

CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models

NOVEMBER 2006



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THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM QUALITY CENTER

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About the CSRQ Center

The Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, through a Comprehensive School Reform Quality Initiative Grant, S332B030012, and is operated by the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

Since 1946, AIR—one of the nation's largest not-for-profit behavioral and social science research organizations—has engaged in thousands of research, evaluation, technical assistance, consulting, and communication projects that help to make research relevant to policy-makers and practitioners. AIR's overriding goal is to use the best science available to bring the most effective ideas and approaches to enhancing everyday life. The organization's work spans a wide range of substantive areas: education, student assessment, international education, individual and organizational performance, health research and communication, human development, usability design and testing, employment equity, and statistical and research methods. AIR conducts its work within a culture and philosophy of strict independence, objectivity, and nonpartisanship. Given the variety of work that AIR conducts, rigorous institutional safeguards have been established to guarantee that any potential conflict of interest is avoided. For additional information about AIR, visit <http://www.air.org>.

The mission of the CSRQ Center is to provide timely and reliable tools and technical assistance to support urban and rural educators and education decision makers in choosing the highest quality comprehensive school reform (CSR) program to meet locally defined needs. The CSRQ Center promises to help raise student achievement and improve other important student outcomes for millions of America's children by helping education decision makers identify and apply “what works” in the area of comprehensive school reform.

To meet its mission, the CSRQ Center produces CSRQ Center Reports and makes them widely available; develops partnerships with communities and education and policy organizations; and provides technical assistance to selected states, districts, and schools. The following CSRQ Center Reports and services are available on its Web site (<http://www.csrq.org>):

- ***CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School CSR Models (updated November 2006)***. This report offers a scientifically based, consumer-friendly review of the effectiveness and quality of 22 widely adopted elementary school CSR models.
- ***CSRQ Center Report on Education Service Providers***. This report offers a scientifically based, consumer-friendly review of the effectiveness and quality of seven widely adopted education service providers.
- ***CSRQ Center Report on Middle and High School CSR Models***. This report offers a scientifically based, consumer-friendly review of the effectiveness and quality of 18 widely adopted middle and high school CSR models.
- ***Works in Progress: A Report on Middle and High School Improvement Programs***. This report summarizes more than a dozen key issues facing middle and high schools, such as literacy and reading, English language learners, violence and bullying, and transition.
- ***Moving Forward: A Guide for Implementing CSR and Improvement Strategies***. This guide and accompanying workshop leads readers through an effective step-by-step process for implementing school reform and improvement strategies.

- ***Enhancing the Participation of Students With Disabilities in CSR Models.*** This guide builds off CSRQ Center Reports by providing information about specific model features that address the needs of students with disabilities. It also offers educators suggestions regarding strategies to enhance the engagement and progress of students with disabilities in school reform models.
- ***Choosing an Education Contractor: A Guide to Assessing Financial and Organizational Capacity.*** This how-to guide provides state or local education agency staff—including state departments of education, school districts, charter school authorizers, or individual schools—with information about the importance of a provider’s financial viability and organizational capacity and with guidance on how to assess these dimensions of contractor quality. The guide, which was developed in partnership with The Finance Project (<http://www.financeproject.org>), offers tips and tools to help readers gather information and use it to evaluate the financial and organizational health of potential education contractors.
- ***Seeing Improvement: A Guide to Visiting Schools That Use Effective Whole School Improvement Models and Promising Practices.*** This guide was developed in cooperation with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and is adapted from

AFT’s *Seeing Progress: A Guide to Visiting Schools Using Promising Programs*. The guide will help schools answer questions about choosing an evidence-based approach and adopting promising practices for school improvement. In addition, it provides guidance on planning and conducting a visit to a school that already uses whole-school improvement approaches and/or promising practices.

- ***CSR Model Registry.*** This online database allows model providers that are not reviewed in CSRQ Center Reports to submit nonevaluative information about their model to the registry. Readers can search the registry to find a model that may meet their local needs.



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Introduction

Why Is This Report Needed?

In 1998, education researcher Sam Stringfield observed, “There is no shortage of programs that promise to turn around low-performing schools, but how can you tell which ones will live up to their claims?” (p. 1). Since those words were written, more than 500 distinct comprehensive school reform (CSR) approaches have been adopted in more than 5,000 schools across the country. How many of these CSR models were chosen based on a rigorous review of the evidence? The answer is unclear. To date, education stakeholders at the national, state, and local levels have had few objective and rigorous sources to turn to when making important school improvement choices. With notable exceptions—such as *An Educators’ Guide to School Reform*, issued by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) (Herman et al. 1999), and the meta-analysis performed by Borman, Hewes, Overman, and Brown (2002)—researchers have provided little help in rating the effectiveness and quality of CSR options available to education decision makers. Sam Stringfield’s (1998) advice, to treat selection of an improvement model “as an important and complicated consumer decision,” is as relevant today as when he issued it nearly a decade ago.

This report is intended to serve as a consumer guide that helps decision makers sort through claims about which approaches could truly meet the needs of students. It is the most extensive and comprehensive review of elementary school CSR models ever issued. To prepare this report, the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center reviewed more than 800 studies on 22 widely implemented elementary school CSR models.¹ We used rigorous standards that

are aligned with the requirements for scientifically based research established by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Each model is rated on a number of dimensions, including evidence of raising student achievement. The reviews of the individual models are written to provide education decision makers with profiles of each model and the evidence they need to make decisions to meet locally defined needs.

What Is CSR and Why Does It Matter?

For the past two decades, the school-level adoption and effective implementation of externally developed and research-based CSR service providers or models have been used increasingly to raise student achievement. CSR models have been tried in thousands of schools nationwide, most of which are high poverty and low performing. This trend is driven by the recognition that school improvement efforts are complex and require a coordinated, systematic approach that addresses every aspect of a school—including curriculum, instruction, governance, scheduling, professional development, assessment, and family and community involvement.

“Today, we are barraged by a cacophony of ideas about how to improve public education in the United States. Opinions are great, but they are not something we want the lives of children to hinge on. Consequently, much work needs to be done to distill the nuggets of enduring value from this cacophony and to implement scientifically based research across educational programs” (Carter, 2002).

— Gene Carter, Executive Director, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

¹Since this report was originally released in November 2005, two models (Community for Learning and Different Ways of Knowing) no longer operate. However, this report includes data on these two models for informational purposes only.

Rather than use individual, piecemeal programs or approaches, effective CSR models integrate research-based practices into one unified effort to raise student achievement and achieve other important outcomes, such as reduced dropouts or improved behavior.

Many schools adopting the CSR approach choose an external model to provide a research-based, replicable set of practices. These external models, offered by a variety of service providers, are meant to be blueprints to help a school make improvements in a number of areas. Although their focus, philosophy, and method varies, these CSR models are designed based on research and are intended to help the school raise student achievement. To support implementation, CSR models typically provide schools with materials, professional development, and hands-on assistance. Other schools adopting a CSR approach may choose to develop their own CSR models, putting together research-based elements. Regardless of the approach, according to the U.S. Department of Education (n.d.), a school implementing a CSR approach must address the following 11 components:

- Employs proven methods and strategies based on scientifically based research
- Integrates a comprehensive design with aligned components
- Provides ongoing, high-quality professional development for teachers and staff
- Includes measurable goals and benchmarks for student achievement
- Is supported within the school by teachers, administrators, and staff
- Provides support for teachers, administrators, and staff

- Provides for meaningful parent and community involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement activities
- Uses high-quality external technical support and assistance from an external partner with experience and expertise in schoolwide reform and improvement
- Plans for the evaluation of the CSR model implementation and impact on annual student results
- Identifies resources to support and sustain the school's comprehensive reform effort
- Has been found to significantly improve the academic achievement of students or demonstrates strong evidence that it will improve the academic achievement of students

CSR has evolved from more than two decades of systematic improvement efforts based on the adoption of external schoolwide reform models. This trend was accelerated in the early 1990s, when, after decades of concentrating on programs designed to target individual students at risk of academic failure, a new idea based on a comprehensive approach to school reform was conceived. The RAND Corporation published *Federal Policy Options for Improving the Education of Low-Income Students, Volume I, Findings and Recommendations* in 1993, suggesting to the federal government that to reap the biggest impact funds

“Several major studies of educational change have indicated that externally developed designs can be successfully implemented and have positive results . . . Studies of CSR show that not only can externally developed designs be successfully implemented, but that they are often easier to implement than locally developed designs” (Desimone, 2000; also see CSRQ, 2005, p. 75).

—Laura Desimone, Education Researcher,
Vanderbilt University

from Title I, previously called Chapter I, would be best spent on schoolwide reform. These ideas regarding schoolwide programs were soon incorporated into the Title I program. At about the same time, New American Schools began to operate as an advocate for CSR and supporter of the development of high quality CSR models (Stringfield, Ross, & Smith, 1996).

The CSR approach gained further momentum with the 1997 passage of the federal Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program. Through this program, Congress provided dedicated funding to support the adoption of CSR strategies throughout the country. The 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as NCLB, gave further momentum to the CSR approach by changing it from a demonstration project to a full-fledged federal program called the Comprehensive School Reform Program. According to the NCLB Act, CSR models must be scientifically based. This means that a model or approach must demonstrate strong research evidence that it can improve students' academic achievement. Today, regardless of the funding source, the use of schoolwide improvement models is likely to remain an important strategy for improving schools, particularly those that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

So far, overall results of the CSR approach have demonstrated promise, with some models helping schools make significant student achievement gains. For example, a 2002 meta-analysis of the student achievement outcomes of 29 leading K–12 CSR models reported that “the overall effects of CSR are significant, meaningful, and appear to be greater than the effects of other interventions that have been designed to serve similar purposes and student and school populations” (Borman et al., p. 34). These findings are consistent with the 1999 findings of *An Educators' Guide to Schoolwide Reform*, a groundbreaking study issued by AIR. The *Educators' Guide* found that of the 24 widely adopted CSR models it examined, 8 had strong or promising evidence of positive effects on student

achievement (Herman et al., 1999). Finally, a 2004 review of the federal CSR Program by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), found that its performance and management were “adequate.” Of the 18 U.S. Department of Education programs reviewed, only 4 received a rating of “adequate” or higher. While OMB noted that the results at the middle and high school levels were mixed, it found that “performance data indicate improvements in elementary school reading and math” (OMB, 2004, p. 59).

CSR models—such as those described in this report—are promising because they are research-based and provide the training and other supports needed to encourage a coordinated approach to achieve student success. The research evidence to date indicates that some models are more effective than others and that their results vary greatly—even with the effective models—depending on the quality of implementation (see Desimone, 2000).

How Can Educators Meet the Challenge of Evidence-Based Decision Making?

Critics often claim that decisions in the education field are driven by whims and fads, thoughtlessly adopted and easily abandoned. Although this is an exaggeration, it is nevertheless true that despite billions of dollars and countless hours of well-intentioned efforts, educators and policymakers still cannot say, with confidence, how best to bring about the many

“By evidence based, I mean an endeavor in which decision makers routinely seek out the best available research and data before adopting programs or practices that will affect significant numbers of students” (Whitehurst, 2004, p. 1).

— Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst, Director, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education

desired improvements. Better research and evidence, when combined with sound professional judgment, can help guide the way toward solid and sustained improvement. However, educators, policymakers, and the public cannot be expected to do “what works” until they actually *know* what works.

The education community increasingly turns to research to help sort through its school improvement options. This reliance on research helps satisfy NCLB’s requirement that school improvement efforts are driven by scientifically based research. More importantly, however, it helps to meet the urgently felt need on the part of educators and policymakers to ensure that their efforts improve the lives of children.

However, researcher Tom Corcoran (2003) points out some of the challenges in transforming education into an evidence-based field. In a study conducted in three districts, he found that

School district leaders want to make evidence-based decisions and they are making efforts to build evidence-based cultures in their central offices and schools. But, significant progress is being hampered by the inadequacy and confusion of the existing research, its availability to school and district-level staff, and reliance by staff on decision-making patterns that focus on philosophy rather than effects. (p. 1)

In addition to the challenges confronted by districts, education stakeholders—including teachers, administrators, policymakers, and state- and district-based evaluators—are hard pressed to keep up with the volume of approaches and initiatives that must be studied. One recent nationwide review of education program evaluation efforts at the state level (Raymond, Bortnik, & Gould, 2004) found that

Most states infrequently evaluate their programs, if at all . . . [A]bout a third of states

do practically none, another third does a little, and a third does a noticeable number of evaluation studies . . . [L]ess than 10% of all the studies purporting to be impact evaluations used random assignment or quasi-experimental designs. (pp. viii–ix)

In short, few evaluation studies are conducted, and even fewer studies are rigorous enough to provide reliable findings. In addition, the researchers found that even the results of these infrequent and flawed evaluations were disseminated only sporadically, thus providing little guidance to decision makers.

A further impediment to building evidence-based practice and policy in education is the lack of research studies and findings that provide practical guidance. Many studies published in education do not focus on the questions that are critical to decision makers, such as what works, under what circumstances, and for which students? Furthermore, some of the research that could potentially act as a guide is very hard to access or understand. Thus, solid research evidence is often undervalued or ignored (Huang, Reiser, Parker, Muniec, & Salvucci, 2003; Sutton & Thompson, 2001). As a result, when educators seek and demand evidence to help answer their questions, they are either left disappointed by the lack of relevant research or are challenged to make meaning out of the findings they encounter.

Thus, even when educators and decision makers have committed to the adoption of models that have track

“There may be less than 1% of existing research that is really meaningful to teachers . . . I don’t want theories. Teachers need strategies, practices. Give them things that can help teaching and learning, things that can help kids” (Huang et al., 2003).

— *Veteran school superintendent, in an interview on the research needs of policymakers*

records of effectiveness, they are challenged to find, interpret, and apply relevant research. The selection process is additionally challenging, because interpretations of findings across evaluation studies of the same or similar models are difficult to make due to variations in implementation, characteristics of participating students, the rigor of the research design, and other factors.

Fortunately, a number of efforts are underway to improve the value of research to education decision makers. Many of these efforts are sponsored by the

U.S. Department of Education and seek to improve the quantity and quality of education research, to make it more relevant to educators, and to ensure that it is available in a timely manner and in easily accessible formats and language. For example, the U.S. Department of Education and others have issued guidance on judging the quality and relevance of research findings (see table 1).² Furthermore, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)—sponsored and managed by the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department

Table 1. Resources for Judging Research in Education

Fashola, O. S. (2004). Being an informed consumer of quantitative educational research. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 85, 532–538.

This article includes a user-friendly description of the nature of scientific research. Specific guidelines are offered on how to evaluate the quality of an evaluation study and how to relate findings to the educator's own school or district context.

Lauer, P. A. (2004). A policymaker's primer on education research: How to understand, evaluate and use it. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States. Retrieved December 1, 2004, from <http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/Research/primer/foreword.asp>

This primer addresses how to determine the trustworthiness of research and whether research warrants policy changes. It also includes a statistics tutorial and a glossary.

Slavin, R. E. (2003). A reader's guide to scientifically based research. *Educational Leadership*, 60, 12–16.

This article presents a review of criteria to use when selecting scientific research to review and how to evaluate the quality of the research.

Stringfield, S. (1998, Fall). Choosing success. *American Educator*. Retrieved December 1, 2004, from http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/fall98/ChoosingSuccess.pdf

This is a practical guide on how to select a model, using criteria such as model goals, research base, and associated costs.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. (2003). *Identifying and implementing educational practices supported by rigorous evidence: A user friendly guide*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved December 1, 2004, from http://www.excelgov.org/usermedia/images/uploads/PDFs/User-Friendly_Guide_12.2.03.pdf

This publication points out the importance of using rigorous evidence and provides guidance when applying it to make program and model adoption decisions.

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. (2003). *Random Assignment in Program Evaluation and Intervention Research: Questions and Answers*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved October 10, 2005, from <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/resources/randomqa.html>

This brochure, issued by the National Center for Education Evaluation of the Institute of Education Sciences, explains the nuts and bolts of why and how random assignment evaluations are conducted and answers some frequently asked questions.

²The CSRQ Center provides further guidance on this topic on pages 6–8 of *Works in Progress: A Report on Middle and High School Improvement Programs* (CSRQ, 2005).

of Education—provides educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central, trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. WWC systematically searches for, evaluates, and reports on the evidence of effectiveness of programs, products, practices, and policies that claim to improve student outcomes. Throughout the coming years, WWC will review many topics of interest to education decision makers, including programs to raise mathematics and reading achievement, reduce dropout rates, and improve character education. Its reports are available at <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>.³

Sorting through and making sense of research is hard work, even for research scientists with years of training and experience. Despite substantial advances in developing standards and processes for judging and adding up the evidence in education, researchers often disagree. Although procedures exist for reviewing and comparing a large number of studies, the process is often complex and painstaking. Therefore, education decision makers often turn to others to sort through the evidence and report it as “actionable” information.

How Can Education Decision Makers Use This Report?

This report provides education stakeholders with a decision-making tool to help them sort out options about hundreds of elementary school improvement choices available to meet local needs. The ratings

“[R]esearch findings must be made more accessible. Most research evidence is published in places and forms that only researchers visit and can comprehend” (Stipek, 2005).

—Deborah Stipek, Dean, School of Education,
Stanford University

provided are intended to clarify options, not to point to or endorse best buys from among the 22 models reviewed. Together, these models represent a significant portion of the total number of CSR models being used by elementary schools. Each model included in this report serves more than 20 schools in at least 3 states and is available for adoption in almost all states. (For a detailed discussion about this report, see the “About This Report” and “Methodology” sections.)

Although this report reviews evidence on widely adopted models, it does not represent an evaluation of the CSR improvement strategy as a whole. To satisfy the interest in CSR expressed by many stakeholders in knowing about as many CSR models as possible, the CSRQ Center’s Web site provides a CSR Model Registry that allows any CSR model provider to enter information about its model (see table 2). In addition, we believe that the review framework described in the “About This Report” section can be used by education consumers to ask probing questions of each model being considered, even if it is not included in one of our reports. For example, consumers can ask models to provide them with rigorous research evidence on effectiveness and ask them to demonstrate how this evidence aligns with the standards set by the CSRQ Center.

Finally, readers should be aware that a variety of organizations provide publications, tools, and guidance to help educators and others who are considering the adoption and effective implementation of comprehensive school reform and CSR models:

- The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (<http://www.csrq.org>), the authors of this report, provide an orientation to CSR, tools to improve CSR model selection, and links to leading resources in the field.
- The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (<http://www.csrclearinghouse.org>) is

³Unless noted otherwise, all Web addresses displayed in this report were active as of the publishing date, November 2006.

Table 2. CSR Model Registry

Reports from the CSRQ Center can review only a limited number of CSR models. Some education decision makers may be interested in additional CSR models, including new or smaller models that have not yet been reviewed by CSRQ Reports. Thus, the CSRQ Center launched a Model Registry in fall 2005 so that service providers have the opportunity to share nonevaluative information about models not included in reports from the CSRQ Center.

The Model Registry is nonevaluative, and any provider who wishes to register information on a CSR model may do so. Users should be aware that each model provider has supplied the information in this Registry. The CSRQ Center will conduct a minimal amount of fact checking for each model. The Model Registry provides basic background information for each CSR model:

- Focus and mission of the model
- Grade levels that the model serves
- Subject areas that the model covers
- Descriptions and citations of research demonstrating the model's effectiveness on student achievement and other outcomes
- Descriptions of the link between research and the model's design
- Description of the model's services and supports to schools
- Cost of the model

Providers that would like to submit information about their models can register on the CSRQ Web site: <http://www.csrq.org/CSRProgramRegistry.asp>.

funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help schools to improve by providing them with accurate and practical information on CSR and by helping to put that information to use.

- The U.S. Department of Education's Web site (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/compreform/resources.html>) provides descriptions of and links to a variety of resources to support the selection, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of CSR.

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About This Report

This section provides readers with general information on how the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center reviewed models on five categories of quality and effectiveness, including a description of the process to establish the rating system, an overview of the rating process, and an explanation of the ratings. In keeping with the consumer orientation of the report, we have tried to limit our use of overly technical jargon and to provide clear, straightforward discussions of methodological issues involved in conducting the reviews. The “Methodology” section, which follows, provides researchers and others interested with a review of the scientific procedures that were followed to produce this report.

