed to substantive instructional change. Response to external threats may "exacerbate rather than challenge educational stratification" (Diamond & Spillane, 2004, p. 1172). Providing low-performing schools with more resources may not lead to sustainable improvement unless concurrent changes occur in the culture of the school to counteract a negative organizational habitus. During implementation, teacher leaders primarily influence their colleagues through developing and sustaining collaborative relationships; thus, all the teachers can focus on improving student achievement. Wider distribution of leadership activities also can build collaborative relationships that in turn change teachers' instructional practices and beliefs.

Model Factors

Developer Support

Previous research underscores the importance of the developer's support during the implementation process. This support is especially important in providing ongoing professional development for teachers. Desimone (2000, p. 20) states that a critical source of support for implementation of CSR models is the presence of developers or design teams working within the school with teachers as they implement reforms in the classroom. Although developers support school stakeholders in a number of ways, such as providing information and monitoring implementation, the primary support activity is providing professional development. Desimone (2000, p. 22) states that professional development is a "critical component of restructuring efforts." Other researchers have also found links between successful implementation and professional development. For example, Berends and colleagues (2002, p. 15) found that levels of implementation were higher in schools that received design team support through whole-school training, the involvement of facilitators, and extensive professional development than in schools that did not receive such support. Professional development opportunities provided by the developer enable teachers to renew their knowledge and understanding of a model's reform strategies. In addition, professional development can assist implementation by addressing resistance among teachers through informational and training sessions (Haynes, 1998).

Model Design Alignment

As the street-level bureaucrats of educational reform, teachers must be able to negotiate the demands placed on them. According to Berends and colleagues (2002, p. 12), "[Teachers'] ability to cope with

these demands and their commitment to changes are crucial to coherent and sustained implementation." Policies and reform programs that are aligned in their goals and activities facilitate teachers' managing the pressures of multiple demands. Because schools in high-level poverty areas are the focus of Title 1 and Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration funds, these schools are more likely to have very fragmented and conflicting environments (Berends et al., 2002, p. 135). The degree to which the model fits or aligns with a school's goals, pedagogical philosophy, and other school programs is termed *model appropriateness*. How appropriate a model is for a particular school depends on the perspective of the school's stakeholders and their ability to see links between various school programs.

District Factors

Honig and Hatch (2004) argue that achieving policy coherence is a goal often cited but seldom achieved. When the goal is not achieved, a gap is created in policy versus practice. Addressing this gap requires a reconceptualization of coherence as a dynamic process rather than the simple alignment of external requirements. Honig and Hatch see policy coherence "as a continual process of negotiating the relationship between schools' internal circumstances and their external demands that involves both schools and organizations external to schools" (p. 18). Activities that schools use to build coherence include (a) setting schoolwide goals and strategies that allow them to cast new demands into tried-and-true forms of handling them and (b) then using schoolwide goals and strategies to decide whether to align themselves with the new policies or buffer themselves from the associated external demands. These bridging and buffering activities include "pulling the environment in" by placing district personnel within schools to support change; "shaping the terms of compliance" by placing school personnel on district-level committees; "adding peripheral structures," such as school-level facilitators; "symbolically adopting external demands" by using the vocabulary of reform but not the activities; and "suspending ties" by not participating or ignoring feedback. School district central offices can enable or restrain these school-level processes in a variety of ways, ranging from policy mandates to continually searching for and using information about schools' goals and experiences to inform their policy-making operations.

Summary

While implementing reform, school stakeholders can be influenced by the school, model, and district contexts that have factors that affect their understandings of school reforms and ultimately their decisions to use model practices. As street-level bureaucrats, school stakeholders may internalize and interpret school reforms in idiosyncratic ways depending on these factors.

Methodology

To examine our research questions, this qualitative study collected and analyzed an array of data from schools that had recently implemented a given CSR model. The first approach, once data were gathered and prepared for analysis, used an analytical rubric to examine school-level stakeholders' perceptions of a given CSR model, as indicated by their understanding of model comprehensiveness and schoolwide use. To understand the findings for comprehensiveness and schoolwide use of CSR, we generated themes across all 24 model schools to uncover contextual factors that might influence school stakeholders' understanding of CSR. Finally, a qualitative case study approach was used for an in-depth focus on two schools. The presentation of two school cases depicts the relationship between contextual factors and street-level bureaucrats' understanding of CSR.

Data Collection Activities and Participants

Qualitative data were used to answer the research questions in this paper. Semistructured interviews and focus groups with administrators and teachers were the core data collection activities. Over the course of 2 school years, the research team conducted 57 interviews of administrators (principals, assistant

principals, and facilitators), 192 interviews of teachers, and 30 focus groups with teachers. In-depth interviewing with multiple school stakeholders provided an opportunity to discuss school processes and perceptions of CSR implementation (Spradley, 1979). Individual interviews of administrators lasted approximately 60 minutes. Individual interviews of teachers and focus group interviews of teachers ranged from 15 to 30 minutes. During the interviews, the participants were asked questions about their implementation of CSR model components (i.e., school culture, organization and governance, curriculum and instruction, assessment, and professional development). Participants were also asked to discuss, among other topics, challenges and supports they received for implementation.

Analytic Approaches

To address our research questions, we used multiple approaches to organize and analyze the data that were collected. One approach focused on the NLECSR Analytic Rubric. . A second approach involved generating themes across the 24 model schools to uncover conditions that may influence understanding. The third approach, a qualitative case-study approach, focused in depth on two schools and the conditions school-level stakeholders identify that can affect their understanding of CSR. We used these analytic approaches with the qualitative data collaboratively to develop a fuller understanding of stakeholder perceptions of CSR implementation. The rubric's purpose was to provide an overview of stakeholders' understanding of CSR and to identify two schools (one with a high rating for CSR understanding and one with a low rating). The thematic analysis approach enabled us to find emergent themes. A case-study approach enabled us to provide in-depth narrative descriptions of the conditions school-level stakeholders identified that may have affected their CSR understanding.

NLECSR Analytic Rubric

We developed a rubric to facilitate the systematic analysis of school-level support for CSR and related constructs. The NLECSR Analytic Rubric contains four primary sections: *constructs related to understanding of CSR, perceptions of the CSR model, school-level processes related to the model*, and *professional resources*. In this paper, we present findings from the constructs related to the component *understanding of CSR.* This aspect of the rubric comprises two constructs: comprehensiveness and schoolwide use of components. To accomplish this analysis, we delineated five distinct levels identified by a 0–4 rating scale and defined each carefully for both constructs (see Tables 1 and 2). To complete a rubric for each school, a researcher read all principal, facilitator, and teacher interview and focus group transcripts, identified text that informed the constructs related to understanding of CSR, and rated each respondent's comments for both constructs.