How Are Models Rated by This Report?

This CSRQ Center report provides a series of reviews on the effectiveness and quality of 22 widely adopted elementary school comprehensive school reform (CSR) models.¹ Although such summaries of overall evidence are crucial to solid decision making, they can also be misleading. For example, researchers have frequently noted that most models vary in their effectiveness from school to school. That is, in some schools they work well and in others hardly at all (Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2002, p. 35). Often these variations in model effectiveness are about as large as the variation in effectiveness from one model to another. Thus, decision makers should keep in mind that even those models that received lower ratings in this report may be good options in certain circumstances. For instance, because implementation is such an important variable in ensuring good results, it may be better for a school or district to adopt models that might meet the needs of the local

leadership and school community, despite their lower rating. Alternatively, if a district or school commits to doing the needed work to ensure that their chosen model is implemented properly, it may wish to adopt a higher rated model even if it may encounter some resistance.

As with all consumer choices, decision makers must weigh the pros and cons of their model selection. This report is not intended to dictate decisions or pick “winners” and “losers,” but rather it aims to clarify choices by providing the most rigorous evidence and user-friendly information to date on the available options to meet local school improvement needs.

Each review first offers basic information on the CSR model, including the model’s mission and focus, year introduced in schools, grade levels served, number of schools served, and costs. In particular, we tried to gather as much detailed information as possible regarding the costs of adopting and implementing each model, because this is a key consideration for schools and districts. Unfortunately, models do not uniformly report this information and costs vary widely. Ideally, for each model, we would have provided an estimated total cost of implementation, which would have included the services and materials provided by the model and any additional labor or materials expenses (e.g., new textbooks or software or release time for teacher professional development or common planning). Each review provides as much information as we were able to gather from the provider and from publicly available sources. As consumers, schools and districts are in a strong position to (a) require each model to specify all of its expected costs in comparable formats and (b) estimate the budgetary impact of local changes that might have to be made to successfully implement

¹Since this report was originally released in November 2005, two models (Community for Learning and Different Ways of Knowing) no longer operate. However, this report includes data on these two models for informational purposes only.

the model. We urge consumers to engage the models in this discussion early in the adoption process.

The Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of National Design-Based Assistance Providers, issued in 2000 by a blue ribbon panel of education stakeholders, established a set of standards to which all model developers should be held (New American Schools, 2000). The CSRQ Center, including our advisory committee, used these standards and its experience working in the CSR field for the past decade to develop a set of measures to rate the quality and effectiveness of CSR models. Without a doubt, academic outcomes are a critical measure of a model's performance. Educators, administrators, policymakers, and the public all want to know: Will the model we are considering for our school improve our students' academic performance? In addition, decision makers want evidence in other critical areas that assures them that a model will provide not only help to improve student achievement but also to deliver services that are considered important, such as providing support for model implementation or for effective parental and community involvement. Therefore, this report evaluates evidence on five categories for each model.

Category 1: Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

A school or district considering implementing a model should conduct a self-assessment to identify its own strengths and weaknesses and to seek a model that will help it address these areas. As part of this process, consumers need to know whether a service provider can help their schools raise achievement levels of specific student groups and whether a model can demonstrate positive impacts on student achievement in specific subject areas. Category 1 examines the extent to which a model can demonstrate, using research of reasonable quality, a positive impact on student achievement. This category is comprised of three subcategories.

Category 1a focuses on a model's evidence of positive overall effects on student achievement. The rubrics in this category establish standards by which research on a model's overall impact on student outcomes is evaluated. This may be the only category that matters for many consumers. However, decision makers should consider that although CSR models are among the most widely studied improvement approaches in the history of education, and despite our review of more than 800 studies on these models, there is still only an emerging evidence base regarding individual model effectiveness. Thus, some models in our review may have received a relatively low rating based on the current small research base of studies demonstrating effectiveness. This means that while many models *may* be able to consistently improve student outcomes, such capacity may not yet be based on rigorous research evidence. In time, many models may and should be able to provide greater evidence of positive impact on student achievement. We recommend that consumers decide which models they will consider based on (a) the CSRQ Center ratings on all categories and (b) a careful review of the detailed profile provided for each model.

Category 1b examines whether a model can demonstrate evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations. Readers should note that the majority of schools implementing the 22 models reviewed in this report are high-poverty schools. Although we were not able to gather the information on the percentage of Title I students served by these models, federally funded CSR models on average serve school populations with a poverty rate of about 70% (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, n.d.). Therefore, even when a model does not break out its results by specific subpopulations, it can be assumed that overall these studies measure impact in highly challenging circumstances. The models that reported outcomes for specific student populations should be commended for their efforts to provide consumers with this additional disaggregated information, which is rarely available. Therefore, even in instances in which a model provided

evidence that was rated on the “low” end of our rating scale, readers should consider that other models have not reported this evidence and therefore provide less information on which to make a decision.

Category 1c examines whether a model can demonstrate evidence of positive effects for specific subject areas. Similar to Category 1b, few models provided evidence of their impact in specific subject areas. When we were able to find this evidence for specific subjects, the most common content areas were reading or math. Therefore, even in instances in which a model provided evidence that was rated on the “low” end of our rating scale, consumers should consider that other models have not reported this evidence and therefore provide less information on which to make a decision.

Category 2: Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Category 2 was developed to provide consumers with information about model effects beyond student achievement. Although student achievement is usually the outcome of primary concern to those seeking tools to improve their schools, consumers also want to know whether a model can help a school improve additional nonachievement outcomes, such as student discipline, student attendance, school climate, retention/promotion rates, and teacher satisfaction. However, our attempts to rate models in these areas faced two key challenges. First, the amount of available evidence in this area is insufficient to adequately judge the quality of most models. Second, currently available measurement tools for these areas are much less reliable and sound than the CSRQ Center would prefer. For example, although steps are now being taken to remedy this situation, student attendance is measured differently across schools and districts. The additional outcomes covered in Category 2 are the outcomes that were most commonly examined in the research literature across models.

Consumers must make a distinction between models that specifically claim to help schools improve in the areas outside of student achievement and those that do not. For example, some models include components designed specifically to help improve student discipline, while other models do not. Improvement in student discipline may be a side effect of implementing a given model—even if that model does not claim to, or was not developed to, improve that particular outcome. However, if a model promises that it can help a school improve student discipline, that model ought to be able to demonstrate that it can deliver on its promise. Consumers should proceed with caution if a model was developed to help schools improve in a specific area but cannot provide solid evidence of effectiveness.

Category 3: Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

The CSRQ Center’s audiences have indicated that consumers also want to know whether a model can help a school improve its level of family and community involvement. Research also suggests that high performing schools may benefit from having strong family and community involvement. Moreover, citizens in every community have a right and a responsibility to be engaged in improving schools for their children and for society at large. Family and community involvement in reform efforts can spur and may help sustain long-term improvements. Based on this information, the CSRQ Center developed rubrics to determine whether a model can demonstrate that it helps schools improve family and community involvement. Consumers should keep in mind that some models, while acknowledging the desirability of parental involvement in schooling, do not count on parental involvement in order to deliver improved student achievement. Decision makers should note this as they review models that may have higher ratings on student outcomes and lower ones on family and community involvement. Some service providers have decided to focus on strengthening

elements other than community involvement to achieve their stated outcomes.

For Categories 1 (student achievement), 2 (other educational outcomes), and 3 (family and community outcomes), we synthesized quantitative evidence gathered through the review of existing research articles on the models reviewed. Whenever possible, we have provided information on model results for specific student groups or specific types of school settings.

Category 4: Evidence of a Link Between Research and the Model's Design

As schools and districts increasingly heed the national call to implement scientifically based reform, consumers will need to know whether a model can clearly demonstrate links between research and the components of its design.

A provider's clear explanations of model design can help school staff understand the model and accept changes they will be required to make. In addition, consumers considering a newer model with lower evidence of effectiveness must consider whether the model's design is based on solid research. A newer model may not have had sufficient time to conduct enough research on its effectiveness, but that model ought to be able to clearly demonstrate that it *can* work: that it was built based on solid evidence of what works. Of course, over time a model must demonstrate that it *does* work. The ratings for Category 4 measure how clearly and explicitly the materials reviewed by the Center demonstrate links between research and the model's design. Through phone conversations with the model's director, conversations with a group of randomly selected school principals for each model, and a review of model materials, we rated whether the model has linked its components—such as organization and governance, professional development, and technology—to a literature base. Consumers should be aware that it was beyond the scope of this report to

review whether the research cited by the models is itself highly rigorous. Other researchers and organizations, such as the What Works Clearinghouse, help address this issue.

Category 5: Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Even the most well-designed, well-researched models can fail to produce positive results if implemented poorly. Implementing any model requires schools and districts to expend significant amounts of money, time, and effort over a long period of time. If consumers are going to make this kind of investment, they need to feel confident that the model's provider can offer adequate, high-quality services and supports to help school staff fully and faithfully implement the model. The CSRQ Center created Category 5 to rate a model's readiness to be implemented successfully and to rate the quality of professional development and technical assistance that the model provides to schools.

Category 5a reviews the model's evidence of readiness for successful implementation. Under this category, we assess the following subcategories:

- Provider ensures initial commitment from schools.
- Provider tracks and supports full implementation in schools.
- Provider helps schools allocate resources needed to fully implement the CSR model.

Category 5b reviews the model's evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation. Under this category, we assess the following subcategories:

- Provider offers comprehensive training opportunities and supporting materials.
- Provider ensures that professional development effectively supports full model implementation.

- Provider develops school's internal capacity to provide professional development.

For Categories 4 (link between research and model design) and 5 (professional development and technical assistance), we synthesized and reported qualitative data gathered through phone conversations with model directors and up to three school principals and reviewed publicly available documentation on the models under review. These two categories rate the effectiveness of the CSR model's delivery of services to schools.

Finally, the CSRQ Center will issue a revised version of this report in the fall of 2006 that will rate two additional categories of quality:

- Model provider's financial viability
- Model provider's capacity to deliver high-quality services to all schools

Decision makers and consumers need to know that the model they adopt is effective and that its services will be delivered effectively. As readers will note, many of the models reviewed in this report take from 3 to 5 years to fully implement and demonstrate results. Consumers must have confidence that the service providers which they engage are financially sound organizations that will be able to deliver high-quality services over the life of the contract. To date, no one has reviewed this type of critical consumer information. However, the CSRQ Center has worked with financial and organizational experts to develop a set of standards that will permit consumers to make more informed and confident long-term commitments. For example, the CSRQ Center, in partnership with The Finance Project, released *Choosing an Education Contractor: A Guide to Assessing Financial and Organizational Capacity* (<http://www.csrq.org/resources.asp>) in August 2006. This "how-to" guide provides state or local education agency staff—including state departments of education, school districts, charter school authorizers, or individual schools—with (a) information about the importance

of a model provider's financial viability and organizational capacity and (b) guidance on how to assess these dimensions of contractor quality. The guide offers tips and tools to help readers gather information and use it to evaluate the financial and organizational health of potential education contractors. The end goal is to help leaders of school systems to make solid investment decisions.

How Was the Rating System Developed and Applied?

The production of this report was guided by the CSRQ Center's Quality Review Tool (QRT). The QRT provides the criteria for independent, fair, and credible model reviews. (Greater detail regarding the methods used in this study is available in the "Methodology" section.) To ensure that the QRT is valid, reliable, credible, and useful, the QRT development process involved several steps. First, CSRQ Center staff developed review frameworks in consultation with some of the nation's most respected education researchers, model evaluators, and school improvement experts. Then, the QRT was reviewed and revised with the help of the CSRQ Center's Advisory Committee, a nationally respected panel of experts that includes leading education practitioners, methodologists, and researchers from a variety of fields, including education, sociology, psychology, and economics (see table 3). Finally, the QRT also drew on prior and current efforts to conduct rigorous research reviews—including Herman et al. (1999) and Borman et al. (2002)—and standards set by the What Works Clearinghouse.

The forms, rubrics, and evaluation criteria that are part of the QRT have been carefully designed to guide the CSRQ Center's reviews of CSR reform models. The tools are intended to make the review process clear, transparent, and rigorous. The QRT review process is divided into three parts. Each part guides a

Table 3. The CSRQ Center’s Advisors

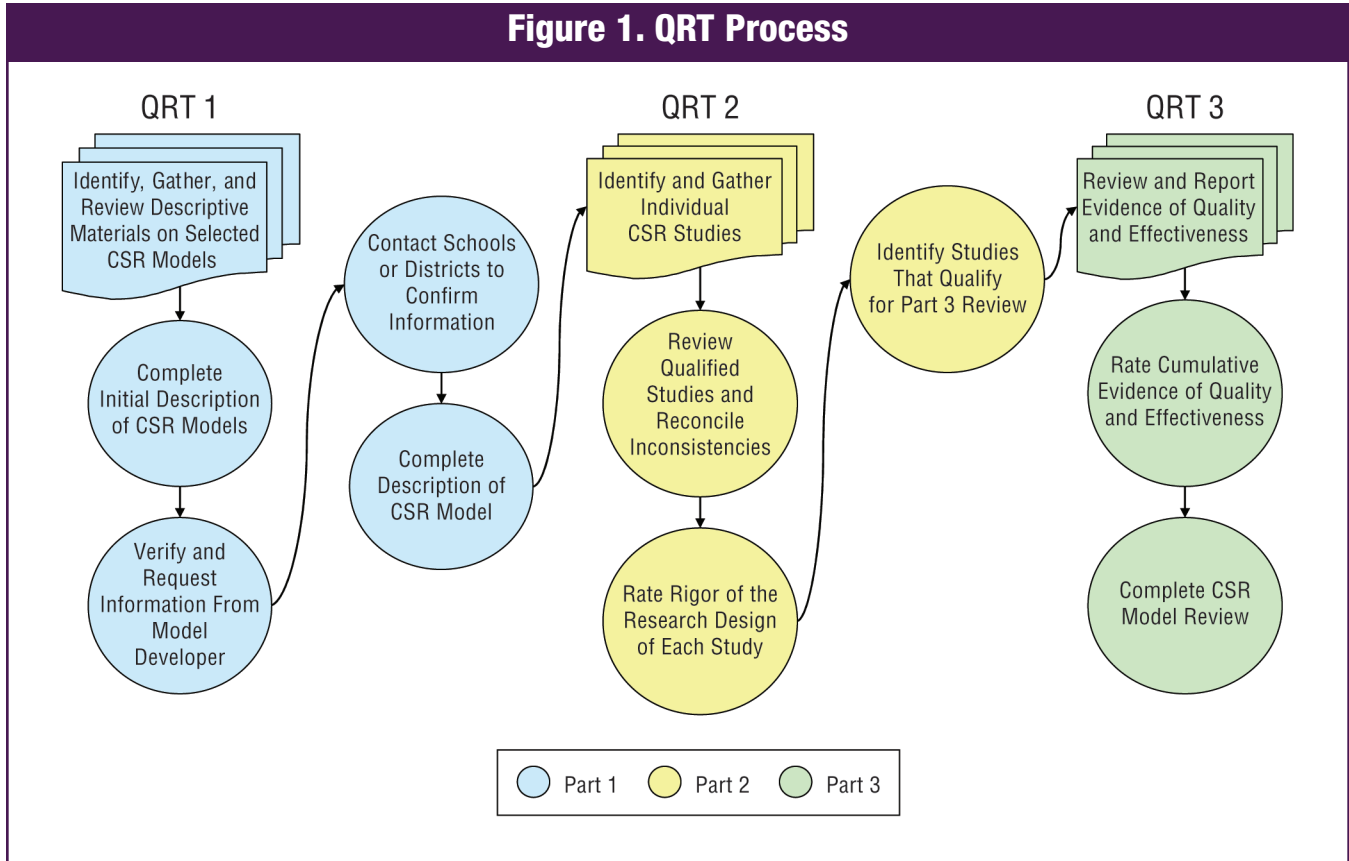
| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Anthony Amato | Superintendent | Kansas City (MO) Public Schools |
| Dan Goldhaber, Ph.D. | Research Associate Professor | University of Washington, Evans School of Public Affairs |
| David Francis, Ph.D. | Professor | University of Houston, Department of Psychology |
| Frances Harris-Burke, Ed.D. | President | Bell School Reform Network |
| Jeff Valentine, Ph.D. | Professor | Duke University, Department of Psychology |
| Jon Supovitz, Ed.D. | Research Assistant Professor | University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education and Senior Researcher, Consortium for Policy Research in Education |
| Katrina Kelley | Director, Council of Urban Boards of Education | National School Boards Association |
| Kenneth Wong, Ph.D. | Professor of Education Policy and Director, Urban Education Policy Master’s Program | Brown University, Education Department |
| Laura Desimone, Ph.D. | Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Education | Vanderbilt University, Peabody College of Education |
| Margaret Raymond, Ph.D. | Research Fellow, Hoover Institution and Director, Center for Research on Education Outcomes | Stanford University, Center for Research on Education Outcomes |
| Matt Hornbeck, J.D. | Principal | Hempstead Elementary School, Baltimore, Maryland |
| Sam Stringfield, Ph.D. | Distinguished University Scholar | University of Louisville, College of Education and Human Development |
| Scott Joftus, Ph.D. | President | Cross and Joftus, LLC |
| Will Jordan, Ph.D. | Associate Professor | Temple University, College of Education |

distinct phase of the review process. Figure 1 depicts the QRT research review and reporting process.

QRT Part 1 is an information cataloguing system that allowed the research team to acquire as much information as possible about all models being reviewed. It consisted of a multifaceted process for collecting and verifying information from literature reviews, contacts with model staff, and conversations with staff at schools implementing the model. Steps in the process included

- Gathering public materials about the CSR models from academic and education journals, the Internet, and from the model developers themselves;
- Reviewing the materials to develop an initial description of the CSR model;
- Contacting the CSR model’s provider to confirm the description and to request the following information: studies of the model’s implementation and

Figure 1. QRT Process



effectiveness, model benchmarks, and the research base for the model design; and

- Holding conversations with principals from three schools for each model (chosen at random) to verify the descriptive information and better understand the implementation process.

QRT Part 2 helped to analyze the model’s evidence of effectiveness and research base. It examined the rigor of the research design of each individual study on a CSR model’s effectiveness. QRT Part 2 did not examine the strength of a CSR model’s impact. Instead, it judged the quality of the research design supporting its evidence of impact. Steps in this process included:

- Determining which studies met the CSRQ Center’s standards for causal validity of the outcome

measures, collecting contextual and statistical information about each study; and

- Rating the rigor of the research design and identifying the studies of sufficient quality to be included in a Part 3 review.

QRT Part 3 applied rubrics that established standards against which evidence of a model’s impact could be examined and rated. If the CSRQ Center’s reviewers deemed the rigor of a study’s research design to be strong or *conclusive* using QRT Part 2, then the study proceeded to QRT Part 3. Using QRT Part 3, reviewers looked across studies on a CSR model and rated the cumulative evidence as “very strong,” “moderately strong,” “moderate,” “limited,” “zero,” or “no rating.” Using research and evidence that met the CSRQ Center’s standards set forth in QRT Parts 1 and 2,

these rubrics helped evaluate the extent to which a model can demonstrate positive impact in the five categories described previously:

- Evidence of positive effects on student achievement
- Evidence of positive effects on additional outcomes
- Evidence of positive effects on parent, family, and community involvement
- Evidence of a link between research and model's design
- Evidence of services and support to schools to enable successful implementation

How Does the Rating System Work?

Our rating process is complex and is based on the assumption that to make timely decisions, education consumers need a relatively small number of straightforward ratings developed through reliable methods.

Our system to measure and report quality and effectiveness for each category combines two elements to provide a single rating for each of the categories and subcategories described previously.

- **The strength of the evidence based upon the causal validity of the research design (e.g., how reliable and credible is it?).** Strength of evidence depends on several elements: (a) the rigor of the research design and thus the reliability of the evidence produced, (b) the quantity of the research evidence provided by a model, and (c) the consistency of the evidence in pointing to positive outcomes.
- **The strength of the reported impact or effect (e.g., does the model raise student achievement a little or a lot?).** To measure the impact of the model, we calculated effect sizes—a measure of standardized differences between groups that allows researchers to compare impact on different outcomes (e.g., reading achievement on different tests). We then established a range of effect sizes that would be used to categorize the strength of impact and contribute to the overall rating. (See “About Effect Sizes” for more information.)

About Effect Sizes

Effect sizes (ESs) are a way to standardize measures to show gains and losses on achievement or other outcomes, where differences between experimental and control groups are expressed as standard deviations (SDs). For example, an ES of 1.00 indicates that students using a CSR model scored one full SD higher than comparison students not using that model. This is equivalent to an estimated increase of 100 points on the SAT, 21 NCEs (normal curve equivalent ranks), 15 points of IQ, or enough to move a student from the 20th percentile to above the 50th percentile (Slavin & Fashola, 1998).

ESs appear throughout this report to serve two purposes. First, we report ESs when describing results within individual studies. The range of outcomes in these studies varies greatly. Second, and most importantly, we report average ESs that indicate the effects of a CSR model across studies on various outcomes. ESs are used by the CSRQ Center as one component to rate models on their evidence of effectiveness. Based on a review of existing literature on ESs for CSR models and in consultation with experts, we set ranges for moderate (+0.15 to +0.19), moderately strong (+0.20 to +0.24), and very strong (+0.25 and above) as components of our model rating rubrics. Because of differences among study designs and assessments, our determination of ESs for each model can only be considered a rough estimate of impact, allowing for comparison among the various models.

More details regarding our ratings process are described in the “Methodology” section.

The CSRQ Center applied separate rubrics for each category to arrive at its ratings. Ratings are expressed by a common set of symbols. In general, the rubrics we used resulted in the following ratings:

- **Very strong** rating is symbolized by a fully shaded circle (●). This is the highest rating provided by the CSRQ Center. It means that the model demonstrates very strong (highly credible) evidence of a very strong (large) impact in a reviewed category.
- **Moderately strong** rating is symbolized by a three-fourths shaded circle (◐). This is the next highest rating. It indicates that the combination of strength of evidence and strength of impact is moderately strong, because for either or both, the evidence base is not sufficiently rigorous or the overall impact is not as large as for very strong models.
- **Moderate** rating is symbolized by a half-shaded circle (◑). This rating results when either or both the strength of evidence or the strength of the impact do not meet the higher standards described above. Models receiving this rating may still have notable evidence because of its rigor or impact.
- **Limited** rating is symbolized by a one-fourth shaded circle (◒). This rating indicates that while the CSRQ Center found some evidence of effectiveness, more rigorous research needs to be conducted on the model to fully support its effectiveness on the category reviewed.
- **Zero** rating is symbolized by a circle with a horizontal slash (⊘). This rating means that none of the studies were of sufficient quality to be counted as reliable evidence.
- **Negative** rating is symbolized by a circle with a minus sign (⊖). This rating indicates that we

found strong evidence of detrimental effects in a given category or subcategory. In practice, we did not find any evidence of this kind for any model.

- **No rating** is symbolized by a circle with “NR” (⊙^{NR}). This rating indicates that the model has no studies (i.e., no evidence) available for review in a category or subcategory.

Table 4 illustrates how a set of fictitious CSR models (A–F) might have been rated based on their evidence of effectiveness (impact) and the strength of their evidence. As noted above and detailed in the “Methodology” section, models vary in the cumulative effect sizes. The higher the positive effect size, the greater the estimated positive impact on the category under analysis. (Whenever possible, effect sizes were calculated for Categories 1, 2, and 3.) Strength of evidence, as noted previously, is a compound of several elements. Because a model can vary in the quantity of these two components, several models may receive the same rating for different reasons.

Several conclusions can be drawn from table 4:

- Model A and Model B are rated “limited.” In Model A’s case, we would have found that we had fairly high confidence based on its research evidence that the model has limited impacts. Although Model B seemed to have moderate impact, we had little confidence that this was indeed the case given the research that suggested this effect (e.g., research designs with relatively lower rigor were used).
- Models C and D would have received a moderate rating but for different reasons. Model C has moderately strong evidence but a limited impact; while Model D has a stronger effect but weaker evidence (e.g., only a few studies).
- Models E and F have strong effect size results (impact), but Model F has stronger evidence

Table 4. CSRQ Center Rating System for Categories 1–3

| | | Impact | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | ← Weak | Strength of Effect | | | Very Strong → |
| Strength of Evidence | High ↑ | Limited | Moderate | Moderately Strong | Very Strong | Very Strong |
| | Confidence in Evidence | Limited <i>Model A</i> | Moderate | Moderately Strong | Moderately Strong | Very Strong <i>Model F</i> |
| | | Limited | Moderate <i>Model C</i> | Moderately Strong | Moderately Strong | Moderately Strong <i>Model E</i> |
| | | Limited | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate <i>Model D</i> | Moderate |
| | | Low ↓ | Limited | Limited | Limited <i>Model B</i> | Limited |

(e.g., a larger number of highly rigorous studies were conducted, leading to greater confidence) supporting a rating of very strong versus moderately strong (for Model E).

In practice, the 22 models we reviewed could be arrayed in a similar fashion because they demonstrated a large range in effect sizes and in the level of confidence we could place on their research findings.

Similarly, the rating system for Categories 4 and 5 was complex and depended on several elements: (a) evidence of explicit links between research and model design, (b) evidence that the model’s provider offers services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation, and (c) evidence that

the model’s provider offers professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation.

To determine evidence of services and supports, the following areas were examined: (a) provider tracks and supports full implementation in all schools and (b) provider helps schools allocate resources needed to fully implement the model. For evidence of professional development and technical assistance, the following areas were examined: (a) extensive training opportunities and supporting materials to support its core components, and (b) provider’s support to schools in the development of its internal capacity to provide professional development.

The same rating scale and symbols were used to rate Categories 4 and 5 as were used to rate Categories 1–3. But the meanings of the ratings are different so that they match the category:

- **Very strong** rating is symbolized by a fully shaded circle (●). This is the highest rating provided by the CSRQ Center. It means that the model provided evidence of explicit links between research and model design, comprehensive services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation, and/or comprehensive professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation for 100% of the model’s core components.
- **Moderately strong** rating symbolized by a three-fourths shaded circle (◐). This is the next highest rating. It indicates evidence of explicit links between research and model design, comprehensive services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation, and/or comprehensive professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation for 75% of the model’s core components.
- **Moderate** rating is symbolized by a half shaded circle (◑). This rating indicates evidence of explicit links between research and model design, comprehensive services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation, and/or comprehensive professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation for 50% and at least two of the model’s core components.
- **Limited** rating is symbolized by a quarter shaded circle (◒). This rating indicates evidence of explicit links between research and model design, comprehensive services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation, or comprehensive professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation for less than half (below 50%) and at least one of the model’s core components.

- **Zero** rating is symbolized by a circle with a horizontal slash (⊘). This rating means that we found a nonspecific research base, no evidence of services and supports, and/or evidence that does not meet CSRQ Center’s standards of rigor and quality.
- **No rating** is symbolized by “NR” in a circle (Ⓝ). This rating indicates that the CSRQ Center was unable to conduct a conversation with the model’s provider or to obtain complete information to verify evidence. Thus, no rating would be given to the model.

What Are the CSRQ Center Findings?

Our report’s overall findings in Category 1 are similar to those of previous studies on comprehensive school reform; that is, that models vary widely in both (a) the number of rigorous studies and evidence that support their claims and (b) their effectiveness and quality when compared to each other. Our rating process for Categories 1–3 is complex and combines two elements to provide a single rating:

- The strength of the evidence based on the causal validity of the research design (e.g., how reliable and credible is it)
- The strength of the reported impact or effect (e.g., does the model raise student achievement a little or a lot)

For more than one third of the models, the CSRQ Center identified only 10 or fewer studies that seemed to be relevant for our review of the overall evidence of positive effects of the models on student achievement. In contrast, one model (Direct Instruction) had more than 50 and another (Success for All) had more than 100 studies that were originally considered for review in Category 1. After screening more than 800 studies for quality in Category 1, we found 95 studies that met CSRQ Center standards. Again, these were unevenly

distributed, with nearly one fourth of the models having no studies that met CSRQ Center standards and with five models (America's Choice School Design, Direct Instruction, Literacy Collaborative, School Development Program, and Success for All) having five or more studies that met CSRQ Center standards. Appendix X, Table X-1 summarizes the quantitative study findings that were used to rate the evidence of overall positive effects on student achievement.

For Category 1, the CSRQ Center rated the models as follows:

- **Two models as *moderately strong*:** Direct Instruction and Success for All
- **Seven models as *moderate*:** Accelerated Schools Plus, America's Choice School Design, Core Knowledge, Literacy Collaborative, National Writing Project, School Development Program, and School Renaissance
- **Six models as *limited*:** ATLAS Learning Communities, Different Ways of Knowing, Integrated Thematic Instruction, Modern Red SchoolHouse, Pearson Achievement Solutions (formerly Co-nect), and Ventures Initiative and Focus System
- **Seven models as *zero*:** Breakthrough to Literacy, Coalition of Essential Schools, Community for Learning, Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning, Expeditionary Learning, First Steps, and Onward to Excellence II

In reviewing findings for Category 1, readers should note that most of the models in this report serve high-poverty students in low-performing schools. Thus, the evidence of effectiveness that they present is for success in educating students in highly challenging conditions.

The research base on which to rate models in Categories 2 and 3 is relatively sparse. Of note, a rating of limited or higher in these categories indicates that the research

on a model provides evidence of *positive impact* on additional outcomes for students, teachers, schools, family, and communities. Few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met CSRQ Center standards in these categories. Models that reported evidence of additional outcomes that met CSRQ Center standards in these categories are commended for providing consumers with more information. All models are encouraged to seek and present this information in future evaluation reports.

The rating system for Categories 4 and 5 depended on several elements: evidence of link between research and the model's design, evidence that the model provider offers services and support to enable successful implementation, and evidence that the model provider offers professional development and technical assistance to enable successful implementation. The same rating scale and symbols were used to rate Categories 4 and 5 as were used to rate Categories 1-3; however, the meanings of the ratings are category specific.

For Categories 4 and 5, most of the models provided moderate to strong evidence that they can provide a link between research and the model's design. Most of the models also provided strong evidence that they can provide services and support that are needed by schools to enable successful implementation.

Given the importance of implementation to the success of any schoolwide reform, consumers who select models that have low rankings in evidence of effects on student outcomes may still experience success if they implement the models faithfully. Appendix X, Table X-2 summarizes the basic model information and model ratings for Categories 1-5.

What Are the Limitations of This Report?

Although this report builds on the strong prior work of others (e.g., Borman et al., 2002; Herman, et al., 1999) and the best thinking of the education research

community regarding how to conduct consumer-friendly evidence reviews, it falls short of the ideal in a number of areas. We hope that over time—with the feedback of education consumers, researchers, and model providers—we will be able to issue future reports that are increasingly accurate and useful.

Relying on existing evidence in providing ratings was a major limitation of this report. Our descriptive information was based on a review of publicly available information, often provided by the models themselves. Given limited resources, verifying the claims made by all service providers was impossible. We did attempt to gather independent information through conversations with a small group of randomly selected principals of schools served by the models reviewed. However, these were informal conversations, conducted with only a very small number of individuals. Given our limitations, other participants and stakeholders involved in CSR—such as teachers, students, parents, and school board members—could not be reached. During the model selection process, we encourage consumers to probe more deeply for further information to support their final choice of a model. For example, schools and districts are in a better position to request detailed cost information for proposed or additional services from a model provider as part of a contracting process.

Likewise, our quantitative information was limited to a review of available research that had been conducted on the 22 models. While we searched extensively to uncover all sources of existing evidence, we did not conduct original research or apply common evaluation measures across all models to ease comparability. Also, because models are evolving and refining their design, we can't be certain whether the “high” or “low” ratings given to a model are truly representative of the current version of that model. Many models may be “new and improved” but may not yet have rigorous evidence to demonstrate such a claim.

As Professor Larry Hedges notes,

Evidence-based social policy formation requires a base of evidence that key actors . . . view as sufficiently valid to warrant its active application in policy formation. The evidence must at least meet minimum standards of internal validity (freedom from bias) and external validity (generalizability to other settings than the one studied). It is not always easy to specify exactly what evidence meets these standards.” (2000, p. 193)

The CSRQ Center undertook this review with the full knowledge of an ongoing scientific debate on such questions as how to appropriately weigh evidence from different types of research designs, how to add up research findings, and how to report results. We confronted a number of these questions in our review, and each time consulted our expert technical advisors to arrive at a workable answer that allowed us to reach our goal: consumer-friendly reports based on the best available evidence and scientific thinking. However, to do so, we had to resolve such issues as (a) how to present a composite measure that included rigor of research design with strength of impact and (b) how to set cut points to determine how large of an effect size was needed to gain a rating of moderate, moderately strong, or very strong on our rating of overall effects. We have made our assumptions and our work as transparent as possible so that others can help improve our thinking and methods for future reports.

Finally, we knew that to be usable, this report had to strike a balance between brevity and depth. Too little information or evaluation risked falling short of our goal to provide consumers with an effective decision-making tool. Too much information risked confusing decision makers with an overwhelming set of details. In practice, we erred on the side of providing less numbers and technical information in our analyses, leaving that for the “Methodology” section and appendixes. However, we also erred on the side of providing

as detailed a description of the models as possible, hoping that consumers will get a clear understanding of the distinctive elements of each, and thus be able to make the wisest decision possible. We hope that we made the right sacrifices to meet the evidence needs of end users of this report, while upholding the highest standards of scientific research.

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Methodology

Although this report is intended for a general readership, cutting edge scientific concepts and processes have been applied to produce the reviews. In this section, we detail the research methods used to support these reviews. This section highlights some of the challenges posed in conducting systematic reviews of evidence and gives our technical readers the background needed to judge the quality of our scientific efforts.

Past systematic reviews of model effectiveness in comprehensive school reform (CSR) have relied heavily on unpublished or published reports on specific CSR models—most notably the work by Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown (2002) and Herman et al. (1999), which compared the effectiveness of specific CSR models in raising student achievement. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s work builds on this work to quantitatively evaluate CSR models as well as to provide qualitatively a narrative description of each reviewed model.

The CSRQ Center’s researchers recognize that, while student achievement is critical, education consumers also rely on thorough descriptions of CSR models and want to know how their school may change if they implement a specific model. School staff also seeks information about the experience of other schools implementing CSR models. The CSRQ Center’s approach combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques to report on CSR models’ impact on student achievement and on experiences of schools implementing these models. Creswell (1994, p. 175) advocated the use of multimethods by stating five purposes:

1. Triangulation, in seeking convergence of results
2. Complementary, in that overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge

3. Developmentally, wherein the first method is used sequentially to help inform the second method
4. Initiation, wherein contradictions and fresh perspective emerge
5. Expansion, wherein the mixed methods add scope and breadth to a study

The CSRQ Center strives to replicate past analyses by determining student achievement effects and to expand and fully describe each component of a CSR model and the services it offers to schools.

As described in the introduction, the CSRQ Center developed the Quality Review Tool (QRT), a three-part, multimethod tool to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate CSR models for the education consumer.

1. **QRT Part 1** is the *qualitative data collection* phase. The purpose of QRT Part 1 is to gather (a) supporting information from the CSR model’s directors and three school principals and (b) descriptive information about the CSR model, such as professional development, technical assistance, and research-based design.
2. **QRT Part 2** is the *quantitative data collection* phase. The purpose of QRT Part 2 is to conduct a systematic review of the literature on the effectiveness of a CSR model on student achievement, other outcomes, such as attendance and graduation rates and family and community involvement outcomes.
3. **QRT Part 3** is the *data analysis* phase, in which the qualitative and quantitative data are synthesized to generate effectiveness ratings of the CSR model. These ratings (very strong, moderately strong, moderate, limited, zero, and no rating) are

developed for several categories including evidence of positive effects on student achievement, additional outcomes, and parent, family, and community outcomes; evidence of a link between research and the model's design; and evidence of the model's ability to provide services and support (e.g., readiness and professional development/technical assistance) to schools to enable successful implementation.

Sample of Elementary School CSR Models

The CSRQ Center gathered a list of more than 100 elementary school CSR models by consulting previous reviews (Borman et al., 2002; Herman et al., 1999; Slavin & Fashola, 1998), the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory's (SEDL) *CSR Awards Database*, and the Northwest Regional Education Lab's (NWREL) *Catalog of School Reform Models Database*. From this list, we selected a final sample by

1. Determining market share, as defined by the total number of schools implementing the CSR model;
2. Exploring the replicability of the CSR model, as determined by geographic spread; and
3. Investigating the comprehensiveness of the CSR model's design.

Each step of the information gathering process consulted previous reviews, databases, and the Web sites of the CSR model providers.

For Step 1 (market share), CSRQ Center's researchers searched the CSR model provider's Web site for information on the total number of schools that used the CSR model. This information was verified using the SEDL's CSR Awards database. From the list of more than 100 CSR model providers, the number of schools using a particular CSR model ranged from 1 school to several hundred schools. The selection criterion for market share was to include CSR models that were

used in 20 or more schools. This yielded 54 CSR model providers.

For Step 2, (replicability), CSRQ Center's researchers consulted information from the CSR model provider's Web site and the SEDL's CSR Awards database to determine whether the 54 CSR models from Step 1 were present in three or more states. This step narrowed down the list from 54 to 49 CSR model providers.

For Step 3 (comprehensiveness), CSRQ Center's researchers examined whether the CSR model's design features met components identified by the U.S. Department of Education: governance, technical assistance, classroom practices, professional development, leadership development, benchmarks/assessments, and curriculum (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). For coding purposes, components were defined as follows:

- **Governance** was defined as operations and management conducted in schools. Key words associated with governance were operations, structure, management, scheduling, committees, blocks, and administration.
- **Technical assistance (TA)** was defined as classroom operational or management assistance through mentoring, coaching, or other services provided to teachers. Key words associated with TA were troubleshooting, coaching, and mentoring.
- **Classroom practices (CP)** was defined as pedagogical, structural, and behavioral management practices that a teacher uses in a classroom. Key words associated with CP were pedagogy, classroom management, classroom structure, teaching strategies, and philosophy of instruction.
- **Professional development (PD)** was defined as teacher training on a specific topic. This training typically occurs in a workshop or conference environment. Key words associated with PD were training (on specific topics), conferences, and workshops.

- **Leadership development (LD)** was defined as administrative training or development for school personnel in leadership positions (e.g., principals, grade-level chairs, and lead teachers). Key words associated with LD were leadership training and/or development.
- **Benchmarks/assessments** was defined as tests and evaluations used to measure students' skills and understanding and academic progress. Key words associated with benchmarks/assessment were measurable goals, formative evaluation, and benchmarks of progress.
- **Curriculum** was defined as the scope and sequence of learning objectives and indicators, as well as material provided for lessons to instruct such objectives. Key words associated with curriculum were materials, scope and sequence, standards, and learning objectives.

Each CSR model was given a point for each component or criterion the model met based on information found on the model's Web site and additional resources including but not limited to *An Educator's Guide to Schoolwide Reform* (Herman et al., 1999), *Show Me the Evidence* (Slavin & Fashola, 1998), and the following Web sites: <http://www.ed.gov>, <http://www.SEDL.org>, and <http://www.nwrel.org>. Each CSR model provider that had five or more components in its design was included in the final sample. This step narrowed the list from 49 to 22 CSR models for review.¹

Q RT Part 1: Qualitative Data Collection Phase

QRT Part 1 is the qualitative data collection phase. It includes guidelines for conversations with model directors and school principals and the collection of artifacts

from CSR models and schools and additional information about the CSR model from publicly available resources (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Creswell, 1994, 1998).

QRT Part 1, including the guidelines for phone conversations, conversation questions, and artifact lists, was pilot tested with one of the CSR model providers in the sample. Based on feedback from the pilot conversations, researchers at the CSRQ Center modified the qualitative data collection process. An experienced and trained qualitative researcher at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) provided training on information gathering techniques, coding artifacts, and synthesizing qualitative data to develop a complete description of each CSR model in the sample. The qualitative researchers met weekly to ensure consistency across the qualitative data collection efforts.