Table 1. Comprehensiveness Rating Descriptions

Construct description	Rating descriptors
This construct reflects the degree to which stakeholders perceive the breadth of CSR, or, in contrast, focus on a narrow range of components.	**4:** The interviewee(s) clearly describes a range of CSR activities, including professional development, parent involvement, and instruction, as appropriate.
	3: The interviewee(s) describes two components in detail and demonstrates awareness of other components.
	2: The interviewee(s) describes one component in detail and demonstrates awareness of other components.
	1: The interviewee(s) describes one or two components but with thin detail. The teacher or principal is aware of some terminology associated with the model but is unable to provide any additional information about the model.
	0: The interviewee(s) exhibits no awareness of the CSR model or associated activities.

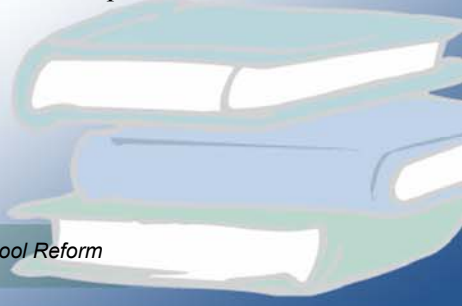
Table 2. Schoolwide Use Rating Descriptions

Construct description	Rating descriptors
"Schoolwide use of components" is related to the degree to which stakeholders perceive the reform to be implemented across the entire school (or across the relevant grades, if applicable) rather than in isolated classrooms.	**4:** The interviewee clearly expresses an understanding that the reform is intended to be a schoolwide effort and provides details that substantiate this.
	3: The interviewee's comments indicate an understanding that the reform should span more than one grade, but the commentary lacks substantive detail or the interviewee describes a process that falls somewhat short of a true schoolwide effort.
	2: The interviewee describes an implementation process that focuses on a few classrooms, engages a subset of teachers, or has resulted in divisions among faculty.
	1: The interviewee makes only the vaguest suggestion that the reform extends beyond his or her personal activities.
	0: The interviewee describes his or her implementation activities in isolation, without reference to other stakeholders.

With all data coded, an aggregate score for each CSR school was generated by construct. These scores were used to identify schools that had either high or low levels of CSR model understanding. Two schools were selected, on the basis of this information, to represent each end of the continuum of CSR understanding.

Thematic Analysis

Interview and focus group transcripts were coded by using a construct key based on the components of CSR models. Throughout the coding process, researchers discussed the codes and defined them based on the data. Once all transcripts were coded, coded text was organized by using NUD*IST v.6, a qualitative software program. Using these coded data, we wrote case reports for each school and developed within- and cross-case data displays (Miles & Huberman, 1994).



Emergent themes were identified from the cross-case displays of the 24 CSR model schools in the study. Themes were explored that captured stakeholders' perceptions of the conditions associated with understanding and making decisions about using CSR model practices. Four main themes or conditions arose from this analysis: the importance of developer support, principals' support activities for understanding and implementation, the challenges created by high teacher turnover and buy-in, and the fit of the CSR model with ongoing school and district programs and policies.

Case Study

To develop a more subtle, in-depth depiction of those factors identified by school stakeholders as influencing their understanding, two schools were selected as cases. Selection of the school cases began with the rubric ratings for understanding. Any schools in the sample that had either high or low ratings for these two constructs were considered potential cases to examine. Another criterion for selection of the two cases was consideration of only schools that were visited in both waves of data collection. The final criterion for selection of the cases was that only models that were well represented in the study were considered. On the basis of all these criteria, we selected two schools as case studies: Chamberland and Ivyton.

Findings

Successful CSR implementation requires that school-level stakeholders use the practices endorsed by their CSR model because they are the primary implementers of reform (Cohen & Ball, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Davidson & St. John, 1996; Smith et al., 1997; Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Woodbury & Gess-Newsome, 2002). However, as street-level bureaucrats, school stakeholders' understanding of reform and their decisions to implement are influenced by contextual factors.

In Part I of the findings, we examine the perceptions of school stakeholders' understanding of CSR at the school level through the use of rubric scores and themes that were generated to uncover contextual factors that may influence understanding of CSR. In Part II, we present two school cases to highlight (1) the conditions identified by school-level stakeholders that affect their understandings of CSR and (2) the decisions that school-level stakeholders make about using model practices.

Part I. School-Stakeholder Understanding of CSR

NLECSR Analytic Rubric

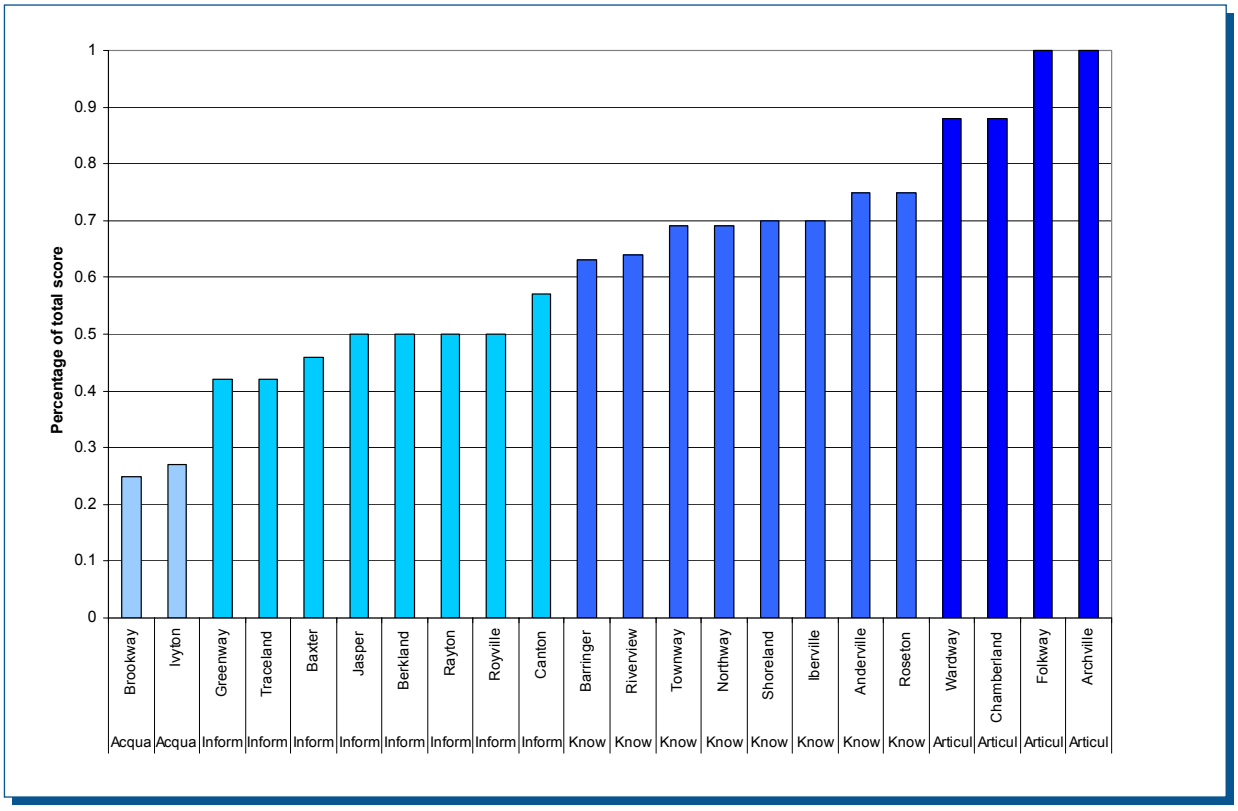
We analyzed the model schools in this study by using a rubric that rated individual school stakeholders' level of comprehensiveness and schoolwide use of the CSR model. All of the individual ratings from stakeholders in a school were computed to create a school score for comprehensiveness and schoolwide use of CSR components. Based on the school scores, five clusters of understanding were created. The five clusters were labeled:

- **Unfamiliar (0.0–0.20)—**School-level stakeholders have no awareness of CSR components or use across classrooms and grades.
- **Acquainted (0.21–0.40)—**School-level stakeholders hold awareness of terminology associated with the model and limited understanding that CSR extends beyond personal activities.
- **Informed (0.41–0.60)—**School-level stakeholders hold awareness of CSR as one component in depth, and implementation is perceived across a few classrooms or a subset of teachers.

- **Knowledgeable (0.61–0.80)**—School-level stakeholders hold detailed awareness of at least two components in depth and that CSR at least spans more than one grade, but they fall short of expressing CSR as a schoolwide initiative.
- **Fully Articulate (0.81–1.0)**—School-level stakeholders hold detailed awareness of more than two components of the CSR model and that CSR is implemented across all grades and classrooms.

As a first step, we depicted in a graphic format the model schools' ratings for comprehensiveness and schoolwide use. Figure 2 shows the comprehensiveness ratings for 22 model schools, and Figure 3 displays the schoolwide use ratings for 20 model schools.[1] The *x*-axis in each figure shows school pseudonyms along with the cluster the school was assigned. For both comprehensiveness and schoolwide use, school scores were in only four clusters: *acquainted*, *informed*, *knowledgeable*, and *fully articulate*. None of the model schools in this study had a school rating below 0.21; therefore, no model schools were assigned to the *unfamiliar* cluster.

Figure 2. Comprehensiveness—School Scores and Cluster Analysis Results

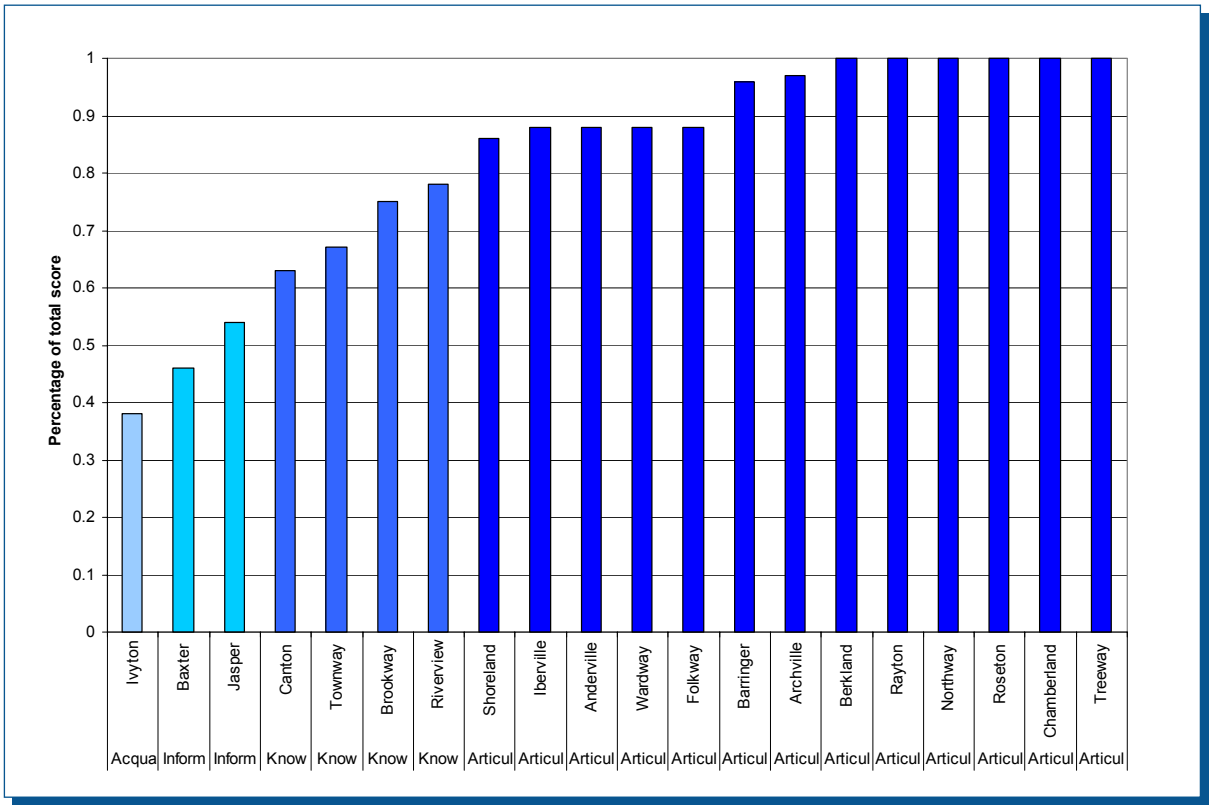


Note. School names are pseudonyms. Cluster abbreviations are Acqua, acquainted; Inform, informed; Know, knowledgeable; Articul, fully articulated.