For QRT Part 1 (qualitative data collection), qualitative researchers performed four main steps:

1. **Complete an initial description of the CSR model description by using a standardized form.** The CSRQ Center developed the Model Description Form, a comprehensive survey instrument for compiling existing information about a CSR model, including mission, history, market share, costs to the school, and design of each of the CSR components as outlined by the U.S. Department of Education. For example, researchers gathered information about the CSR model's organization and governance, such as how the CSR model provides site-based autonomy, whether additional personnel are needed, and whether the CSR model requires changes to the structure of the school. For questions about professional development, researchers gathered information about which school personnel are required to attend professional development; what types of professional development are offered prior to, during, and after implementation; and what strategies are

¹Since this report was originally released in November 2005, two models (Community for Learning and Different Ways of Knowing) no longer operate. However, this report includes data on these two models for informational purposes only.

available to help a school build capacity to provide its own professional development. In all, researchers gathered information about the CSR model's organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, technology, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and parent, family, and community involvement. The researchers also requested benchmarks and explicit citations that link the model's design to a research base. The researchers completed this survey using the CSR model provider's Web site and other publicly available information.

2. **Conduct a phone conversation with the provider of the CSR model to verify previously gathered information.** Conversations were structured around the Model Description Form (completed in step 1). On average, phone conversations lasted 90 minutes.
3. **Conduct phone conversations with three school principals who use the CSR model.** The conversations verified information gathered in steps 1 and 2. Schools were randomly selected from a list provided by the CSR model's provider or through the SEDL CSR Award database. The conversations were guided by the Model Description Form.
4. **Complete a final description of the CSR model by using a standardized form.** The Model Description Form-Complete synthesized all sources of qualitative data gathered, such as the conversations with the model's provider and the three school principals and artifacts collected from the CSR model provider or schools. The Model Description Form-Complete was checked for quality control twice to ensure that each item had 100% agreement between the two qualitative researchers. This form was then used to organize the data through the identification of core components. Core components are considered essential to the successful implementation of the model according to the CSRQ Center's

standards. Additionally, these data were coded to answer several questions:

- Is there a strong link between research and the CSR model?
- Does the CSR model track and support full implementation in all schools?
- Does the CSR model help schools allocate resources to implement the model?
- Does the CSR model provide comprehensive training opportunities and supporting materials?
- Does the CSR model develop the schools' internal capacity to provide professional development?

QRT Part 2: Quantitative Data Collection Phase

QRT Part 2 is the quantitative data collection phase. Using systematic review methods (Borman et al., 2002; Lipsey & Wilson, 2001), QRT Part 2 includes protocols to conduct systematic literature reviews and to code research studies for statistical and causal validity information.

QRT Part 2, including the protocols for literature reviews and coding instruments, was pilot tested using the same CSR model provider from the qualitative data collection efforts (QRT Part 1). Based on feedback from the pilot test, the process for conducting the literature review was improved and the coding instruments were refined. An experienced and trained quantitative researcher at AIR conducted training on how to use the coding instruments to ensure consistency in the data collection. The training included a presentation of the definitions of different research designs, causal validity issues, and background information on effect size calculations.

For QRT Part 2, quantitative researchers completed five main steps:

1. **Conduct a thorough literature search.** For each CSR model, quantitative researchers searched educational databases (e.g., JSTOR, ERIC, EBSCO, Psycinfo, Sociofile, NWREL, DAI), Web-based repositories (e.g., Google, Yahoo, Google Scholar), and two previous studies on comprehensive school reform (Herman et al., 1999; Borman et al., 2002). From these sources, quantitative researchers screened for *initial relevance* more than 800 article abstracts or summaries across the 22 models in the sample. To pass the initial screen, the sources had to meet several criteria: be published or distributed between 1980 and April 2005, examine at least one of the CSR models being investigated, use quantitative methods, and be reported as a full-text research paper (i.e., not a PowerPoint presentation or executive summary). From these articles, researchers identified 495 studies to code. Of those, 158 were eligible for full review. Appendix X provides a summary table of the number of studies that passed through each phase of the QRT Part 2 process.
2. **Complete a Study Description Outcome Form (SDOF), the first standardized coding sheet.** The CSRQ Center's quantitative researchers used the SDOF to code and document each source's research design, outcome variables, and demographic information. The Center assigned a lead and secondary coder for each source. The SDOF was completed by the lead coder. Then, the secondary coder verified all the information for 100% agreement. At this stage of coding, the primary focus was to screen each source for a reliable research design. Studies that *were not eligible for full review* were often evaluations of implementation theories supporting the CSR model with no quantitative data on outcomes or used research designs that were not sufficiently rigorous (e.g., one group pretest-posttest research designs). Research designs that passed this stage included experimental designs and quasi-experimental research designs with both pre- and posttests that evaluated the CSR model with a control group (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002) and longitudinal and cohort designs with multiple testing periods. Studies with research designs that passed this screen and included student achievement outcomes became eligible for full review. A total of 158 studies passed this step and were eligible for full coding in step 3.
3. **Complete the Quality Indicators Form (QLIF), the second standardized coding sheet.** Researchers used the QLIF to code studies that appeared to use rigorous research designs. The QLIF served two purposes: It examined the quality of the research and gathered statistical information. Researchers examined the quality of the research, such as the internal and external validity, face and psychometric validity of the outcome measures, and other quality indicators (Herman et al., 1999). Coders also collected statistical information, such as effect sizes reported by the authors or raw statistical information. For each study that was relevant for full review, two quantitative researchers independently coded one QLIF for each achievement outcome in a study.
4. **Reconcile the two QLIF coding sheets to attain 100% agreement on each coded item.** If the two quantitative researchers could not reach a consensus, a review coordinator reviewed the coding sheets to facilitate reconciliation. After the reconciliation process, a final QLIF reflected the 100% agreement.
5. **Rate each article on an overall causal validity score.** The final step was to systematically map the information from the final QLIF (the reconciled version) based on a set of rubrics designed to score each study for its causal validity (Shadish et al., 2002) as *inconclusive*, *suggestive*, or *conclusive*. Studies determined to be suggestive or conclusive met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design.

A study was inconclusive if it had critical threats to validity, such as using testing instruments with poor face validity and reliability, insufficient program fidelity, nonequivalence of treatment/control groups, lack of proper baseline, and/or timing of outcome measures (less than 1 school year after CSR model implementation or less than 1 academic year elapsed between pretest and posttest).

Noncritical threats to validity include historical events, disruption/novelty effects, instrumentation changes, maturation, selection bias, and statistical regression (Shadish et al., 2002).

Suggestive studies had zero critical threats but more than two noncritical threats. Studies without control groups including longitudinal and cohort research designs were capped at suggestive, unless the analytic techniques generated higher levels of rigor.² Conclusive articles had higher levels of rigor, that is, experimental and quasi-experimental designs that had zero critical threats to validity and fewer than two noncritical threats to validity. Effect sizes were reported or calculated only from studies that had a conclusive causal validity rating (Cooper, 1998; Light & Pillemer, 1984; Shadish et al., 2002). If the researcher could not calculate an effect size because of missing data, then the researcher conducted one of the following steps: (a) contacted the author for the statistical information needed, (b) imputed missing data, particularly standard deviations and sample size using protocols established in previous meta-analysis (Borman et al., 2002), or (c) chose not to include the study in the synthesis if options a and b were not feasible.

Q RT Part 3: Data Analysis Phase

QRT Part 3 synthesizes the qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate each CSR model in five main categories.

1. Evidence of positive effects on student achievement:
 - a. Evidence of positive overall effects
 - b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations
 - c. Evidence of positive effects for specific subject areas
2. Evidence of positive effects on additional outcomes (e.g., student discipline, student attendance, school climate, retention/promotion rates, and teacher satisfaction)
3. Evidence of positive effects on parent, family, and community involvement
4. Evidence of a link between research and the model's design
5. Evidence of services and supports to schools to enable successful implementation:
 - a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation
 - b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation

Category 1 uses the quantitative information gathered in QRT Part 2. For each CSR model in the sample, the quantitative information—including the number of studies coded, the number of studies that were rated as suggestive and conclusive, the percentage of findings in the suggestive and conclusive sources that demonstrated a positive impact, and the average effect size of those significant findings—was mapped onto rubrics to determine if the model should receive a very strong, moderately strong, moderate, limited, zero, or no rating for effects on student achievement. Quantitative researchers systematically aggregated results according to the QRT 3 rubric for the overall effect by grade,

²For example, backward-looking interrupted time series designs were considered more rigorous than longitudinal or longitudinal cohort studies that examined trends over time.

subject (reading, writing, math, science, and social studies), and diverse student populations (e.g., high poverty, minority, learning disabled and other special needs, and urban and rural students).

Category 2 evaluates the positive effects of each CSR model on additional outcomes, and Category 3 evaluates the evidence of positive effects of each CSR model on parent, family, and community involvement. Similar to Category 1, quantitative researchers mapped onto rubrics the information about the number of sources (that evaluated these outcome variables), the number of sources that were suggestive and conclusive, the percentage of findings that demonstrated a positive impact, and the average effect size of those positive findings.

In general, the rubrics for the quantitative information for Categories 1–3 are as follows:

- **Very strong.** If a model had at least 10 studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design with at least 5 rated conclusive (and/or conclusive studies constitute at least 50% of the total studies coded) and 75% of the outcomes showed statistically significant positive model effects ($p \leq .05$), with an overall mean model achievement effect of at least $ES = +0.25$, then the model received a very strong rating, which is symbolized by a fully shaded circle (●).
- **Moderately strong.** If a model had 5 to 9 studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design with at least 3 rated conclusive (and/or conclusive studies constituted at least 50% of the total studies coded) and 51% to 74% of the outcomes showed statistically significant positive model effects ($p \leq .05$), with an overall mean program achievement effect of $ES = +0.20$ to $+0.24$, then the model received a moderately strong rating, which is symbolized by a three-fourths shaded circle (◐).
- **Moderate.** If a model had 2 to 4 studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design with at least 1 rated conclusive (and/or conclusive studies constituted at least 50% of the total studies coded) and 26% to 50% of the outcomes showed statistically significant positive model effects ($p \leq .05$), with an overall mean model achievement effect of $ES = +0.15$ to $+0.19$, then the model received a moderate rating, which is symbolized by a half-shaded circle (◑).
- **Limited.** If a model had 1 study that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design and 1% to 25% of the outcomes showed positive model effects that were statistically significant ($p \leq .05$), then the model received a limited rating, which is symbolized by a one-fourth shaded circle (◒).
- **Zero.** If a model had zero studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design or 0% of the outcomes in the studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design showed statistically significant positive effects, as required for a limited rating, then the model received a zero rating, which is symbolized by a circle with a horizontal slash (⊘).
- **Negative.** If a model had at least 10 studies that met CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design with at least 5 rated conclusive (and/or conclusive studies constituted at least 50% of the total studies coded) and 75% of the outcomes showed statistically significant negative model effects ($p \leq .05$), with an overall mean model achievement effect of $ES < 0$, then it received a negative rating, which is symbolized by a circle with a minus sign (⊖). This indicated that research suggests the model has detrimental effects. In practice, this review did not find any evidence of this kind for any model.
- **No rating.** If a model had no studies (i.e., no evidence was available), then the model received

a no rating, which is symbolized by a circle with “NR” (NR).

Category 4 evaluates the link between research and the CSR model’s design. This category uses the qualitative information from QRT Part 1. Qualitative researchers applied the information synthesized in the Model Description Form (from QRT Part 1) into the following rubric.

- **Very strong.** If a model provided documentation that explicitly described and convincingly supported links between the research base and *all* (100%) core components of its design, then it received a very strong rating, which is symbolized by a fully shaded circle (●).
- **Moderately strong.** If a model provided documentation that explicitly described and supported links between the research base and *most* (75%) of the core components of its design, then it received a moderately strong rating, which is symbolized by a three-fourths shaded circle (◐).
- **Moderate.** If a model provided documentation that explicitly described and supported links between the research base and *half* (50%) of the core components of its design, then it received a moderate rating, which is symbolized by a half-shaded circle (◑).
- **Limited.** If a model provided documentation that explicitly described and supported links between the research base and *less than half* (below 50%) of the core components of its design, then it received a limited rating, which is symbolized by a one-fourth shaded circle (◒).
- **Zero.** If a model provided documentation that referred to a *nonspecific* research base to support the inclusion of the core components in its design, then it received a zero rating, which is symbolized by a circle with a horizontal slash (⊘).

- **No rating.** If the CSRQ Center was unable to conduct a conversation with the model provider or obtain complete information to verify evidence, then the model received a no rating, which is symbolized by a circle with “NR” (NR).

Two main questions guided the ratings for Category 5 (evidence that the model provider offers services and support to schools to ensure successful implementation). The first question—does the CSR model provide evidence of readiness for successful implementation—included the following subcategories:

- Provider ensures initial commitment from schools.
- Provider tracks and supports full implementation in schools.
- Provider helps schools allocate resources needed to fully implement the CSR model.

Qualitative researchers used the information synthesized in the Model Description Form (from QRT Part 1) to rate the three subcategories using a specific rubric. Next, these three ratings were averaged to determine the rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation. In general, a model’s rating was based on evidence of the following: a formal or informal process for establishing an initial understanding of the model, strategies to develop faculty buy-in, formal or informal benchmarks for all or some of its core components, and a formal or informal process for the allocation of such school resources as materials, staffing, and time.

The second question—does the CSR model provide schools with professional development and technical assistance needed to help teachers implement the model—included the following subcategories:

- Provider offers comprehensive training opportunities and supporting materials.

- Provider ensures that professional development effectively supports full model implementation.
- Provider develops school’s internal capacity to provide professional development.

Again, each subcategory received a rating. The three ratings were averaged to determine the rating for evidence of professional development and technical assistance for successful implementation. In general, a model’s rating was based on evidence of the following: a variety of training opportunities, supporting materials for professional development in all or some of its core components, and a formal or informal plan to help build a school’s capacity to provide professional development.

In addition to the ratings across these five categories, the qualitative data gathered in QRT Part 1, such as the artifacts and phone conversations, were synthesized into a narrative description of each CSR model. Each narrative includes in-depth information about the CSR model’s costs and descriptions of the following components: organization and governance; curriculum and instruction; scheduling and grouping; technology; monitoring of student progress; parent, family, and community involvement; professional development and technical assistance; and implementation expectations and benchmarks.

In all, qualitative and quantitative data were mapped to rate a CSR model on main categories:

- Evidence of positive effects on student achievement
- Evidence of positive effects on additional outcomes
- Evidence of positive effects on parent, family, and community outcomes
- Evidence of link between research and the model’s design
- Evidence of services and support to schools to enable successful implementation

The quantitative data provided a systematic literature review of the reported effects of student achievement and other outcome variables. CSR models that have relatively more literature consisting of evaluation studies were more likely to achieve higher ratings in Categories 1–3 (as long as results demonstrated positive impact). Furthermore, by using qualitative data, newer CSR models or those that do not have a substantial number of evaluation reports can be evaluated on dimensions such as professional development. Although past research on student achievement offers important considerations for education consumers, they may also consider whether the CSR model’s design is based on solid research and provides a strong commitment to support schools through professional development and technical assistance. Newer models may not have had sufficient time to conduct research on their effectiveness, but they ought to be able to clearly demonstrate that they *can work*, that is, that the model’s design is based on solid evidence of *what works*. Hence, by using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the CSRQ Center strives to provide the education consumer with a thorough and systematic description of the effectiveness of each CSR model reviewed in this report.

By using qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate the effectiveness of widely implemented CSR models, this study also strives to provide usable information to education consumers. U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings recently stated that the No Child Left Behind Act “rests on the common sense principles of accountability for results, data-based decision making, high expectations for all, and empowering change” (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Meeting these goals will require a significant expansion of information for education consumers about what works. This report is intended to act as a decision-support tool for educators wishing to find effective CSR approaches for meeting locally defined needs. It helps to provide such information and will help

increase its use in education decision making—marking a significant change in the culture of the education system to meet the needs of educators, policymakers, community leaders, families, and most importantly, America's children.

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Accelerated Schools PLUS—Elementary

Overview: Basic Model Information and Quality Review Results

Model Name: Accelerated Schools: Powerful Learning Unlimited Success (AS PLUS)

Model Mission/Focus: The mission of AS PLUS is to enrich the lives of all students, especially those who live in poverty and have a history of low academic performance and remediation, through a school environment characterized by accelerated instruction with high expectations and teaching methods traditionally reserved for only high achieving students.

Year Introduced in Schools: 1986

Grade Levels Served: K–12



Number of Schools

| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: |
|--------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| 143 | 113 | 3 | 27 |
| | Elementary: | Middle: | High: |
| | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Costs

| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|--------|
| Year 1 | \$61,500 | \$40,500 | \$3,000 | Varies | Varies |
| Year 2 | \$61,500 | \$40,500 | \$3,000 | Varies | Varies |
| Year 3 | \$51,000 | \$40,500 | \$3,000 | Varies | Varies |
| Years 4+ | \$15,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement:

- a. Evidence of positive overall effects 
- b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations 
- c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas:
Reading and math 

2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Student Outcomes





3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement



4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design



5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation:

- a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation 
- b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation 

 = Very Strong
  = Moderately Strong
  = Moderate
  = Limited
  = Zero
  = Negative
  = No Rating

This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by "N/A."

Model Description

The Accelerated Schools (AS) project began at Stanford University as a comprehensive approach to school change that focuses on students from at-risk communities. Dr. Henry Levin began to challenge the idea that struggling students should be remediated and proposed a new schooling system in which all students have access to instructional strategies that are usually reserved for gifted and talented students. In 1986, the first AS was introduced in the San Francisco Bay area. In 2003, AS piloted its first high school. AS operates seven AS high schools in seven states.

The National Center for Accelerated Schools established several regional centers in 1989 to support and monitor the growth of the AS comprehensive school reform model. In 2000, the National Center for Accelerated Schools moved its headquarters to the University of Connecticut and now maintains a partnership with the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT). In 2003, the AS project was renamed Accelerated Schools PLUS (Powerful Learning Unlimited Success).

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center's standards, the following were identified as core components of AS PLUS: organization and governance; professional development; instruction; inclusion; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation of the model.

Model Mission/Focus

According to AS PLUS, the model's mission is to enrich the lives of all students, especially those who live in poverty and have a history of low academic performance and remediation, through a school environment characterized by accelerated instruction with high

expectations and teaching methods traditionally reserved for only the high achieving students. The AS PLUS model is a learning philosophy accompanied by a process for change. The transformation process greatly emphasizes placing school governance and decision making in the hands of school staff, parents, and students so they can take responsibility for the transformation of their own school culture and practices.

Goals/Rationale

According to the model, the goal of AS PLUS is to create Powerful Learning opportunities for all students. Powerful Learning is an instructional philosophy that integrates three elements of accelerated instruction: materials, learning opportunities, and classroom settings. The model believes that by building on the strengths of students, the school can use instructional strategies traditionally reserved for gifted students to accelerate the learning of all students. Each Accelerated School is expected to create its own Powerful Learning experiences based on its unique needs, strengths, and vision. Through Powerful Learning, the model believes students are actively engaged and allowed to take ownership of their learning, thus accelerating achievement.

Costs

The total operating cost for one school is \$61,500 for each of the first 3 years. In the 4th year, operating costs are lowered to \$15,000. The cost breakdown includes \$36,000 for onsite professional development, \$4,500 for offsite professional development, and \$3,000 for materials. The remaining costs cover additional personnel, travel costs, and overhead costs.

The model costs include 18 days of onsite professional development; coaching assistance and support; a minimum of 4 days of offsite professional development sessions for a team of staff members; training materials, including five copies of the *Accelerated Schools Resource*

Guide (Hopfenberg, Levin, & Chase, 1993); an introductory video; instructional materials for all staff members; several books, including *In Search of Understanding: The Case for the Constructivist Classroom* (Brooks & Brooks, 1999), *Accelerating the Learning of all Students* (Finnan & Swanson, 2000), and *Using Data to Improve Student Learning in Elementary Schools* (Bernhardt, 2003); ongoing assessments of AS PLUS implementation and student achievement; annual diagnostic assessments of school progress; access to national faculty and NRC/GT resources; five regional or national conference registrations; technical assistance via phone, fax, and e-mail; membership in the AS PLUS national network, and a subscription to the newsletter and the project's electronic network. Additional costs include release time for the entire teaching staff for 2 days of initial training and 4 days of additional training during the 1st year. More specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel can be obtained directly from the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ●

The CSRQ Center reviewed 39 quantitative studies for effects of AS PLUS on student achievement. Three studies met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of these three studies to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results of the studies. About one third of the results reported in these studies demonstrated a positive effect of AS PLUS on student achievement. The average effect size for significant results was +0.76. The results of this review are consistent with an overall rating of moderate for the effects of AS PLUS on student achievement. The three studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards are described below. (Appendix A reports on the other

36 studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards.)