[1] The number of model schools included in the rubric analysis varies because some schools did not have enough data available to enable a rating to be assigned.

School ratings for comprehensiveness ranged from 0.25 to 1.0 (see Figure 2). The ratings for schoolwide use ranged from 0.38 to 1.0 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Schoolwide Use—Scores and Cluster Analysis Results



Note. School names are pseudonyms. Cluster abbreviations are Acqua, acquainted; Inform, informed; Know, knowledgeable; Articul, fully articulated.

When comparing ratings for comprehensiveness and schoolwide use, there is more variation of the comprehensiveness of CSR among schools. When we looked at comprehensiveness scores of 22 schools in clusters, 90% were in the *informed*, *knowledgeable,* and *fully articulate* clusters. Two schools were in the *acquainted cluster*, and no schools were in the *unfamiliar cluster*. When we examined the ratings of schoolwide use across 20 model schools, 85% were in the *knowledgeable* and *fully articulate* clusters. Two schools were in the informed cluster. Only one school was in the *acquainted* cluster, and no schools were in the *unfamiliar* cluster (see Table 3).

Table 3. Percentage of Schools That Belong in Each Cluster

	Comprehensiveness		Schoolwide use	
Cluster (range of scores)	***n***	**Percent**	***n***	**Percent**
Unfamiliar (0.0–0.20)	0	0	0	0
Acquainted (0.21–0.40)	2	9.1	1	5.0
Informed (0.41–0.60)	8	36.4	2	10.0
Knowledgeable (0.61–0.80)	8	36.4	4	20.0
Fully Articulate (0.81–1.0)	4	18.2	13	65.0

Given that, across the model schools, school-level stakeholders understand that the CSR model is to be implemented schoolwide, and stakeholders' understanding of the comprehensiveness of models varies more among model schools, we suggest that stakeholders had different levels of understanding of the CSR model, particularly of model components. Given this finding of more variation of comprehensiveness of component understanding versus the schoolwide nature of CSR, we asked more specific questions: What explains the variation of schools' comprehensiveness across these clusters? In other words, what contextual factors do stakeholders perceive that influence their understanding of CSR models and ultimately the decisions that they make to use model practices?

Contextual Factors

To answer these questions, we turned to the findings from our thematic analysis. The analysis of interview and focus group data, using cross-case data displays (Miles & Huberman, 1994), was used to identify contextual factors that may explain school-level stakeholders' variations in perceptions. Five themes arose from this analysis. First, school stakeholders described the challenge of getting buy-in by new teachers. This challenge was especially problematic in schools with high levels of teacher turnover. The activities the school stakeholders undertake to combat the challenge of high teacher turnover and getting buy-in are referred to as "new teacher induction." Second, principals' leadership, such as monitoring, emerged as a theme, because school stakeholders described these activities as supporting the implementation process. Third, model design features, such as whether school stakeholders perceived the model to align with ongoing school programs, were identified as a theme that affects decisions to implement. Fourth, developer support was perceived by school stakeholders as an important influence for helping them understand the intricacies of a CSR model. Stakeholders described developer support as the type and frequency of developer support activities, such as professional development opportunities. Fifth, district and federal policy, as well as state assessments, were found to influence stakeholders' decisions to implement model components. If school stakeholders cannot align their model activities with the goals of outside policy and assessments, implementation may suffer.

As we analyzed these five themes that school stakeholders described as affecting their understanding of CSR and ultimately their decision to implement the CSR model, we classified them in terms of the contextual factors listed in Figure 1: school context, model design features, and district context. However, these findings expand district context to include the influence of state assessments and federal policies.

School Context

New Teacher Induction

When high numbers of faculty leave CSR model schools, the school stakeholders must teach the new, replacement teachers about the model and encourage buy-in for the model.

Model learning. School stakeholders perceived that the models required extensive learning for new teachers. Lack of knowledge among new faculty on how to implement a model compromised the implementation process. Because of the high rates of teacher turnover, school stakeholders stressed the importance of training new teachers on how to implement the model. One principal pointed out that new teachers must learn the model in a crash course that becomes "sink or swim, which is not very productive." Stakeholders emphasized that practice and time are required to learn to master the higher-ordered aspects of a particular program. One principal stated, "It takes a good deal of time to really learn this reading program, get entrenched in it, maneuver it, and make it exciting. First, you have to teach the new teachers how to teach the program before you can get into the deeper things with them."

Model buy-in. Not only do new teachers need to learn about the model, but they need to buy into its philosophy and processes. A stakeholder pointed out that, within a school, teachers buy into the model at different times and for different reasons. Stakeholders explained that teachers who participated in the adoption process were more sold on the model than new teachers. One stakeholder explained, "Someone who has been here since the start of the process sees it differently than someone [who] came in September." A reform model facilitator noted that after the new teachers at the school began to see positive results from the model, their opinion of it began to change.

Principal Leadership

The principal plays an active role in ensuring that implementation can occur at the school. Two activities that supported the implementation process were making organizational changes and monitoring implementation.

Making organizational changes. Principals prepared their schools for implementation in several ways. Some principals reorganized the school day to allow for the appropriate amount of instructional time for a subject area, such as 90 minutes of reading.. Other principals ensured that the faculty had common planning or preparation times to meet and discuss model-related activities. A principal pointed out that common planning time "has been very helpful for new teachers coming in because they have that opportunity to share and grow." Another organizational change that occurred to facilitate implementation of a model was to encourage decision-making opportunities for the teachers. One teacher's description of how decision making is conducted at her school exemplified this organizational change. She stated, "Everyone is given their wings when they walk in the door and [are] allowed to fly. We vote on things, we talk about things, we make our decision." Shared decision making was done through leadership teams, committees, study groups, or cadres. A teacher in a focus group said, "We all make decisions together," and explained the process of the leadership team. "Even though there is a leadership team, those of us in mathematics and language arts, those that teach those particular subjects, we all get together, and we talk about what we need and what we'd like to have [happen]." These types of decision-making opportunities facilitated communication between teachers and enabled them to become invested in school activities, such as model implementation.

Monitoring implementation. Visiting classrooms was the main way principals monitored implementation. Principals described the methods they used for conducting observations. Some followed a schedule, others visited every classroom for some amount of time, and others "popped in" some

classrooms. One principal said, "It doesn't take you 50 minutes to observe a classroom to see if teaching is going on." This principal described stopping in classrooms throughout the day to observe instruction.

Reviewing lesson plans was another method principals used to monitor implementation. One facilitator commented, "[The principal] wants to know how [the teachers] tie the model into their lesson plans throughout the week." One teacher explained, "We submit our lesson plans so our administration can see what we're teaching." Reviewing lessons plans enabled some principals to monitor instructional activities and whether the lesson plans reflected model activities. Regardless of the method they used to monitor classroom instructional practices, principals had clear expectations for instruction.

Model Design Features

Developer Support

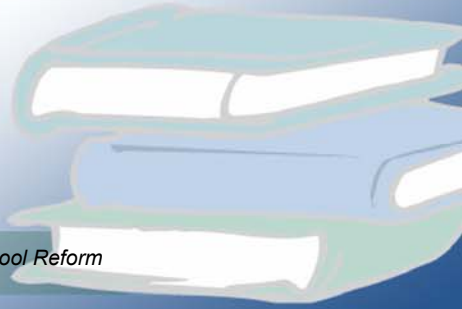
School stakeholders described the types of developer support activities they received at their school. On the basis of their descriptions, two types of activities emerged: ongoing support and onsite technical assistance.

Ongoing support. School stakeholders emphasized the value and importance of ongoing developer support. Ongoing support was viewed as an important support feature for the school stakeholders' implementing a CSR model. Throughout model implementation, developers offered onsite and offsite workshops that focused on model components and strategies for instruction as well as provided information on the model through videos or national conferences. One principal described the value of ongoing developer support by saying, "We've had numerous in-services, and they've been wonderful and we've gained a lot of insight into various facets of the curriculum." When school stakeholders did not receive the type or level of ongoing support they felt their school needed, they expressed their frustrations. One principal exemplified this feeling by saying, "I think they can do more. I think that [for] the amount of money that we are paying them, we are not getting the services that we should have. I think there should be more technical assistance at the school, at least monthly."

Onsite technical assistance. School-level stakeholders also emphasized the importance of onsite technical assistance. Developers predominantly offered onsite support by conducting site visits that included observations of classroom instruction and offering feedback to the teachers who were observed. Furthermore, model developers worked with teachers either individually or during grade-level or study group meetings. One principal suggested that onsite support and feedback was very useful to implementation, particularly when the developers met with teachers to see how they were doing and to check to see if they needed anything. Model developers also provided onsite technical assistance to address problems. One teacher explained, "If there was a problem that came out, if we needed professional development, [the developers] were here." When onsite support was not present, stakeholders expressed the need for more frequent contact with the developer. One principal stated "When we took on the model, they [the developer] promised more than what they produced. They promised us that there would be onsite consultants for our needs. That did not materialize." When onsite support was received, it provided an opportunity for stakeholders to have their questions answered and needs met by the developer.

Model Efficacy

Model efficacy refers to the results that school-level stakeholders perceived as occurring from using the model. If school-level stakeholders perceived the model as being useful, then they continued practices associated with the model. School-level stakeholders valued seeing model results in terms of student outcomes, professional community, and improvement in instructional practice.



Student outcomes. School-level stakeholders perceived the worth of the model if student outcomes improved. For the teachers, having positive outcomes as a result of the implementation confirmed that the implementation was worth the effort. One teacher explained,

> The number of students on grade level just keeps increasing and increasing every year. Now that we are in the fourth year, we are really starting to see results. The first year was frustrating because you don't see any movement. This is the first year that I've been here where I can see the reading program really working with our students.

Other stakeholders identified the model as providing support needed for their school's student population. A principal stated, "I recommend the model for any group of students who are very transient, who are second language learners, for students whose homes are not print rich and no one is reading." Having the model address students' lower level of reading skills was necessary for some of the schools.

Professional community. School-level stakeholders also perceived the worth of a model in relation to professional community. Teachers stated that they felt supported by their colleagues during model implementation. Describing how the school's culture changed because of implementing the model, one teacher stated, "Teachers have expanded on working with each other. The communication has brought us closer together as a family." Working and communicating together about the model, student work, and instructional practices enabled the teachers to develop collaborative relationships. One principal suggested that the model gave the teachers the feeling of "We are in this thing together, you are not alone."

Instructional practices. School-level stakeholders also noted the worth of the model in relation to instruction. Teachers started seeing positive changes in their instructional practice as a result of the model use and were able to see their instruction improve throughout the course of implementation. One teacher stated, "[The model] helped us as a faculty to improve our skills to help our children prepare academically for the world." The reform models offered schools opportunities to engage faculty in professional development and to improve their instructional practices. A principal explained that the model provided a way to show teachers how to teach reading "without the district spending millions of dollars to send everyone back to school."

School Programmatic Fit

When stakeholders were able to identify a match or alignment in goals between ongoing school programs or philosophies, they were likely to see the model as fitting the school.

School-level stakeholders valued alignment of other school programs with the school's model or philosophy. A principal stated, "We thought we had good programs here. We didn't need to change our whole program." This principal thought the model fit the instructional style of the teachers by emphasizing student-centered learning and authenticity. Another principal stated that one program cannot have everything; therefore, school programs should supplement each other. Thus, models that supplemented other school programs were viewed as fitting the school. Models that matched the school's philosophy were also deemed appropriate. For example, one stakeholder stated, "The [model's] philosophy was a fit for the school's gifted and talented program."

District Context

Other Initiatives

Other initiatives refers to programs from the school district, state assessments, and federal policies. Because federal policy and state assessments are filtered through a school district, we use the term

District Context to incorporate these other initiatives. Both implementing district programs and preparing for state tests influenced how stakeholders viewed their model's appropriateness for the school.

District-mandated programs. When the model appeared to compete with district-mandated programs or initiatives, school stakeholders did not view the model as appropriate for their school. As teachers in one focus group explained,

> The demands that are administered to us from the board of education in terms of our curriculum and how it should be laid out—those demands far exceed the demands for the [model] this year. How can we incorporate [the model] and also incorporate what is mandated [by the district]?