Two of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards and are considered to be conclusive used quasi-experimental, matched comparison group designs. One of these studies compared first- and second-grade students in seven schools implementing AS PLUS with students using locally developed programs on reading achievement as measured by three subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test and the Oral Reading subtest of the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty. AS PLUS students scored lower than comparison students on passage comprehension and oral reading skills. No statistical differences were found among students on the other two Woodcock subtests. The second study compared achievement of students in grades 2–5 at three schools implementing AS PLUS with students in 61 schools that were not using AS PLUS. The schools were located in an urban, low socioeconomic status (SES), high minority district in the south-central part of the United States. TerraNova assessment was used to measure achievement in reading, language, math, science, and social sciences. Results indicated a positive effect of AS PLUS on reading. The effect size was +1.29. Results in the other subject areas were not statistically significant (likely because too few schools in the sample were using AS PLUS) but were all positive and had moderate to large effect sizes.

A third study used a longitudinal cohort design with backward-looking interrupted time series analysis to compare the reading and math achievement of third-grade students on state standardized tests. The study was conducted over 8 years in eight schools that were in years 3–5 of AS PLUS implementation. The schools were located in multiple states across the nation and served primarily low SES, minority students. Results showed little change in the first 4 years of implementation, but by the 5th year, AS PLUS was having a statistically significant positive effect in reading and math. The average effect size was +0.22.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

No studies of AS PLUS that met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design examined effects for diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

Three studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards and were considered to be conclusive examined the effect of AS PLUS on reading achievement. One study demonstrated negative effects. The other two studies found significant positive effects: One used schools as the unit of analysis and reported an effect size of +1.29, and the other used students as the unit of analysis and reported an effect size of +0.19. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

Two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards and were considered to be conclusive examined the effect of AS PLUS on math achievement. One study did not find significant results, and the other study demonstrated a significant positive effect, with an effect size of +0.24. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design included measures of classroom and school climate. On student perceptions

of their learning environment and motivation for learning, results indicated improvements during the 1st year of AS PLUS implementation, relative to students at control schools. Teacher perceptions of school climate improved from baseline ratings to 1 year after AS PLUS implementation, but the improvement was not significantly different from that of control schools. Because only one study examined these outcomes, the rating for this category is limited.

Of note, a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that research provides evidence of positive effects. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met the CSRQ Center's standards in this category. AS PLUS is commended for offering additional detailed evidence that met the CSRQ Center's standards in this category.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

No studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the impact of AS PLUS on parent, family, or community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, explicit citations support the following core components of AS PLUS: organization and governance, professional development, instruction, inclusion, student assessment, and data-based decision making. However, the model did not provide explicit citations for its family and community involvement component. Therefore, the rating for this category is moderately strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, AS PLUS offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, AS PLUS only offers an informal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. AS PLUS provides formal benchmarks for implementation in the form of TRACES (Tools for Reflection, Assessment, and Continuous Evaluation of Schools). Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderately strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, AS PLUS provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model's core components. AS PLUS also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Each school using the AS PLUS model is either a K–8 Accelerated School or 9–12 Accelerated High School. Both models follow the same philosophy of Powerful Learning and use the same strategies for change.

However, the Accelerated High Schools also use an “inquiry academy” to increase student achievement. An Accelerated High School consists of several small “inquiry academies” that are supported by local corporations and community agencies. Each student, faculty member, and parent elects to join an academy. AS PLUS believes that this process of choice creates a culture of achievement in which all stakeholders take responsibility for their own learning. Within each academy, students complete “inquiry projects” that link classroom learning to specific careers and vocations. Both types of schools (K–8 and 9–12) are expected to commit to a 5-year partnership with the district and AS PLUS.

AS PLUS recommends that middle and high schools interested in participating expose all school staff to the AS PLUS philosophy before applying to the national center. The model also encourages interested schools to speak with coaches and principals currently implementing the model and to host meetings with school community members to introduce them to the AS PLUS process. After the initial exploration phase, members of the school community are encouraged to visit existing AS PLUS schools to observe the model and to ask any additional questions regarding implementation. At this stage, schools begin to consider potential individuals to fill the coaching position and submit an application to the national center. AS PLUS requires a 90% teacher buy-in before a school can be accepted to participate.

After the application is accepted, schools follow a four-step start-up phase prior to full implementation. The first step involves taking stock of the school's starting point by organizing the entire school community to consider important questions about the school, research potential answers, and explore all the facts. The information collected should include a history of the school, the curriculum, and instructional practices currently used; a detailed description of student and

community characteristics; and a depiction of the school by its staff.

The second step requests that each school create a shared vision that is unanimously agreed upon by the school community. During the third step, schools establish priorities for action. Creating a school governance structure is the fourth and final step before full implementation can commence.

The new governance structure should include a three-tier system: (1) the school as a whole (SAW) committee, (2) a steering committee, and (3) cadres of committees to focus on specific priorities. The groups build on the work of each in a cooperative manner with final decisions made by the SAW. The members of these groups use specific problem-solving and decision-making strategies provided by the model such as consensus building, collaboration, and using data and assessment strategies to improve student achievement.

School principals are required to take an active role in the implementation process through attending conferences, sharing in decision making, granting release time, assisting coaches, and attending staff training. The national center provides each school with an assessment toolkit used to monitor progress. The toolkit provides timelines, checklists, and tools for observations. Self-assessments are ongoing, and coaches are trained to provide guidance during the assessment process.

The model requires each school to have a coach and recommends that schools also have an internal facilitator. The coach position may be filled by someone from a nearby university, the state department of education, or the district. The coach acts as a resource to guide a school community through the transformation into an Accelerated School. Coaches support the schools in making changes over time by monitoring and assisting with the implementation but are not held responsible for evaluating staff members. Coaches are required to spend at least 50% of their time supporting

implementation in K–8 schools and 25% of their time supporting implementation in 9–12 schools.

The internal facilitator acts as a teacher leader who is granted release time to assist the coach in providing training and follow-up guidance throughout the model implementation process.

Curriculum and Instruction

AS PLUS does not require that a specific curriculum be implemented in any subject area. However, AS PLUS recommends that schools implementing the model adopt curricula that provide enriched instruction; emphasize language development in all subject areas, including math and science; and focus on problem-solving and higher order analytical skills. Teachers are encouraged to use the inquiry process to select materials and to work as a team in constructing units, lessons, and learning experiences.

AS PLUS schools establish common curricular objectives for all students. During implementation, AS PLUS encourages teachers to use teacher-developed materials some of the time. After implementation, teachers begin using these materials more frequently. These items may include daily practice materials, specialized units of instruction, selected books, and curriculum maps.

AS PLUS requires that all schools use the Powerful Learning instructional philosophy across all subject areas. The Powerful Learning approach integrates the following three elements of acceleration: what students need to know, how students are engaged in the learning experience, and the context or learning environment to support their learning. Powerful Learning includes five basic components:

- Authentic—engaging students in authentic activities
- Interactive—involving all teachers in sharing ideas and concerns

- Learner centered—addressing specific interests of students
- Inclusive—creating opportunities for active learning
- Continuous—helping students make interdisciplinary connections in what they learn

Through Powerful Learning, teachers encourage students to use their diverse cultural and daily experiences to become the subjects of their own education. For example, the benchmarks for authentic learning provide teachers with a list of ways students can be more engaged in learning activities, such as incorporating real-life situations within lesson plans.

Additional recommended instructional practices include small-group instruction, hands-on activities, discussion, cooperative learning, content reading strategies, and cross-age tutoring. More strategies for improvement of instruction are provided in the TRACES toolkit.

Scheduling and Grouping

AS PLUS does not require any specific scheduling changes, although some schools may opt to make scheduling changes due to the interdisciplinary nature of the model. Schools are expected to assess the need for any necessary changes through the inquiry process at the beginning of implementation.

AS PLUS recommends that students be instructed in both small groups and individually. Grouping strategies are flexible, and determining factors may include interest, readiness, and preferred ways to demonstrate competence. AS PLUS emphasizes differentiated instruction for both small groups and individual instruction.

According to the AS PLUS philosophy, all students are treated as gifted and talented and every student needs to receive the same accelerated instruction. AS PLUS places a strong emphasis on including students in the mainstream, including those from different ethnicities

and socioeconomic backgrounds, special needs students, and English language learners.

Technology

AS PLUS does not expect schools to incorporate technology within the model's implementation. However, if a school chooses to use computers as part of its instructional model, AS PLUS does offer computer modules that incorporate the Powerful Learning framework within instructional practices. Additionally, AS PLUS provides e-mail discussion groups and an online information clearinghouse to assist coaching activities and other implementation activities in participating schools.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

AS PLUS is a data-driven process and provides each participating school with an assessment toolkit, TRACES, to assist with data collection. The toolkit was redesigned in 2003 to reflect the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the guidance provided by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

The assessment toolkit includes checklists, questionnaires, and protocols for observing both school and student progress. These tools may be used to assess progress against benchmarks; guide classroom, steering committee, and cadre observations; provide interview protocols; and support schoolwide assessment and coaching activities. The school staff uses these data collection tools to assist with the data-based decision-making process encouraged by the model.

For example, classroom observations are part of a multiple assessment approach used to construct a thorough understanding of the AS PLUS Powerful Learning framework, which is a key component in

achieving successful implementation of the model according to the provider. Linked with data accumulated through the Powerful Learning Questionnaire, interviews, and schoolwide observation notes, information gathered through multiple observations of every classroom allows participating schools to create a “complete picture” of schoolwide activities as the school progresses through the implementation process. These assessments provide feedback to teachers that they can use to adjust their classroom teaching practices for the benefit of all students.

The data collection toolkit is designed to help each school reflect upon and evaluate its own work to develop action plans as needed and to make continuous progress in student achievement. The local provider and the national center use the toolkit to ensure that each school’s needs are met and to monitor the effectiveness of AS PLUS nationwide.

The TRACES toolkit is designed to monitor a school’s progress over the course of 1 year. Schools should use the assessment tools annually and the data portfolio should be updated continually as new information becomes available to the school. AS PLUS provides coaches with training on how to guide a school through the TRACES process.

Family and Community Involvement

AS PLUS requires community and family membership on the school governance committee. Prior to implementation, parents are expected to agree to the goals of the AS PLUS model, which include a list of the specific obligations of parents, students, and school staff. Parents help make school decisions by joining various task forces and serving on the steering committee. According to AS PLUS, parental involvement in school activities is increased when schools follow the model requirements.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

AS PLUS works with each school to reinforce the school’s capacity for improvement through continual professional development. The model’s formal professional development plan includes mentorship from the national center or a regional center, phone calls, site visits, retreats, and a continual exchange of ideas and materials with the national center and other Accelerated Schools. Schools have access to the model’s newsletter, e-mail discussion group, and information clearinghouse.

AS PLUS distributes the formal professional development plan to all schools and covers topics that provide a research-based model for improving student achievement; involve students, parents, and community members in the school in a collaborative effort; and provide a “process” that changes the way the school meets individual needs of all students.

AS PLUS expects participating schools to commit to a minimum 5-year partnership to ensure successful implementation. To assist schools in achieving this goal, AS PLUS provides a detailed year-by-year breakdown of the elements necessary to succeed.

In the 1st year of implementation, schools assess their needs, develop goals, and create a plan that will help them achieve their stated goals. AS PLUS provides 18 days of onsite professional development for school personnel and 4 days of networkwide training sessions for five representatives (a team) from the school. During the 18 days of onsite training, model staff covers such topics as setting priorities, establishing school governance, and developing a community-owned vision. The offsite sessions discuss school leadership, collegial coaching, and strategies to meet the needs of students. These sessions also provide opportunities to network with other schools. The model provides the materials and technical assistance that the schools need to be successful.

During years 2 and 3 of AS PLUS implementation, schools again receive 18 days of onsite training, mentoring, and coaching that move beyond the initial tasks identified in year 1 and focus on specific needs of that school. The 4 days of offsite sessions are again provided for school teams. These training sessions can help schools prepare and support new team members and become more familiar with AS PLUS national faculty and resources. The focus on what tasks lay ahead in the implementation process is narrowed to meet more specific challenges to implementation.

In the 4th year and beyond, AS PLUS determines the number of onsite training days that are necessary through a diagnostic assessment and a review of the school action plan. The model provides two 4-day offsite sessions for school teams during the 4th year. Topics included in these years mirror those of the first 3 years, although each year allows more focus as the school gets closer to successfully completing its implementation of the model. The model also provides an assessment tool through which schools are able to gauge their implementation progress.

Beginning in year 1, both the external coach and internal facilitator are trained at an AS PLUS regional center and attend monthly follow-up training sessions. The external coach and internal facilitator are trained in a 5-day session at AS PLUS regional centers and attend additional 2-day training sessions each month. The model provides an assessment tool through which schools are able to gauge their implementation progress.

AS PLUS provides technical assistance through its regional centers, e-mail discussion groups, and online information clearinghouse to assist teachers as they work through AS PLUS model implementation activities in participating schools. The regional centers are located in the western, central, southeastern, and northeastern regions of the country. The model also publishes a newsletter, *Imagine*, several times each school year that provides profiles of AS PLUS schools

and includes articles of interest for those schools implementing the model.

Additionally, AS PLUS sponsors an annual national or regional conference and provides a leadership conference for participants to gain additional knowledge about the model from others working to implement it. Leadership and regional conferences are provided for specific audiences. For example, a leadership conference might be held for principals, coaches, and others working on their 1st year of model implementation.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The AS PLUS national center provides each school with the TRACES assessment tool and a formal set of benchmarks used to monitor progress toward implementation. Specific benchmarks are provided through TRACES for nine categories identified by AS PLUS as “demonstrated” implementation of the model: philosophy, principles, values, vision, inquiry process, governance structure, Powerful Learning, academic achievement, and schoolwide strategies for acceleration.

In addition, each category may include one or more of the components that lead schools in the direction of successful implementation of the model. For example, in the Powerful Learning category, TRACES lists key benchmarks for authentic, interactive, learner-centered, inclusive, and continuous learning. According to the model, the key to authentic learning lies in the belief that “[e]very student demonstrates his/her learning through the creation of authentic products, and performances.” Likewise, the model states that “Every student is engaged in differentiated content, process and products based upon his/her needs, interests, and strengths to accelerate learning” which it lists as a key benchmark.

According to AS PLUS, components in the TRACES toolkit, especially the interviewing exercises, allow teachers opportunities to express opinions and

concerns about the AS PLUS model implementation and the challenges they encounter while active in the process. Classroom observation checklists, provided in the TRACES toolkit and conducted by AS PLUS national faculty members, provide feedback to teachers about their teaching practices, how their practices are working or not working, and what changes might be useful to improve them. Additionally, the schoolwide assessment portfolio helps teachers complete their implementation tasks by providing clearly defined timelines.

Data are collected through checklists, observations, and self-assessments provided by TRACES and are used to establish goals for subsequent years and to adjust model implementation as needed. The role of the AS PLUS coach is to use these tools to provide feedback and guidance to schools and their staff, keeping them on track to achieve successful implementation of the AS PLUS model.

Special Considerations

AS PLUS requires schools to enter into a partnership agreement that ensures a 5-year commitment to the model. The transformation process for an AS PLUS school generally takes 3–5 years. According to AS PLUS, regional AS centers and schools are mutually committed to the model's implementation: The regional centers commit to providing professional services to support the implementation process, and the schools commit to the change process for successful implementation. AS PLUS views itself as a process rather than a product.

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M odel Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Conclusive)

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America's Choice School Design—Elementary

Overview: Basic Model Information and Review Results

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Model Name: | America's Choice School Design (America's Choice) |
| Model Mission/Focus: | America's Choice is a standards-based model that seeks to ensure that all students are successful on local and state assessments, are prepared to do college-level work without remediation, and are ready to participate in today's economy. |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1998 |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 |


Number of Schools

| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: |
|--------|-------------|-----------|--------|
| 364 | 239 | 51 | 74 |
| | Elementary: | Middle: | High: |
| | 234 | 104 | 26 |

Costs¹

| | Total Operating Costs (for basic elementary school design) | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
|----------|--|-----------|------------|------------|--------|
| Year 1 | \$75,000–\$110,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$75,000–\$110,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | \$75,000–\$110,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | \$25,000–\$60,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement:



- a. Evidence of positive overall effects 
- b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations 
- c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas:
Reading, math, and writing 

2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation:

- a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation 
- b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation 

 = Very Strong
  = Moderately Strong
  = Moderate
  = Limited
  = Zero
  = Negative
  = No Rating

This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.

¹America's Choice also offers, at a higher cost, an intensive version of the design. Refer to the section titled "Costs" for additional details and costs regarding the intensive design.

Model Description

America's Choice School Design (America's Choice), originally known as the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, began in 1989 as a project partially funded by the New American Schools Development Corporation. The design results from a study by The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) on the best educational practices in the United States and abroad. NCEE presented the framework for America's Choice in the NCEE 1990 report and introduced the model to schools in 1998.

Currently, America's Choice provides six regional networks to support implementation of the model throughout the United States: Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Central, Southwest, and Pacific. Additionally, the model hosts a national conference each year for educators to share ideas, to deepen their knowledge of the design, and to listen to national experts on school improvement.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of America's Choice: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

The mission of America's Choice is to ensure that all students are successful on local and state assessments and are prepared to do college-level work without remediation. America's Choice has model designs for elementary, middle, K–8, and high schools. The model generally works directly with schools but can also work with states and districts on strategies for raising

student achievement. For example, Mississippi has contracted directly with America's Choice to use the design throughout the state under the name Mississippi's Choice. Massachusetts and Arkansas have also identified America's Choice as a partner for schools and districts that face restructuring.

America's Choice focuses on five design tasks: (1) standards and assessments; (2) aligned instructional systems; (3) high-performance management, leadership, and organization; (4) professional learning communities; and (5) parent/guardian and community involvement. The design elements are interdependent and require that each school set high expectations for all students and clearly communicate those expectations.

Goals/Rationale

America's Choice seeks to provide teachers and schools with a coherent standards-based educational system. America's Choice works with districts and schools to align classroom instruction with state standards and assessments. Through ongoing analysis of student assessment data and student work, teachers learn to focus instruction on identified needs and move students toward attainment of standards.

America's Choice aims to prevent student failure by early intervention and acceleration rather than remediation.

Costs

In the first 3 years of adoption, costs will vary depending on the type of school, enrollment, and other factors. For example, the average cost of America's Choice for a school with fewer than 700 students is \$75,000 per year. For schools with over 700 students, the cost is \$95,000 or higher per year. Implementation costs for year 4 and beyond average \$25,000–\$60,000 per year.

America's Choice professional development, materials, and onsite technical assistance are included in the

model costs. Other implementation-related costs not covered by the model cost include student materials, salaries for coaches, assessments, and release time for staff to attend professional development sessions. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ①

The CSRQ Center reviewed 17 quantitative studies for effects of America's Choice on student achievement.² Seven of these studies met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. The Center considers six of the seven studies' findings *conclusive*, which means that the Center has confidence in the results reported. The Center considers the findings of one study *suggestive*, because a less rigorous research design was used, which means that the Center has limited confidence in its findings. Because (a) mixed results suggested both a positive impact and no effect of America's Choice and (b) the average effect size of the positive effects was +0.19, the overall rating of the effects of America's Choice on student achievement is moderate. The studies that met standards are described below. (Appendix B reports on the other 10 studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The six studies that met standards and are considered conclusive used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design to examine the model's impact in several states in different regions of the United States, among primarily low socioeconomic status (SES) students in schools with large minority populations. These studies had large sample sizes and used advanced

statistical analyses to examine differences in achievement in reading, math, and writing between America's Choice students and comparison students over time.