District-mandated programs took precedence over other school programs. When stakeholders were not able to align their model with the district programs, implementation of the model suffered. Teachers in one school stated, "The district says, 'No, I'm sorry you can't do that [use model-related curricula]. We have our own scope and sequence, and we have our own themes.'" When a program was mandated from the district, school stakeholders felt that program took precedence over other school programs, including CSR models.

Required testing. How well a particular model prepared the students for assessment tests was also an important consideration for the stakeholders in regard to the appropriateness of their model. One teacher explained, "We have so much pressure on us to get these scores up that sometimes you get away from the model." Other stakeholders agreed that, when it came to testing, preparing the students took priority over implementation of the model. Teachers in a focus group stated, "When you have to deviate from your instructional program to bring in things that they need to know for this or that test, that takes 2 or 3 weeks out of the program . . . it's just interruptive." Not being able to align a model's activities to preparation for the state test was a challenge for implementation of the model.

Part II. Two School Cases

The section above focused on five kinds of conditions identified by school stakeholders that indirectly or directly affected their decisions to use model practices. Using findings from the rubric, we identified two schools that highlighted the extremes of CSR for consistency and comprehensiveness. Chamberland fell into the *fully articulated clusters* of comprehensiveness and consistency (comprehensiveness = 0.88 and consistency = 1.0). Ivyton fell into the *acquainted clusters* of comprehensiveness and consistency (comprehensiveness = 0.27 and consistency = 0.38). These two cases and conditions are described in more detail below.

A Case of Fully Articulated Comprehensiveness and Consistency: Chamberland

General School Information

Chamberland (a pseudonym) is an elementary school, grades K–8, with 771 students and 33 faculty. The school is located in a high-poverty area of a large urban district. In 2002, public housing around the school was being demolished, causing families to move farther away and often out of the school's attendance zone. Nevertheless, parents, who in some cases attended Chamberland as children, were finding ways to make sure their children continued to attend Chamberland. The principal and teachers as well as the parents expressed their commitment to the school. The principal had spent her entire career at Chamberland, beginning as a substitute teacher in the 1960s and becoming principal 30 years later. However, the principal was retiring at the end of the 2002–2003 school year. The new principal (2003–2004 school year) served as an assistant principal at the school prior to her promotion. Many teachers stay at Chamberland until retirement or promotion, so the school has very little teacher turnover. Because the

school has had a history of a dedicated administration, faculty, and parents, the school stakeholders are able to create a supportive, family-like environment.

In 2001, at the time of the first site visit, Chamberland had adopted Model A 8 years earlier. The principal said that to have the school eligible to adopt a CSR model, she had to beg the district for approval. She stated, "The only way you are going to get something for the school is to beg." The main reason the stakeholders wanted a CSR model was to bring in additional funds to "support what we were already doing." The school was resource poor, and that fact influenced which model was chosen. The principal explained that they wanted to implement a model that did not require a lot of resources because they were only getting $50,000. The teachers said that they voted for Model A because of the three choices they were given, "We thought it would best fit with what we were already doing." Although funding for the model ended 5 years before the site visit in 2001, school-level stakeholders still expressed understanding of Model A's components. In particular, school-level stakeholders identified model practices associated with school governance. School-level stakeholders at Chamberland fully articulated the use of committees as central to their decision-making efforts. Committees were formed to focus on what the teachers deemed to be the four important areas at Chamberland: academic performance, community involvement, school spirit, and discipline. The committees' purpose was to work out problems and give suggestions to the principal. All teachers participated in at least one committee that met once a month. As noted above, Chamberland's history of a dedicated faculty, administration, and parents has created a supportive, family-like environment. This environment enabled communication between the stakeholders and understanding of activities and programs that are implemented in the school, including the CSR model.

School Context

New Teacher Induction

Chamberland had a low rate of teacher turnover. Teachers expressed commitment to the school, and many teachers stay at Chamberland until retirement or promotion. The principal commented, "Once they get here, they don't want to leave." When teacher turnover did occur, school staff at Chamberland worked to ensure that new teachers were trained properly. Teachers in the focus group interview pointed out that they attended workshops and national conferences on Model A during the 3 years of its implementation to "hear what was going on." The teachers said that they tried to get the newer teachers to attend so "they will learn what the rest of us already know." The combination of low teacher turnover and support for new teachers to learn about the model encouraged a deeper understanding of model components.

Principal Leadership

Chamberland's principal during the implementation phase supported the teachers in implementing the model by allowing them to form committtees to facilitate consensus decision making on school-related activities and issues. The teachers in the focus group explained,

> Chamberland has for the last 4 years been affiliated with the model's network , so in keeping with that process we have formed committees that focus on what the teachers have deemed to be the important areas at Chamberland. And so all decisions are made—those areas are academic performance, community involvement, school spirit, and discipline. Any problems that come about in that way, those problems are sent to that committee. Then the committee tries to work them out, and they send a report in turn to the principal with the suggestions that we have made. Everyone is on at least one committee. We meet once a month.

The teacher committees assist with the governance of the school. According to the teachers during the 2002–2003 school year, "The principal has an open door. Anything that you want to bring to the table is

up for discussion." The committees, formed during the early phase of model implementation, gave the teachers an opportunity to communicate and become invested in school activities.

The principal also monitored implementation of the model by visiting classrooms and encouraging the use of model instructional practices. The principal explained that she looked for these instructional practices and noticed them in the classroom: "When kids are actively engaged in a lesson, that's an instructional practice associated with the model. So that's what we are trying to do." By supporting teachers in their instructional activities and providing opportunities to participate in school decisions, the principal's activities encourage discourse and understanding about the model.

Model Design Features

Developer Support

Implementation of Model A was supported for 3 years by ongoing training at the state capital. The principal explained that the money for the program came from state dollars, so the teachers had to go to the capital for training. In addition to that training, model trainers came to the school to instruct the teachers. According to the principal, "Then we had a coach who was also trained and was in the building every week, assisting and training the teachers." This training over the first 3 years consisted of 2-day in-service sessions on every phase of the program. The principal described the type of training: "So we had an in-service on everything, every phase of the program. They did a great job in acclimating us to the program."

The professional development provided from the developer assisted the faculty and administration in understanding every phase of the program. In addition to that ongoing professional development, the program design required one of the school's teachers to be an onsite coach for model implementation, thus assuring onsite technical assistance.

Model Efficacy

At Chamberland, teachers perceived that the model had been helpful. When asked if the model helped to achieve their goals, a teacher reported, "Yes, because we are still using it now. Every teacher is on a team or is committed to working and everything. We've all had that training." Teachers have seen results for their students. One teacher stated that she noticed the students enjoying mathematics more since the model began. This teacher noted improvement, "By doing those investigations and seeing things and saying, 'Oh, I knew this but now I know why.'" Teachers thought students enjoyed the lessons more when they were able to make connections between their everyday experiences and observations with the instructional material. Teachers also noticed improvement in their instruction because they became more focused on reading.

District Context

Chamberland had other school programs and initially selected their model to support existing school priorities. However, the school district's reading initiative had a major effect on the school. The principal explained, "That is the main thing, you gotta do that first." Professional development opportunities for teachers during the 2003–2004 school year centered on the four components of the reading initiative (word knowledge, fluency, writing, and comprehension), and class schedules were altered to allow more instructional time for the four areas.

Although funding has stopped, the former principal retired, and the school district's reading initiative became the focus, the school stakeholders continued to implement the model. The principal during the 2003–2004 school year explained "We provide lots of professional development here and utilize the same

theories of shared decision making [through the committees], so the structure of our school enables us to continue that implementation very easily."

Summary

Chamberland is an example of a school where the school stakeholders have a high degree of understanding of their model and have continued to use components of the model schoolwide years after the implementation phase ended. Contextual factors at the school level and features of Model A encouraged school stakeholders to continue implementation. The support of the developer throughout the implementation process enabled teachers to receive training on model components and activities. This training was optimized by the faculty because of the low level of teacher turnover at Chamberland. Therefore, the faculty had the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the model rather than having to focus on training high numbers of new teachers each year in the fundamentals.

The former principal, who retired at the end of the 2002–2003 school year, also played an important role in supporting implementation. Through the creation of committees, she encouraged decision making by the faculty. In addition, the principal monitored instructional practices on a regular basis. The principal also supported model implementation at the school and sought alignment of the school's programs. The principal recognized this aspect during the adoption of the school's model and encouraged the selection of a model that aligned. The subsequent principal, who began her principalship during the 2003–2004 school year, continued to support the use of committees s and Model A instructional activities. These conditions and activities at the school assisted the school stakeholders in developing a deeper understanding of the model.

The street-level bureaucrats at Chamberland have made decisions at the school that support implementation. The principal and teachers have opted to align their model activities with other school goals and programs, to continue to use committees as a decision-making structure for the teachers, and to embed Model A instructional activities in their practices. Sustained implementation of the model may be in jeopardy, because of the school district's current reading initiative, but the school-level stakeholders' positive opinions of the model and continued use of committees and "the process" may curb any further decline in implementation.

A Case of Acquainted Comprehensiveness and Consistency: Ivyton

General School Information

Ivyton (a pseudonym) is an elementary school, grades K–8, with 487 students and 28 faculty members. The school is located in a high-poverty area of a large urban school district. The principal referred to the area as an "urban blight area" with few community resources. Ivyton had adopted Model B 6 years before the site visit in 2003. The principal described model implementation at Ivyton as intense during the first 3 years. However, only the principal of the school was knowledgeable about the model. She commented that the teachers would not recognize the name of the model but would recognize the parts of the program. The teachers who participated in the study during the 2003 and 2004 site visits lacked awareness of the model. One of the few teachers familiar with the model noted that, "There is a trickle here and a trickle there, but it's not the CSR model that was modeled at one of the site schools." This trickle of implementation was described as team meetings (study groups) where the faculty reviews student work to assess and make decisions about different ways to meet student needs. "That's the extent of CSR model at the school," said one teacher.

School Context

New Teacher Induction

Ivyton elementary experienced high levels of teacher turnover. The school hired 10 new teachers and a new principal in the 2001–2002 school year. The principal's description of teachers' experience at the school was, "[We have] seasoned veteran people on this hand and then a whole [batch] of new folks [on the other hand]. So with that mix, it's working well . . . for the most part they are very willing. . . . Most of the young teachers are in school and meet requirements."

This level of teacher turnover continued the following year. That year, 2004, the principal said that 85% of her staff was new and that "My staff, currently, is 80% under the age of 27, so they are just like brand new." According to the principal, the main reasons for the high turnover rate were retirement, promotion to district-level positions, and lack of certification. Furthermore, five principals had served in the previous 6 years. The current principal, in her third year as principal in 2004, explained, "The staff had a reputation for being resistant and for driving people out." When she began at the school in 2001, she asked the staff to "consider transferring" if they couldn't buy into the model program. One teacher pointed out, "The school is new, as far as teachers. So everybody's learning." This high level of turnover created a school environment that was not supportive of implementation of a reform model.

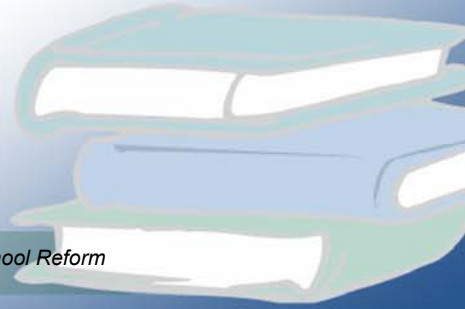
The principal also conceded that, because 85% of the teachers were new during the 2003–2004 school year, they would not recognize the model or articulate the components, although "15% could still say, 'from A to Z, that this is the CSR model .'" Concurring that Ivyton lacked teachers who understand the model, one teacher stated, "People haven't been educated as to what the model is. And our school has a very high turnover rate for teachers." The one teacher in the focus group who had heard of the model stated, "Now, [the model] was brought up this year. In the beginning of the year, they brought up the model. But I don't remember anything happening from there." The school's teachers did not appear to be aware of the model at their school, mainly because of the high level of turnover but also because no process seemed to be in place to support understanding of Model B.

Principal Leadership

The principal at Ivyton described Model B implementation at the school as having progressed from a Model B site to using another model. One way the principal supported the continued implementation of the model was through study groups, also referred to as team meetings. The principal stated that the main focus of the team meetings was to review student work: "Looking at student work is definitely the model. So that is a major part [of the study groups]." The principal stated that the main component of the model still being implemented was the study groups, or team meetings, during which teachers have the opportunity to meet each week for a 1-hour block of time.