One study examined the value-added effects of America's Choice on student achievement in grades 1–3 in a large number of schools in the Northeast over an 11-year period. Results were positive on both reading and math standardized state tests, yielding an average effect size of +0.22. This study also provided evidence that America's Choice benefited low-achieving students in math and African American and Hispanic students in math and reading.

A second study compared students in grades 4–6 in 38 America's Choice schools with those in 53 non-America's Choice schools (that were using other reform models) in the same state. The study examined differences on state reading, math, and writing tests and found mixed results. Schools that implemented America's Choice in the 1st year of the study showed no differences on reading and math, but America's Choice students outperformed comparison students on writing tests. No differences were found among fifth and sixth graders in schools that implemented America's Choice 1 year later, but America's Choice students in the fourth grade scored higher than comparison students in all three subjects. The average effect size of the positive effects was +0.11.

Three studies compared America's Choice students in three school districts with students in a matched sample of similar schools in the same districts that did not use America's Choice. Two of the districts were located in the Northeast and one in the South Atlantic. The schools included minority populations that were primarily low SES. One of these studies reported results for students in grades 2–6. On the standardized state reading test, second, fifth, and sixth graders in America's Choice schools significantly outperformed comparison students (average effect size of +0.30), and although

²Three separate studies were reported in one paper, therefore there are 14 citations.

third and fourth graders showed a similar pattern, the differences were not significant. On the standardized state math test, a positive impact of America's Choice was reported for third, fifth, and sixth graders (average effect size of +0.29), but there were no differences among fourth graders, and among second graders, America's Choice students scored lower than comparison students. The report on the second district observed no positive impact of America's Choice on fourth- and fifth-grade reading scores, but fourth graders outperformed comparison students in both math and writing (average effect size of +0.17). In the third district, the impact of America's Choice on reading and math statewide tests was examined for grades 3–5. Fourth-grade reading scores were higher for America's Choice students than comparison students (effect size of +0.30), but there were negative effects for fifth graders and no significant differences for third graders in reading or in any grade on math achievement.

The sixth study that met standards and is considered conclusive compared cohorts of fifth graders in 109 America's Choice and comparison schools on state writing tests 1 year before and after America's Choice was adopted. With a large sample size of almost 9,500 students, results showed that gains at America's Choice schools were significantly greater than those at comparison schools. The difference had an effect size of +0.09.

The one study that met CSRQ standards and is considered suggestive examined fourth and fifth grade cohorts over 6 years at 24 America's Choice schools in the South Central region. The study reported mainly positive trends over time in both math and reading, though they were not tested for statistical significance.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

The study that met the CSRQ Center standards and examined the effects of America's Choice over an

11-year period examined subsamples of African American, Hispanic, and low-achieving students. Results demonstrated a positive impact on reading and math achievement on statewide tests for African-American students (average effect size of +0.22), Hispanic students (average effect size of +0.43), and low-achieving students (average effect size of +0.58). While these results are promising, there were no other studies of the effects of America's Choice on the achievement of diverse populations. Therefore, the rating in this category is limited. It is important to note that a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that a model provides evidence of positive impact for specific diverse student populations. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center provided evidence that met CSRQ Center standards in this category. America's Choice is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met CSRQ Center standards in this category.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

Five of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards demonstrated some positive impact on reading achievement in grade levels ranging from 1–5 (results were mixed by grade, as detailed above). The average effect size for reading achievement is +0.20. These findings are consistent with a rating of moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

Five of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards demonstrated some positive impact on math achievement that varied by grade level. The average effect size for math achievement was +0.17. These findings are consistent with a rating of moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Writing

Rating: ●

Three studies of America's Choice that met CSRQ Center standards examined the model's effects on student achievement in writing. Findings in these studies demonstrated a positive impact of America's Choice on writing. On fourth-grade writing assessments, America's Choice students outperformed comparison students in all three studies. The average effect size for writing across these studies was +0.16. These findings are consistent with a rating of moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

The seven studies of America's Choice that met CSRQ Center standards focused on student achievement; they did not examine additional outcomes. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no outcomes measuring parent, family, or community involvement in the five studies of America's Choice that met CSRQ Center standards, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, there are explicit citations to support all the core

components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and family and community involvement. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, and capacity building. However, the model does not offer professional development specifically designed for new staff. The model also provides supporting materials for professional development that address *most* of its core components. Additionally, the model offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the

CSRQ Center standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is moderately strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

In order to adopt the America's Choice model, a school must have a substantial majority of the faculty buy-in before implementation. Full implementation of the model takes place over 5 years. During implementation, the model requires several changes in the organization and governance of the school. America's Choice requires schools to hire additional personnel, use the required materials and assessments, participate in the America's Choice National Conference by sending a team of at least three staff members, provide safety nets for students that need additional support, secure district support, reserve adequate funding for continued implementation, and participate in outside evaluations.

The principal acts as the instructional leader to guide the implementation process. In this role, the principal participates in professional development through regional academies and networks. The principal also oversees the school's leadership team and business partners in implementing the design. In order to facilitate teacher growth through professional development, the principal must also grant release time for teachers to attend professional development and establish common planning periods. At the district level, there must be support for implementation including the purchase of materials and the allowance for site-based autonomy for certain activities such as professional development.

America's Choice requires each school to provide release time for two staff members: the primary coach and the upper elementary coach. The primary coach

oversees the implementation of the literacy model in grades K–2, and the upper elementary coach oversees the implementation of the program in grades 3–5. Salaries for these staff members are not included in the model costs.

Large elementary schools may also designate an administrator to assist the principal in leading implementation of the design. Additionally, schools designate lead teachers who provide instructional leadership by receiving training and then implementing the strategies and routines in their classrooms. Furthermore, a parent community outreach coordinator is available to help parents understand the model and ways they can support their children's education. This position is usually filled by a PTA president or another parent already active in the school community.

The coaches for literacy and lead teachers for math work together to deliver professional development, coach classroom teachers, support the staff in analyzing student assessment data, and identify needed steps to move students toward meeting the standards. Both of the coaching positions are full time. The two coaches and math lead teacher need to have prior teaching experience and be specialists in reading, math, or science.

At each school, the principal forms a leadership team comprised of the principal, the primary coach, the upper elementary coach, the math lead teacher, the parent/community outreach coordinator, and additional faculty members selected by the administration. The leadership team sets schoolwide targets for achievement and oversees the use of data to guide instruction.

In addition to the staffing requirements, America's Choice advocates smaller learning communities. The model believes that no elementary school should have more than 400 students. In communities where larger elementary schools exist, the model requires that the schools divide into smaller communities.

These “houses” should have no more than 300–400 students each.

Within the houses, teachers are required to stay with the same group of students for 2 or more years. Teachers are expected to plan each student’s program for more than 1 year and to regularly communicate with his or her parents. After grade 3, each teacher specializes in two or three subject areas rather than teaching every subject area. The model believes that by focusing on only a few subject areas, teachers are better equipped to prepare their students for high school and beyond.

Curriculum and Instruction

The America’s Choice model offers specific curricula for reading, writing, and math. Dedicated instructional blocks for specific subjects are divided into three segments referred to as workshops. During these workshops, teachers practice whole-class as well as one-on-one and small-group instruction. America’s Choice provides teachers with sample lessons and practice test materials to guide implementation. Teachers learn to differentiate instruction using a workshop model.

Literacy Instruction. America’s Choice requires a 2.5-hour block for literacy instruction for the early grades and a 2-hour block in the intermediate grades. During this block, there is one-half hour of skills instruction, which includes phonics, grammar, spelling, and diction; a 1-hour reading workshop; and a 1-hour writing workshop. The workshops are designed to help students develop strong reading and writing skills through the use of rituals and routines, which promote effective learning and teaching. The literacy model is based on the National Research Council’s definitions of effective teaching and includes oral language, letter recognition, phonemic awareness, decoding skills, comprehension, writing,

spelling, grammar, and opportunities for frequent reading and writing.

Math. The model employs a 1-hour instructional block designed to empower students to learn and master skills. Based on the findings of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, America’s Choice prepares students for advanced math in the upper grades, using an integrated approach to building skills, solving problems, and understanding concepts. Math specialists teach a series of integrated units called Core Assignments, which augment the core curriculum.

The model has “safety net” programs, including one-on-one and small group tutoring, for students who are not making adequate progress. These programs can take place before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer. Extended-day classes and access to community programs are additional resources used by the model to help students meet the model’s standards.

Scheduling and Grouping

America’s Choice has several scheduling requirements for each grade level that are referred to as the “master schedule.” In grades K–3, America’s Choice requires dedicated instructional blocks: 2.5 hours for reading instruction and 1 hour for math instruction. The model also recommends science, art, and music instruction for 2 hours a week each. Lessons in all subject areas should also include literacy and math instruction.

The schedule for the upper elementary grades should include 2 hours daily for instruction in reading, writing, and literacy; and 1 hour in math. Scheduling should also include time each week for teachers to plan collaboratively by subject area as well as by grade level and to analyze and discuss student performance in order to adjust instruction.

The model states that it offers inclusion guidance for teachers working with students who have special needs and English language learners and recommends an extended-day format for all students. Students are grouped for instruction both individually and in small groups based on progress assessments, observations, and skill mastery. America's Choice schools are required to offer either full-day kindergarten or half-day kindergarten and half-day preschool.

Technology

America's Choice recommends, but does not require, the use of computers for both instructional and non-instructional purposes. According to the model developer, technology can be integrated into the design as a tool to support student learning, but not as a machine to deliver instruction. Students may use technology to revise written work, practice targeted skills, or to access data and information. Technology is also integrated into professional development sessions to enhance the learning experience for teachers, principals, and coaches.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

America's Choice uses a variety of assessments and strategies to monitor student progress including teacher-developed assessments and commercial or state assessments. The model also expects teachers to use the Developmental Reading Assessment to monitor student progress in reading three times a year.

Data-based decision making is a core component of the model. The results from state assessments and ongoing formative assessments guide instructional planning and schoolwide goals. Teachers meet in study groups or other meeting formats to discuss and analyze the results from ongoing progress monitoring to guide daily instruction.

Each year, schools receive implementation rubrics that describe expectations in the critical areas of instructional leadership and management, literacy and math assessment and instruction, professional development, and parent and community involvement. Based on these rubrics, America's Choice staff members perform quality reviews of program implementation twice a year with the school's leadership team and plan next steps based on the results of the review.

Family and Community Involvement

America's Choice requires schools to appoint a parent community outreach coordinator. The coordinator encourages parental involvement through a variety of activities such as Home-School notebooks, parent workshops, Book-of-the-Month, and the 25 Books Campaign. The Home-School notebooks are blank notebooks distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year. Students are responsible for taking the notebooks back and forth, between parent and teacher, as each writes comments and questions for the other.

America's Choice also expects parents and guardians to monitor and guide students' literacy progress at home. For example, in the early grades, parents are expected to listen to their children reading aloud for 20 minutes every night. In later grades, parents must monitor their children's reading activities to ensure the appropriate books are being read.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

America's Choice provides professional development and technical assistance to schools prior to and during implementation. The model requires teachers, administrators, and specialized personnel to participate in professional development workshops and training sessions. These sessions are also available to district leaders, although they are not required. America's Choice developers believe professional development

must help teachers connect their work with student performance standards, be intensive and sustained, relate to teacher experience with students, and be content-focused and connected to other school improvement and change. America's Choice customizes the professional development plan based on each school's individual needs. The model also conducts semi-annual implementation checks and provides feedback to schools regarding progress.

Prior to implementation, school faculty members take part in an onsite workshop that provides an understanding of the America's Choice School Design. The workshop lasts for 2 full days and allows all staff to learn about the model, analyze their school data, and be introduced to standards-based reform. During implementation, teachers participate in onsite study groups and teacher meetings. The coaches create model classrooms through lesson demonstrations and collaborative work with the classroom teacher that become a professional development tool for all teachers.

Principals and design coaches also attend regional academies and networks prior to implementation. Their professional development provides a deeper understanding of the model to facilitate their leadership roles in its implementation. The primary and upper elementary coaches and the math lead teachers attend offsite institutes, which focus on the model's approach to teaching and learning.

All of the model's professional development trainers are required to attend a year-long "boot camp" through its national institute and to be certified in a major subject area. At the end of the boot camp, America's Choice National College certifies the trainers in the America's Choice School Design.

America's Choice also provides technical assistance, primarily through cluster leaders who are part of the America's Choice staff. The cluster leaders provide onsite assistance through follow-up visits to the schools. Cluster leaders work with the school leadership

teams and coaches to plan and implement the America's Choice model and to troubleshoot along the way.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

America's Choice provides all member schools with implementation rubrics to guide the implementation process. Stage 1 rubrics guide the initial reform efforts and assist schools in gauging progress. The rubrics are organized around the five design tasks: standards and assessments, aligned instructional systems, high performance management, professional-learning communities, and parent and community involvement. Within each design task, the rubric outlines the implementation expectations for each quarter of a school year and provides several examples of evidence as indicators of high performance. For example, under high performance management, one expectation is to implement the Book-of-the-Month program school-wide. One example of evidence that could indicate high performance is that student work related to the monthly book selection is on display in classrooms and hallways.

The model also provides similar rubrics for Stage 2 implementation. Stage 2 rubrics deepen the expectations for each design task. In Stage 2, schools are expected to continue to implement all items on the Stage 1 implementation rubrics. An example of an expectation for high performance under Standards and Assessment for Stage 2 is that teachers use the Planning for Results system to set and meet clear grade and class targets for student performance. Evidence that this takes place could be grade-level team meetings where teachers determine individual student weaknesses according to the standards, strategies, and student work. Stage 3 implementation rubrics are also available.

America's Choice cluster leaders list the implementation outcomes based on these rubrics on the Diagnostic and Assessment Tool, which is then incorporated into the

yearly Quality Review. The Quality Review provides feedback to schools regarding strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improved implementation. Schools are required to use this feedback to guide implementation; therefore, all school staff members are expected to be familiar with the rubrics.

Special Considerations

America's Choice School Design is a model that requires significant changes and adjustments in multiple areas such as scheduling, curriculum, and additional personnel. Because of the nature of these changes, teacher buy-in is important. Three school principals who were currently implementing the America's Choice model found that veteran teachers may come on board more slowly than others, but as teachers see results, the buy-in increases. All of the principals advised schools to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about the design prior to implementation.

The intensive version of America's Choice is targeted at schools that are in corrective action or facing restructuring. The intensive version includes all of the previously described design elements but also delivers onsite technical assistance and more direct training to teachers and accelerates some of the key elements of the design. Costs for the intensive version are higher than the costs for the basic model design.

One principal noted that using a standards-based model at every grade level raises the performance and expectations for both teachers and students. Another principal commented that the model is an effective tool to help develop and improve teacher performance and knowledge base, as well as to help meet state mandates for student performance. According to the model provider, high standards, which drive instruction, are the cornerstone of America's Choice. With proper buy-in and implementation fidelity, America's Choice believes it can assist schools with the alignment of

standards, assessment, and instruction to improve student achievement.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

RAND Corporation. (2000). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up*. Santa Monica, CA: Author.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

- May, H., Supovitz, J., & Lesnick, J. (2004). *The impact of America's Choice on writing performance in Georgia: First-year results*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.
- May, H., Supovitz, J., & Perda, D. (2004). *A longitudinal study of the impact of America's Choice on student performance in Rochester, New York, 1998–2003*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.
- Supovitz, J., Poglinco, S. M., & Snyder, B. A. (2001). *Moving mountains: Successes and challenges of the America's Choice comprehensive school reform design*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.
- Supovitz, J., Taylor, B., & May, H. (2002). *The impact of America's Choice on student performance in Duval County, Florida*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

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ATLAS Learning Communities—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | ATLAS (Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for All Students) Learning Communities | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | ATLAS' mission is to enable every young person to fully realize his/her learning potential by building academically rigorous and caring schools that leave no child behind. In addition, ATLAS' schools use five key elements that serve as fundamental assumptions about how schools create substantive and long-lasting learning experiences for all students. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1993 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 100 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| | Elementary: | Middle: | High: | | |
| | 57 | 26 | 17 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$60,000–\$80,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$60,000–\$80,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | \$60,000–\$80,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | |  |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | |
| | Math | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Student Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by "N/A."</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

Since 1993, ATLAS (Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for All Students) Learning Communities, Inc. has delivered comprehensive school improvement services to more than 150 schools nationwide. ATLAS was founded by four nationally recognized educational leaders: Dr. Howard Gardner of Project Zero at Harvard University, Dr. TheodoreSizer of the Coalition of Essential Schools, Ms. Janet Whitla of the Education Development Center, and Dr. James Comer of the School Development Program at Yale University. ATLAS' mission is to enable every young person to fully realize his/her learning potential by building academically rigorous and caring schools that ensure that no child is left behind.

Built on the research base and experience of the four founding partners, ATLAS offers a model for systemic change that leads to continuous improvement by changing the ways in which teachers and administrators think and work. The comprehensive approach is developed through the adoption of five key elements: teaching and learning, assessment, professional development, management and decision making, and family and community. This comprehensive approach is grounded further through a School Pathway—ATLAS' concept that views a child's passage from pre-K–12 as a unified program from grade to grade and subject to subject. Designed to interact with the unique site context by building on local assets, ATLAS provides network schools with a structured process and tools and strategies to create an environment for students' success.

ATLAS recognizes that school improvement is not a “one size fits all” endeavor and has developed alternatives for districts to consider. In 2005, ATLAS began to offer *Pathway Services* for classroom teachers, principals, and/or district administrators. The services

can be delivered individually or together as part of a comprehensive approach.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center's standards, the following were identified as core components of ATLAS Learning Communities: organization and governance; professional development; technical assistance; instruction; time and scheduling; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation of the model.

Model Mission/Focus

ATLAS' mission is to enable every young person to fully realize his/her learning potential by building academically rigorous and caring schools that leave no child behind. In addition, ATLAS' schools use five key elements (teaching and learning, assessment, professional development, management and decision making, and family and community) that serve as fundamental assumptions about how schools create substantive and long-lasting learning experiences for all students.

Goals/Rationale

ATLAS Learning Communities seeks to ensure that students are integrated members of a global learning community and are lifelong learners and productive workers. To achieve this goal, ATLAS supports school communities on several fronts:

- Linking elementary, middle, and high schools as partners to ensure that academic and social connections are made from pre-K to grade 12 to support the success of every child. A Pathways Leadership Team (PLT) facilitates collaborative learning, curriculum alignment, instruction, and assessment to ensure a coherent academic program for each student.

- Preparing teachers to be the driving force in school improvement through a variety of professional development programs that create highly qualified teachers who meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Developing highly qualified school leaders who can guide systemic school change that is linked to an explicit and rigorous set of academic standards.
- Building school–community partnerships that embrace the assets of families and community organizations in the service of student learning and success.

C

osts

The costs of the comprehensive model for the first 3 years of implementation range from \$60,000 to 80,000 per year. The model costs for the 4th year of implementation depend on which ATLAS services are selected by the site. ATLAS negotiates the 4th-year costs directly with the site. Costs for services related to individual pathways are negotiated directly with the site. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

E

vidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 13 quantitative studies for effects of ATLAS Learning Communities on student achievement. One study met the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of this study to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the

results of the study. Because only one study that demonstrated positive results met the CSRQ Center’s standards, the overall rating of the effects of ATLAS Learning Communities on student achievement is limited. The study that met the CSRQ Center’s standards is described below. (Appendix C reports on the other 12 studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards.)

The study that met the CSRQ Center’s standards used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison design to compare student achievement at two urban, low socioeconomic status, high minority ATLAS schools in the south-central part of the United States with student achievement at 61 non-ATLAS elementary schools in the same geographical area. This study compared school-level performance gains on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in grades 2–5 at ATLAS schools from 1 year before implementation to 2 years after implementation with students at nonrestructuring schools during the same timeframe. The subject areas tested were reading, language, math, science, and social studies. ATLAS schools appeared to out-gain comparison schools in reading, language, math, and science areas of the CTBS. Comparison students out-gained ATLAS students in only the social studies area of the CTBS. Although the reported effect sizes in all subject areas are considered large, the differences between the groups approached statistical significance on only the math test.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

The one study of ATLAS Learning Communities that met the CSRQ Center’s standards did not examine the impact of the model on the achievement of diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

In the one study that met the CSRQ Center's standards, achievement in math was the subject area that showed the greatest difference between students at ATLAS schools and students at nonrestructuring schools. The difference approached statistical significance ($p = .06$) with an effect size of +1.34. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

The one study of ATLAS Learning Communities that met the CSRQ Center's standards did not examine additional outcomes. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

The one study of ATLAS Learning Communities that met the CSRQ Center's standards did not measure parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by ATLAS Learning Communities, the model's design is grounded in the Teaching for Understanding (TFU) framework and Dr. James Comer's research and work on the

School Development Program. ATLAS Learning Communities provided an explicit citation to support the following core components of the model: professional development and technical assistance. However, explicit citations for the following core components were not provided: organization and governance; instruction; time and scheduling; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is limited.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by ATLAS Learning Communities, the model offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of ATLAS Learning Communities and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. ATLAS Learning Communities also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

ATLAS Learning Communities provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, ATLAS Learning Communities provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. ATLAS Learning Communities also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school

capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

ATLAS Learning Communities serves school feeder patterns, also known as pathways, which normally consist of one high school, two middle schools, and several elementary schools within a school district. ATLAS will work with individual school sites with the intention of expanding into a pathway. Before the school site or pathway makes a commitment to ATLAS, the school district and ATLAS staff evaluate whether the model fits local and state requirements and meets the needs of the school site or pathway. To this end, ATLAS staff members conduct an internal audit of the site. The audit provides the site with indepth information regarding the site's capacity to implement the model based on current state and local requirements. The assessment also provides the site with next steps for implementation. Finally, the audit provides an overview of the academic achievement of the site.

To deepen the site's understanding of the model, ATLAS Learning Communities conducts weekly meetings with school administrators in person or via phone or e-mail. ATLAS staff members also conduct a formal presentation for the site's faculty, family members, and community in order to help these stakeholders gain an indepth understanding of ATLAS Learning Communities. In addition, ATLAS provides materials on the model to build faculty buy-in during the pre-implementation stage. Although no minimum percentage of faculty buy-in is required, the model does require agreement among faculty prior to the model's adoption. Each individual site determines the level of consensus necessary for adoption.

After committing to the model, ATLAS assigns each site one ATLAS staff member, called an ATLAS site developer. The ATLAS site developer works with the site once a week to help facilitate implementation activities. The site developer provides guidance on professional development, teaching and learning practices, assessment, family and community involvement, and data-based decision making. For example, a site developer might work with ATLAS Learning Communities' study groups that consist of school site faculty to lead professional development activities, assist teachers with teaching and learning practices, or provide training on assessment tools. These site developers are trained by ATLAS and are generally members of the ATLAS staff.

Although the model does not require sites or pathways to hire additional staff, each pathway identifies an ATLAS Learning Communities liaison from within its staff to work closely with ATLAS throughout implementation. The model also requires schools to appoint a pathway administrator and site administrator whose support for the model is believed to be vital to successful implementation. The model requires pathway administrators to participate in professional development opportunities and to allocate funding for these professional development opportunities. The model also requires a site administrator to grant professional development release time for site staff and to participate in leadership groups. Furthermore, pathway and site administrators make decisions about time and scheduling, participate in leadership teams that consist of stakeholders from the school and community who support the leadership structure of the school, analyze student achievement data, and ensure that curriculum and instruction are carefully aligned with state and district standards.

Each site is required to form a PLT that consists of multiple stakeholders from the school and/or community, depending on how the model is being implemented locally. ATLAS trains the PLT to analyze and use data

to improve instruction. Additionally, the PLT leads the local effort to provide for a coherent learning experience for students across classrooms, grades, and schools (depending on the local structure of the reform model). With the assistance of the ATLAS site developer, the PLT is also responsible for establishing the school's baseline data and subsequently for working with ATLAS to develop the implementation plan and school improvement plan. The PLT is intended to function as a vehicle for shared decision making and leadership and is trained in the analysis and use of data to support the instructional vision of the school or group of schools across grade levels and content areas. According to ATLAS, this contributes to the alignment and the coherence of learning opportunities across schools and grades.

In addition, ATLAS Learning Communities requires site-based or pathway-based autonomy in the areas of curriculum, instruction, staffing, and scheduling. Decision making about these topics is a collaborative process conducted by the PLT.

Curriculum and Instruction

ATLAS Learning Communities does not have its own curriculum and does not require sites to adopt certain curricula. Nonetheless, the PLT, administrators, teachers, and family members are all actively involved in making decisions about curriculum.

Teaching and assessment are designed to promote student mastery and understanding of important facts, concepts, and skills. Therefore, ATLAS supports teachers in developing the basic strategies and tools for improving teaching and assessment through TFU. The four-part TFU framework focuses on instructional strategies and practices across all grade and content area standards, accommodates the skills and abilities of students over a developmental continuum, and connects these with ongoing assessment.

The model requires sites to adopt the TFU framework, which guides teaching and instruction. The framework is a guideline for organizing and linking curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Pathways use the framework to adapt or modify their existing curricula and to align these curricula with state and district standards. The framework seeks to embed assessment in student learning so that knowledge is applied and synthesized.

Through TFU, ATLAS provides teachers with sample lesson plans in all core content areas and guidance on instructional practices. The model recommends that teachers use the following instructional strategies: group instruction, project-based activities, hands-on activities, and cooperative learning. ATLAS provides teachers and staff with training on the framework and instructional strategies through annual TFU Institutes.

Scheduling and Grouping

Although the model does not have specific grouping requirements, it recognizes the importance of flexible grouping.

The model does require schools to make scheduling modifications to allow for study groups and PLT meetings during the school day. The purpose of these meetings is to provide time for school staff collaboration and planning.

Technology

The model does not require sites to use technology for instruction. However, ATLAS Learning Communities does use technology to facilitate networking among the ATLAS Learning Communities sites. For example, the ATLAS Connection, an online database, provides site-based information on all of the ATLAS Learning Communities sites. The database features individual Web sites with specific site-based information such as demographics and implementation plans. The database

also serves as an online forum for ATLAS Learning Communities sites to share information about resources or materials.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model requires ongoing assessment of student progress and performance. Specifically, ATLAS Learning Communities requires sites to use teacher-developed assessments, commercial diagnostics, and state and district assessments to gauge student progress. ATLAS Learning Communities also requires teachers to assess student progress using performance-based assessments, portfolios, and teacher observations. The model provider encourages teachers to use multiple assessment measures, including diagnostic assessments and ongoing progress monitoring assessments. The progress monitoring assessments help teachers identify students in need of special services and interventions, refine instructional strategies, and align teaching objectives with state standards.

Again, TFU connects teaching and assessment strategies and tools. (For a description of TFU, see the section titled “Curriculum and Instruction.”) The TFU framework helps teachers conduct embedded, ongoing assessments of students’ learning by engaging them in “performances of understanding,” which requires students to apply, extend, and synthesize what they know. This portion of the assessment is linked back to the developmental continuum to inform teachers of their students’ progress and the areas of need.

Additionally, the model employs data-based decision making across ATLAS Learning Communities sites. The primary tool used for data-based decision making is the ATLAS Rubric. The rubric provides a detailed description of the five ATLAS Learning Communities elements with corresponding criteria and indicators for each of the elements. The rubric also describes the roles of school faculty, parents, district administration, and the PLT. These roles require all key stakeholders to make

decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on analyses of student achievement data.

The PLT is responsible for designing an accountability strategy with measurable goals for student academic achievement that links school progress to the district and/or state benchmarks and to the school’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). At the beginning of the ATLAS implementation, the ATLAS site developer assists the PLT in the analysis of student data to establish the baseline of the school’s current performance. The following information is reviewed as part of the baseline assessment process:

- School improvement plan
- State and local assessments
- AYP status
- Student attendance
- Student discipline statistics
- Student dropout rate
- Postgraduate plans (for high schools)
- Student work

Family and Community Involvement

Family and community involvement is one of the five elements of the model. The ATLAS Rubric is a set of implementation indicators for schools and districts, and because family and community involvement is an essential component of the model, it identifies the specific roles and responsibilities of family and community members. Specifically, the rubric states that families and community members should become involved in volunteer activities in the classroom, serve on the PLT, and provide tutorial support to students.

ATLAS Learning Communities expects school administrators to establish support programs for parents and

to conduct surveys to measure parent concern and satisfaction. Likewise, the PLT ensures that school facilities are available for community use and forms partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and social service entities. The ATLAS site developer trains the PLT to map the assets of the community in order to guide these partnerships as well as other forms of community outreach.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

ATLAS Learning Communities requires professional development prior to and during full implementation. The professional development plan includes the following:

- Principals' Institutes
- Pathways to Understanding Institutes
- ATLAS Study Groups
- ATLAS Summer Leadership Institutes
- TFU Institutes

The Principals' Institute occurs yearly and involves an intensive 3-day workshop for the site leaders on model design and implementation. Like the Principals' Institute, the Pathways to Understanding Institutes, ATLAS Summer Leadership Institutes, and TFU Institutes provide information about the model's theoretical foundations and strategies for implementation.

Pathways to Understanding Institutes, the model's annual national teachers' conference, convenes teachers from across the country to modify existing curricula for collaboration around instructional challenges.

ATLAS study groups provide day-to-day professional development for site faculty. An ATLAS study group consists of three to six faculty members. All school faculty members meet in study groups, where they examine student work, address instructional needs,

and develop their understanding of core academic content areas.

ATLAS Learning Communities also focuses on building school capacity to provide professional development through site-based coaching, critical friends' visits, and administrator input on professional development. Specifically, ATLAS Learning Communities helps schools build organizational capacity and a climate of collaboration through the formation of a PLT, which builds on existing leadership structures and is made up of multiple stakeholders from within the school and the community.

The professional development plan also includes cross-site visits and collaboration among pathway sites. Both existing and new staff receive ongoing professional development during implementation.

Furthermore, ATLAS provides technical assistance on a weekly basis to sites through the ATLAS site developer. The site developer works with the sites to support the elements of the ATLAS Learning Communities design (e.g., ATLAS study groups and the PLT), to help the sites with the full implementation of the model, and to assist with building capacity to provide professional development.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

ATLAS provides school administrators and teachers with the ATLAS Rubric, a formal set of implementation benchmarks and indicators. The ATLAS Rubric includes benchmarks for the five key elements of the model: teaching and learning, assessment, professional development, management and decision making, and family and community. The rubric also provides a detailed description of the five ATLAS Learning Communities elements and corresponding criteria for the elements' underlying principles. The rubric includes indicators for the beginning, developing,

and advanced stages of implementation for each criterion.

The PLT and site developer use the ATLAS Rubric to map the existing practices within the school site into the five key elements of the ATLAS Learning Communities design. Criteria and indicators support each element, and for each criterion, the rubric describes the indicators one might observe. The results of the baseline assessment process are used to develop the ATLAS Learning Communities Implementation Plan, which is directly linked to the school improvement plan. (For more information on the baseline assessment process, see the section titled “Monitoring Student Progress and Performance.”) The implementation plan lists the focus elements, action steps, a timeline, and key personnel responsible in each of these areas. The implementation plan is a site-specific plan that is used for evaluating and monitoring implementation progress. The implementation plan is also used to customize benchmarks, which are found in the ATLAS Rubric, for a specific school site.

Administrators and teachers at ATLAS Learning Communities sites use benchmarks and pre-assessments, mid-point assessments, and annual reports to guide and monitor implementation. ATLAS Learning Communities also includes both formative and summative evaluations that are conducted onsite by ATLAS staff, administrators, and cross-site visitors. ATLAS staff members, in particular the ATLAS site developer, provide feedback to the sites to improve implementation of the model.

Special Considerations

ATLAS Learning Communities targets school feeder patterns or pathways to develop a unified K–12 experience. However, according to ATLAS, the model provider will work with a single school that intends to “grow” a pathway. Pathways require collaboration across multiple school sites within a school district.

Thus, district support for ATLAS Learning Communities implementation and the support of leaders from the schools within the K–12 pathway should be assessed when schools are considering the model. In addition, the model focuses on professional development, including ATLAS study groups.

Model Study Reviewed

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Two- and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

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Breakthrough to Literacy—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Breakthrough to Literacy | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | Breakthrough to Literacy is focused on developing the reading, writing, and thinking skills of pre-K–3 students. The model requires the implementation of the model provider's curriculum and places a strong emphasis on professional development and teacher support so that the learning experiences gained through technology are integrated into all classroom activities. The model focuses on developing language comprehension and thinking skills while systematically developing word recognition skills. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1992 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | Pre-K–3 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 1,924 | 1,348 | 384 | 192 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$15,500–\$17,500/classroom (without technology) | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$0/classroom | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | Varies | \$1,500/classroom | \$715/classroom | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

Breakthrough to Literacy is a comprehensive school reform model that focuses on the development of literacy skills of students in grades pre-K–3. The model, which began at the University of Iowa’s Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, is based on two decades of research conducted by its founders, Drs. Carolyn Brown and Jerry Zimmerman. In 1981, the researchers began working with a second-grade student struggling to make the transition from oral to print language. They introduced the student to a computer-based interactive reading program and tracked his phonological development over an 18-month period. After observing a significant growth in the student’s reading and comprehension skills, the model developers began moving similar strategies from the laboratory to the classroom. The Breakthrough to Literacy model was introduced in schools in 1992.

The Breakthrough to Literacy developers continually use the model’s performance data to refine its curriculum and instructional strategies. The model aims to provide a comprehensive approach to early literacy instruction through systematic instruction for students and extensive professional development for teachers. The model currently serves only pre-K–3 classrooms.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of Breakthrough to Literacy: professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, technology, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to Breakthrough to Literacy, the model’s vision is “to share the responsibility with teachers,

parents, and administrators for developing successful readers, writers, and thinkers.” The model’s process for change uses a combination of curriculum, instructional practices, and ongoing assessments to build effective early language and literacy classrooms. The focus of Breakthrough to Literacy is primarily on the early language and literacy instruction of students and the development of teachers to provide this instruction. The model provider also makes a 2-year commitment to each school to provide a comprehensive professional development and technical assistance plan for teachers and staff.

Goals/Rationale

According to the Breakthrough to Literacy Web site, the model’s primary goal is to improve student achievement and test scores through the use of a systematic, integrated curriculum, instructional practices, and ongoing assessment. To achieve this goal, the model focuses on helping each teacher become a diagnostician with the ability to identify and meet the individual learning needs of all children.

Costs

Breakthrough to Literacy packages are sold by classroom rather than by school. Each package is designed for a classroom of 30 students, and the individual components cannot be purchased separately. The cost of implementing the 1st year of Breakthrough to Literacy ranges from \$15,500/classroom to \$17,500/classroom, depending on the grade level. This figure does not include technology costs. The 2nd year has no additional costs. In the 3rd year, the additional cost is approximately \$715 for materials and an optional \$1,500 for additional training. The model can provide a general cost breakdown upon request, if needed for grant applications.

The Breakthrough to Literacy package includes four components: (1) interactive software, (2) in-class print materials, (3) take-home print materials, and (4) professional development. The materials included in the model cost are teacher guides, Book-of-the-Week guides, Home Connections guides, Individualized Software Instruction guides, story reference guides, story cards, posters, stickers, wall charts, pupil books, student writing journals, Take-Me-Home books (30 copies of 36 to 53 titles), pupil books (6 copies of 32 titles), CD-ROM disks, instructional curriculum, student transfer diskettes, reporting management system, student reading logs, cassette tapes and CDs, and worksheets. Take-Me-Home books and Audio Read-Along CDs are available in English and Spanish.

The professional development plan includes an overview session with the school principal, a Getting Started meeting for the entire school staff, 3 training days in year 1, a minimum of five follow-up classroom visits in year 1, an additional training day in year 2, and a minimum of four follow-up classroom visits in year 2. Access to a toll-free support line is also included in the package cost. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ⊘

The CSRQ Center reviewed 10 quantitative studies for effects of Breakthrough to Literacy on student achievement. Of these studies, none had sufficient rigor to meet CSRQ Center standards. Therefore, the overall rating of the evidence of positive effects of this model on student achievement is zero. (Appendix D reports

on the 10 studies that were reviewed but did not meet CSRQ Center standards.)

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no studies of Breakthrough to Literacy that met CSRQ Center standards, the impact of this model on student achievement for diverse student populations is unknown. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

With no studies that met CSRQ Center standards to review, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no studies of Breakthrough to Literacy that met CSRQ Center standards, the Center was not able to evaluate the effects of Breakthrough to Literacy on additional outcomes. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

There were no studies that met CSRQ Center standards that examined the effects of Breakthrough to Literacy on parent, family, or community involvement. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 0

Based on documentation provided by the model, its underlying theory was influenced by the model developer's research during the 1980s on the transition from oral language to print and the use of computer-based tools to assist students in that process. However, no explicit citations are provided. The model did provide extensive lists of citations in its professional development guides; however, these citations are not linked explicitly to any of the core components of the model. Therefore, based on the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is zero.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 2

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, the model only offers an informal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model does provide implementation parameters, which are formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is moderately strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: 4

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides training materials that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The model encourages all potential Breakthrough teachers and reading staff in interested schools to attend an Awareness Meeting prior to purchase and implementation. The purpose of the meeting is to inform teachers and administrators about the Breakthrough to Literacy model and materials. The model encourages each classroom teacher using the Breakthrough to Literacy curriculum to understand and buy in to the model philosophy before beginning implementation. Before or during the early stages of implementation, the principal is encouraged to attend a 2-hour Administrator's Workshop. Prior to implementation, Breakthrough to Literacy also requires all teachers using the model's curriculum to attend a day-long Getting Started training session. At the preliminary Getting Started training session, teachers are aided in setting expectations and goals for implementation.

The model assigns each school a part-time literacy coach prior to implementation. Literacy coaches are full-time, dedicated employees of the model provider

or school staff members trained as facilitators or coaches. Each coach is trained and certified in the areas of early language and literacy by the Breakthrough to Literacy founders and is a certified expert in the areas of early language and literacy. Coaches are onsite during the 1st week of implementation and visit each Breakthrough to Literacy classroom at least five times in the 1st year and four times in the 2nd year. During the site visits, coaches model for teachers and assist them with issues related to the implementation of curriculum and instructional processes. School principals meet with the literacy coach after each classroom visit and under most conditions, grant release time for teachers to attend workshops and one-on-one meetings with the literacy coaches periodically throughout the year.

Curriculum and Instruction

Breakthrough to Literacy requires the use of a reading and writing curriculum that was developed by the model and shares its name. The Breakthrough to Literacy curriculum can be used as either a core reading program or as a supplement to the school's existing curriculum. The model does not require or recommend a specific curriculum for math, social studies, or science.

Breakthrough to Literacy provides each classroom with 36 to 53 different Feature Book sets, depending on grade level, one for each week. Each Feature Book is presented as a Big Book, a Take-Me-Home Book, and a Pupil Book. Big Books and Pupil Books should be kept in the classroom, but Take-Me-Home Books are smaller versions designed for students to take home and keep. Breakthrough to Literacy also provides Individualized Software Instruction (ISI) and Read-Along CDs specific to each feature book. Each classroom package is designed for a class of 30 students. The components cannot be purchased separately.

Breakthrough to Literacy also provides teachers with Teacher Guides, Book-of-the-Week Guides, Home

Connections Guides, Enroll and Report Guides, and Software Demonstration Guides to assist with implementation. Teachers receive Professional Development Guides for each grade level to use at professional development days and throughout the year.

Breakthrough to Literacy expects teachers to develop materials for classroom use in addition to the required curriculum. Teachers work with students daily to develop graphic organizers. Teachers also gather readily available objects for use during book discussions, story charts, literacy centers, and other instructional uses.