The principal did not describe any method for monitoring the implementation of Model B components still in place at Ivyton. However, she was concerned with ensuring that instruction is taking place and that students are actively involved in a lesson. The principal described making daily visits to classrooms to make sure the teachers are aware of the objectives and expectations for instruction. She stated,

> In the morning I'll try to do a quick round to see if the first period is being used as an instructional period, because sometimes people use it just as advisory. . . . Kids are waiting for things to do . . . so we will run around and make sure that children are engaged first thing in the morning with some type of activity.



Model Design Features

Developer Support

The school stakeholders at Ivyton did not describe any developer activities at the school. One teacher, who was knowledgeable about the model, stated, "I don't think enough people actually understand the model. It hasn't been emphasized in professional development." Professional development activities from the developer may have occurred during the model implementation phase, but the teachers were not receiving any model-related support at the time of the site visits in 2003 and 2004.

Model Efficacy

The principal found the teacher study groups to be "very effective." She stated,

> The tone of conversation changed . . . not that little Johnny is dumb, but actually having documentation that shows what little Johnny's challenges are and how can we as a team come up with a plan so that we can address those changes so that they can turn into success.

One of the positive outcomes to result from the model is reviewing student work and discussing it among the faculty. In addition, the principal pointed out that the nature of the study groups encourages the teachers to work together. Overall, the study groups were the one component of the model that the principal found to be most helpful in increasing collaboration and helping the students succeed.

District Context

School-level stakeholders identified several established priorities at Ivyton. Teachers mentioned an emphasis on standards. One teacher commented on No Child Left Behind, stating that the school is very standards driven. Additional district mandates also drove the school's other priorities; the core curriculum, grades K through 8, is an initiative that came from the superintendent's office. Ivyton began implementing the core curriculum in 2003.

Summary

Ivyton elementary is an example of a school in which there was limited understanding of the model and school stakeholders were vaguely familiar with model-related terminology. However, Ivyton faced a number of school-level challenges that influenced model understanding and implementation. The most dramatic challenge was the high level of teacher turnover. At the time of the site visit in 2004, the turnover rate for teachers was 85%, according to the principal. This turnover rate is problematic in relation to reform because few of the teachers initially trained in Model B remained, and the school no longer received professional development opportunities from the model developer. Furthermore, no structure appeared to be in place to inform the new teachers of model activities.

As street-level bureaucrats, the teachers were in a position of not having enough information—in many cases, no information—about the model. Without basic information and understanding of model activities, the teachers were not able to make "bureaucratic" decisions related to implementation of the model. Although few school stakeholders were aware of the model, the principal and some teachers mentioned the team meetings (study groups). Teachers continued to meet in weekly team meetings to discuss student work. The teachers continued to implement the study group component; however, few teachers linked the weekly meeting to the model. These meetings were viewed positively by the principal because they encouraged collaboration among the faculty. From the principal's perspective, they continue to implement the model. She stated in 2004, "We still use the philosophy, and we still use the protocols." Without higher levels of teacher understanding of the model, implementation will continue to be unsuccessful.

Conclusion

Research on CSR processes suggests that implementation varies within and across schools (Berends, 2000; Desimone, 2000). Despite model developers' best intentions to make school stakeholders adhere strictly to the implementation of model components, school stakeholders implementing CSR models have inevitably made adaptations to the model (Datnow & Castellano, 2000). There are multiple ways to explore why variance in implementation occurs. One way is to probe school stakeholders' perceptions of CSR.

In this study, we probed school stakeholders' perceptions of CSR. We suggest that school stakeholders implement changes based on their understanding of the reform. Although our study shows that stakeholders generally understand that the reform model is to be implemented in a schoolwide fashion, their understanding of implementing reform components can be limited. School stakeholders' decisions about CSR have the potential to be strongly influenced by their understanding of CSR, given particular contextual factors. Contextual factors involving the school site, the model design, and the district all can play roles in influencing school stakeholders' understanding and ultimately their use of practices associated with the CSR model.

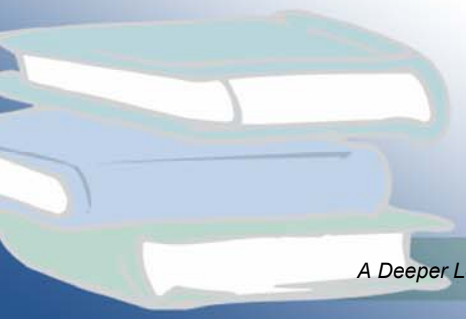
School stakeholders' perceptions of different types of contextual factors at their school influence their understanding of their model and the reform effort. School contextual factors center on teacher induction and principal leadership. Teacher turnover was identified as a major challenge to implementation, because new teachers have to buy into the model as well as learn the basics of implementation. Schools with high levels of turnover that also had a system in place to teach model activities, philosophy, components, and other features of the model, had stakeholders who were more likely to describe continued implementation at their school. Similarly, schools in which the principal monitored or made organizational changes at the school to enable implementation of components were perceived as supporting understanding and implementation.

Model design features, such as the perception of model efficacy and developer support, were described by school stakeholders as supporting understanding and implementation. Perceptions of whether model implementation has produced positive outcomes affect stakeholders' decisions to use model practices. As street-level bureaucrats, school stakeholders decide, on the basis of their perceptions of these contextual factors, which components to implement and how. Therefore, school stakeholders who viewed their model as being effective in terms of increasing student outcomes, enhancing professional community, and improving instructional practices were more likely to implement the model than those stakeholders who viewed the model as not resulting in positive outcomes. Developer support was discussed as a challenge to implementation when school stakeholders perceived that they did not receive adequate assistance from the developer. On the other hand, school stakeholders who received ongoing and/or onsite technical assistance from developers were more likely to feel supported in their implementation.

Another contextual factor stakeholders considered was how well the model aligned with other school initiatives at the school, district, state, and federal levels. When stakeholders were able to match the model's activities or goals with ongoing school programs, they were more likely to continue implementation of the model. However, when stakeholders did not perceive alignment in relation to state assessments or mandates from the district or federal government, model implementation suffered. The conditions related to model alignment with other school initiatives were very important considerations for stakeholders and influenced implementation.

Overall, this paper addresses the importance of analyzing school stakeholders' perceptions to uncover their understandings of CSR models. Our study implies that CSR is a complicated process of school

stakeholder understandings and context. Specific factors associated with the school, model, and district settings need to be considerations that affect school-level stakeholder perceptions of CSR. With in-depth consideration of school stakeholders' perceptions of CSR, we can start to uncover the pathways in which practitioners decide to use model practices that ultimately lead to CSR model implementation.



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