The Breakthrough curriculum encompasses four Daily Essential Practices that teachers are expected to integrate into their daily instructional routine:

- **Book-of-the-Week comprehension strategies.** Each day, the teacher reads the Book-of-the-Week to the classroom using a different activity designed to focus on a certain aspect of language, cognitive, or literacy development. Activities focus on areas such as oral vocabulary and comprehension, concepts of print, phonemic awareness, alphabet, and emergent writing. An example of an activity designed to help students sharpen their higher-order thinking skills is the development of an alternate ending or an extension to the story.
- **Take-Me-Home books.** Each student receives a copy of the Book-of-the-Week to take home at the end of the week. Families are encouraged to read and discuss these books with students. Each family receives a copy of Home Connection, a booklet that provides ideas for how families can use the Take-Me-Home books to develop their child's language and literacy skills.
- **Writing at the developmentally appropriate grade level.** Students are encouraged to practice independent writing both at home and in the classroom. The graphic organizers introduced in the whole group discussion serve as a springboard for

oral and written expression. Each Take-Me-Home book has several blank pages at the back for students to draw and write on in the classroom. After the students take home the books, they are encouraged to share their writings with their families. In addition to independent writing, teachers may use whole group activities such as drawing, tracing letters, matching text with story cards, and writing words and sentences.

■ **Individualized software instruction (ISI).**

Breakthrough to Literacy requires each student to spend 8 to 25 minutes a day, depending on the grade level, using the model’s instructional software. The software provides a number of activities for each Book-of-the-Week that help develop vocabulary and language, phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, fluency, and word recognition skills. For example, in the Read and Record activity, students develop their fluency skills by recording themselves telling a story aloud and listening to the recordings.

Each week, teachers use the four Daily Essential Practices to focus on one book. While the model focuses primarily on language development and literacy instruction, the featured books often have interdisciplinary themes that address science, social studies, and other content areas.

Breakthrough to Literacy provides teachers with detailed Teacher Guides for each grade level that describe instructional strategies and ways to incorporate the Essential Practices into their daily routine. In addition to the Essential Practices, the model requires the use of several other instructional strategies. These strategies include direct instruction, small-group instruction, hands-on activities, discussion, cooperative learning, content reading strategies, and intervention activities. Teacher Guides offer suggestions on how to incorporate these additional instructional strategies into the daily class routine. According to model, the instructional practices presented in the Teacher Guides promote

cognitive and comprehension strategies and are appropriate for use in all content areas.

Scheduling and Grouping

Although Breakthrough to Literacy does not mandate any specific scheduling changes, some changes may be needed to ensure that the time requirements of the model are met in each classroom. Breakthrough to Literacy requires that the essential practices are implemented each day. These practices can be implemented in a dedicated block of time or can be integrated into classroom activities during the day. Depending on the grade level, the time might vary from 60 to 90 minutes to accomplish the essential practices. The model offers sample classroom schedules in the Teacher Guides and also offers professional development sessions to help teachers plan their classroom around the time requirements of the model.

The Breakthrough to Literacy model requires that students work both independently and in small groups at the appropriate level. The ISI software developed by the model produces individualized student reports that are updated daily. Teachers use these reports to create small groups and to adjust their teaching strategies to meet individual student needs. Teacher observations and skill mastery should also be used to inform grouping strategies. Because the software assessment reports change daily, the strategies are flexible and students will be periodically regrouped within a class. Grouping strategies and guidance on using the computer assessments are provided in professional development training sessions.

Technology

Breakthrough to Literacy requires each school to use the instructional and non-instructional software programs provided with the model. Each student is expected to spend at least 8 to 25 minutes a day using the Breakthrough to Literacy computer program,

although specific times are flexible depending on grade level and ability. The model also provides customized assessments for teachers to use for grouping and small-group reading activities. Breakthrough to Literacy suggests a computer-to-student ratio of 1:7 in pre-K and K, and a ratio of 1:6 in grades 1–3. Computers should be available in each classroom implementing the model. Software is available for both Macintoshes and PCs.

The Breakthrough software is a central component of the model. The model requires that each teacher use the software to supplement classroom instruction, monitor progress, and provide data reports to guide grouping strategies. According to the model, the ISI allows students to use several instructional methods that are systematically linked to the best predictors of reading success. The software includes the following components:

- Listening and speaking activities that build oral language vocabulary
- Speaking and reading activities that allow children to record themselves and listen to their recordings
- Word puzzle activities that build phonological awareness
- Alphabet and spelling activities
- Exploring words activities that develop phonological awareness, phoneme awareness, and phonics

Breakthrough to Literacy also provides teachers with non-instructional software. This software is linked to daily student progress reports and helps teachers group students by ability and target specific weaknesses and strengths. Teachers may also use the software to create parent letters and progress reports in both English and Spanish.

Teacher Guides and professional development sessions focus on the inclusion of technology in the daily

classroom routine for both instructional and non-instructional use. The model provides each teacher with a Software Demonstration Guide to help teachers introduce the software to students, and an Enroll and Reports Guide which shows teachers how to access and interpret student reports and how to customize the placement of their students within the software program.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The primary tool used by Breakthrough to Literacy to monitor student performance is the daily assessment component of the ISI software. Literacy coaches provide additional feedback after each series of onsite observations (approximately 4 to 5 a year). Teachers are also expected to provide periodic self-assessments. Although the model does not administer any assessments, literacy coaches are available to help schools integrate data from commercial or state/district assessments into the model's implementation recommendations.

The literacy coaches guide small groups of teachers in interpreting and analyzing the collected data. In the small group sessions, coaches help teachers use the student assessment data to inform instruction, adjust grouping strategies, and respond to individual student needs. The Breakthrough to Literacy assessment team is also available to generate a summative analysis of student results if requested by the district.

Family and Community Involvement

Although parents do not participate in the organization or governance of the model, Breakthrough to Literacy seeks to involve each family in their individual child's education through other methods. Prior to implementation, the model encourages and will host an informational session for families and community members to introduce them to the model. Regular meetings for

family and community members continue throughout the year with model support.

The model also encourages parents to take an active role in their child's education through the Take-Me-Home book series, which is designed to regularly include parents and families in a student's education. Every week, students are given a Take-Me-Home copy of the featured book to read and discuss with family members. Breakthrough to Literacy provides each family with a Home Connections Guide that outlines different strategies parents can use to engage their children in reading and writing at home.

To sustain family involvement for the duration of the implementation, Breakthrough to Literacy requires teachers to send home progress reports at regular intervals and to hold periodic progress conferences with parents. The computer software allows teachers to print individualized student assessment reports in both English and Spanish.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Breakthrough to Literacy offers a formal professional development and technical assistance plan both prior to and during implementation. Prior to implementation or soon thereafter, the school principal is encouraged to attend a 2-hour Administrator's Workshop, and teachers are required to attend a day-long Getting Started meeting. Topics covered at the teacher session include rearranging classrooms, creating daily schedules, organizing model materials, and enrolling students in the instructional software program. During implementation, teachers are required to attend 3 days of training in the 1st year and 1 day of training in the 2nd year. District leaders and specialized personnel are invited to attend the training sessions at no extra cost.

The professional development sessions are divided into three general areas: (1) Getting Started, (2) Level I, and (3) Level II training. Getting Started sessions

cover the following topics: Planning a Successful Implementation, Organizing a Breakthrough to Literacy Classroom, Preparing for ISI, and Implementing an Action Plan. Level I and Level II trainings cover a wide range of topics that differ for each grade level. Some possible workshop topics include Linking Children's Experiences to Breakthrough to Literacy Classroom Instruction, Teaching Whole-Group Book-of-the-Week Oral Comprehension Strategies, Preparing for ISI, Making Writing Connections, Implementing an Action Plan, Best Predictors of Reading Achievement and Breakthrough to Literacy Daily Essential Practices, and The Phonological Journey: Explore Words, Alphabet, and Spelling.

Technical assistance is provided primarily through a school's literacy coach. In the 1st year of implementation, the literacy coach holds a minimum of five follow-up visits per classroom. In the 2nd year, the coach holds a minimum of four follow-up visits per classroom. After each classroom visit, literacy coaches meet one-on-one with classroom teachers to provide feedback. Literacy coaches also meet with school principals during each site visit. The literacy coach is onsite during the 1st week of implementation and is available by phone and e-mail between site visits. Training schedules are adjusted to meet district needs.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Breakthrough to Literacy provides each school with formal benchmarks to guide implementation for both teachers and students. Surveys, observations, timelines, checklists, student achievement data, and self-assessments serve as indicators. For example, a month 1 benchmark for a student is becoming familiar with the computer rotation schedule. A month 1 benchmark for a teacher is managing the computer rotation schedule. Either an observation or self-assessment could serve as the indicator to measure progress toward that particular goal.

Breakthrough to Literacy provides each school with feedback based on analysis of the collected data. In particular, the model helps schools use the benchmarks to establish goals for subsequent years, to adjust model implementation, and to adjust instructional practices. Literacy coaches work with teachers to interpret the data and to establish future goals. Breakthrough to Literacy also provides schools with a formal timeline to guide the implementation process.

Special Considerations

Because of the importance of technology to the model, schools are expected to have sufficient computers prior to implementation. Without meeting the ratio of computers to students recommended by the model (1:7 in pre-K and K, 1:6 in grades 1–3), the benefits of the model may be compromised. In conversations with three elementary school principals, each stressed the importance of obtaining enough computers prior to implementation.

The school principals expressed mixed views on the role of technology in the classroom. While one principal commented on the ability of computers to grab and keep students' attention in a way that classroom teachers could not, another noted that each teacher must work to maintain a balance between teacher and computer in the classroom. This principal also stressed that computers must remain an enhancement, rather than a replacement, for the classroom teacher.

The flexible and recurring nature of the Breakthrough to Literacy computer assessments allows each student to change daily the level at which he or she is working. Two school principals noted that the assessment component of the model provided ongoing feedback and individualized reports and helped teachers change instructional practices to meet each student's needs. However, another principal commented that the assessments worked effectively only if each classroom was able to create the time needed for daily computer instruction. Without sufficient time for each student to use the assessment software, the model's results may be diminished.

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Coalition of Essential Schools—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Quality Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of CES National is to transform public education by making all schools personalized, equitable, and intellectually vibrant. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1984 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| Approximately 600 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| | Elementary: | Middle: | High: | | |
| | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs¹ | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | |  |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by "N/A."</p> | | | | | |

¹Schools may join the CES national affiliate for \$500 annually. Implementation costs vary by affiliate center and contracted services.

Model Description

Theodore R.Sizer built the 10 principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) on theories that arose from his works, *A Study of High Schools* (1984b) and *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School: The First Report From a Study of High Schools* (1984a). In 1984, a group of schools met and decided to redesign themselves based on Sizer's principles. This group formed the coalition. Sizer then formed a team based at Brown University to support these first schools.

Currently, CES serves grades K–12 and is a network of schools and centers that work together to create schools based on CES's 10 Common Principles. The model has a CES National Office in Oakland, California, and 22 CES affiliate centers across the country. Each affiliate center is independent and has the autonomy to create services appropriate for the schools it serves.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of the model: organization and governance; professional development; technical assistance; instruction; inclusion; time and scheduling; instructional grouping; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. The model identified an additional core component, continuous improvement and leadership, which is supported through the professional development. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation of the model.

Model Mission/Focus

The mission of CES National is to transform public education by making all schools personalized, equitable, and intellectually vibrant.

Goals/Rationale

Four organizational goals form CES's "Theory of Action":

- **Exchange.** According to CES, exchanging knowledge and practices enhances schools' capacity to become more intellectually vibrant, personalized, and equitable and enhances the affiliate centers' capacity to support schools.
- **Growth.** CES seeks to increase (a) the number of schools that adopt the model's mission and enact the model's 10 Common Principles and (b) the capacity of regional centers to support schools.
- **Improvement.** CES seeks to improve the work of schools that have already adopted the CES principles and to improve the work of the affiliate centers that support schools.
- **Influence.** CES seeks to influence or shape public policy and public opinion to create an environment that is more conducive to equitable, personalized, and intellectually vibrant schools.

CES demonstrates its theory of action through 10 Common Principles:

- Teaching children to use their minds
- Focusing on a limited number of essential skills
- Applying the same goals to all students
- Personalizing teaching and learning
- Viewing students as workers and teachers as coaches
- Assessing students on real tasks with multiple forms of evidence
- Establishing a culture of trust and decency
- Assigning staff to multiple roles to establish a commitment to the whole school

- Concentrating maximum resources on teaching and learning
- Demonstrating policies and practices that are inclusive and honor diversity

CES holds that each school community can best determine the methods for embedding the 10 Common Principles within the school.

Costs

National affiliation with CES costs \$500 annually and provides benefits to schools and/or districts such as a nationwide reform network, opportunities to participate in CES research projects, a waiver or discount on registration fees for professional development offerings, and subscriptions to newsletters and publications from CES. The CES National Office also supports schools directly.

If a school aligns with a CES affiliate center, together they customize a reform model for the site based on the 10 Common Principles. Implementation costs vary by affiliate center. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, schools should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ○

The CSRQ Center reviewed 14 quantitative studies for effects of CES on student achievement. None of these studies met the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of CES on student achievement is zero. (Appendix E reports on the 14 studies that were

reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards.)

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CES met the CSRQ Center’s standards, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CES met the CSRQ Center’s standards, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CES met the CSRQ Center’s standards, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CES met the CSRQ Center’s standards, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, CES’s Common Principles are derived from Dr. Sizer’s

work on high schools, *A Study of High Schools* (1984b) and *Horace's Compromise: The dilemma of the American high school: The first report from a study of high schools* (1984a). These studies support the following core components: organization and governance; professional development; technical assistance; instruction; time and scheduling; instructional grouping; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. However, explicit citations were not provided for the following core component: inclusion. Therefore, the rating for this category is moderately strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, CES offers an informal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Furthermore, CES offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time but does not monitor such allocation. CES also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderately strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

CES provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, CES provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model's core components. CES also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development.

Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

There are three ways that schools and/or districts may choose to affiliate with CES. First, schools may philosophically decide to follow the principles of CES and adopt various elements of the reform process. Second, schools may choose to affiliate with the CES National Office. The CES National Office provides direct technical assistance and benefits, such as discounts on professional development opportunities and subscriptions to newsletters and publications. Finally, schools may affiliate with a CES affiliate center. The CES affiliate centers use the 10 Common Principles as a framework to bring knowledge and skills to schools regarding change in four areas: classroom practice, school organization, leadership, and parent/community connections.

When a school begins to work with a CES affiliate center, the process starts with informational planning meetings with school leadership teams. The affiliate center and the school work together to create an action plan that includes data-based and inquiry-driven schedules, expectations, benchmarks, targets, and outcome goals. The plan should build on the successful elements of the school's existing programs. At the same time, the school leadership team continuously communicates with all stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, parents, and other community members) to develop a clear understanding of the CES mission and goals. Depending on each school, these meetings can be multiday institutes, retreats, symposia, or workshops. The direct CES coaching work begins once the action plan has been determined.

Schools considering the CES model need teacher buy-in for implementation. CES recommends that teachers

have time to coordinate instructional activities that support the CES principles. Furthermore, CES encourages teachers to continually discuss and refine their craft through shared decision making and common planning time.

CES requires that an onsite coach work with school staff and administrators. In addition, a team of professional development experts works with the district and school staff. These two requirements are common across all CES affiliate centers.

Curriculum and Instruction

The CES model does not require the use of specific curricula, but it does include essential skills that all students must master. These skills and areas reflect, to varying degrees, traditional academic disciplines (such as math and reading). However, CES recommends that mastery and achievement shape a school's curriculum design rather than content coverage. The model believes that the emphasis should be on the depth and understanding of the concepts rather than on the amount of material covered.

According to the CES principles, schools should view students and teachers as learning partners. CES believes that this collaborative approach provides opportunities for students to assume ownership of their work; participate in varied roles in the classroom such as investigator, team player, and leader; and critically examine their performance and achievement.

CES offers a process to ensure that a school's curriculum, instruction, and performance assessments are aligned with state standards, but the content of that curriculum varies based on each school's unique needs.

CES also provides guidance to schools on instructional strategies to promote higher-order thinking skills. Strategies such as inquiry into cause and effect and an examination of different perspectives are examples of classroom practices that promote higher-order thinking.

The model also highly recommends heterogeneous grouping, small-group instruction, hands-on activities, student-to-student discussions, and the use of technology to enhance the learning process. Instructional strategies should allow students to apply various learning styles to the process.

According to CES's 10 Common Principles, the model fosters an environment in which the student is a worker and the teacher is a coach, rather than the more familiar arrangement with a teacher serving as the deliverer of instructional services. As coaches, CES teachers encourage students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves. Through this learner-centered approach, CES aims to help students acquire independent learning skills such as justifying their beliefs with evidence, critically examining issues and events, questioning bias and stereotyping, and conducting realistic and authentic problemsolving.

Scheduling and Grouping

Each school designs the appropriate structures, scheduling, and grouping practices that support its individual goals. Although CES does not require specific organizational structures or schedules such as houses, block scheduling, dedicated instructional blocks, or specific school hours, CES administrators find that as schools implement the model's practices and principles, they often initiate changes in these areas.

To enact the model's 10 Common Principles, CES highly recommends that teachers have responsibility for no more than 80 students at the middle and high school levels. CES's developers believe smaller classes and low overall student loads help teachers foster a personalized teaching and learning experience and provide teachers with time and opportunities for collaborative planning.

CES provides guidance, materials, and strategies for inclusion as guided by the model's principles. The

model encourages differentiated instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Schools following the CES principles should demonstrate nondiscriminatory and inclusive policies and use democratic practices that involve all stakeholders such as families, teachers, school leaders, and community members.

Technology

CES recommends but does not require the use of technology for teachers and students.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model claims to help schools implement research-based best practices in three focus areas to monitor student progress and performance:

- Aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state standards and the CES principles
- Establishing collaborative, reflective learning communities to look at student work to inform teacher practice
- Engaging in data-driven decision making and action research using the CES Cycle of Inquiry to design lessons and interventions that meet each student's needs

CES uses different types of formative and summative assessments. Assessment results are used to guide instructional groups and to identify students with special needs or needing intervention. Schools disaggregate data to assess the effective implementation of instructional, curricular, and other strategies to achieve high outcomes for all students. Schools analyze a wide range of data to drive the instructional program of the school and to fine-tune their classroom practices.

The model encourages teachers to assess students' performance through a demonstration of mastery

using performance assessments on real-life tasks. For example, students may complete projects and have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community audiences. Likewise, teachers conduct observations to understand each student's strengths and needs and to plan for appropriate instruction. Teachers then provide intensive support and resources to students who have not reached appropriate levels of competence to assist them in meeting those standards. Consequently, student achievement in the classroom depends on mastery rather than time spent in class.

Data-driven assessment and instructional practices help CES schools work toward a culture of continuous school improvement. External and internal evaluators conduct formative evaluations at some CES schools. Additionally, external evaluators perform summative evaluations.

Family and Community Involvement

Each CES affiliate center works with schools to create specific strategies to encourage family and community participation. Centers may engage parents, businesses, and organizations in activities such as tutoring, volunteering in the classroom or library, or participating in schoolwide planning committees. The model believes that the community and school need to work together and hold each other accountable for the achievement of all students.

Additionally, CES wants schools to actively involve and engage family and community members in the life of the school through such activities as student exhibitions and tutoring. CES also encourages school staff to develop "critical friends' relationships" with parents and community members by inviting them to participate in a school review, engage in an exchange of ideas to support school improvement, and assess student work.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

CES affiliate centers aim to deliver knowledge and skills necessary for school change by creating and sustaining professional learning communities. CES does not offer a one-size-fits-all professional development model, but believes support systems are central to developing a reflective learning community and reaching and maintaining high student achievement.

The CES professional development program is required for teachers and administrators. Parents, students, and other community members are often invited to attend. Program offerings and requirements, such as summer sessions, workshops, and institutes vary by affiliate center. Examples of professional development activities include the following:

- The trek—a summer institute offered by centers across the country
- School coaching—regular onsite consultations
- Principal institutes—sessions to build leadership capacity
- Implementation assessment workshops—workshops that show schools ways to measure progress against their benchmarks
- Peer coaching or visits to CES schools

The affiliate centers provide ongoing training for leadership teams, school-based coaches, and other school leaders. These centers work to establish school-based professional learning communities that are data driven and student centered to build capacity for schools to sustain professional development beyond the grant. For example, school personnel may participate in Peer Coaching Training or visits to CES schools. Depending on the size of the school, a school may have one or more onsite coaches. All coaches are experienced educators with expertise in instructional

practices, professional learning communities, leadership, data analysis, and best practices.

The CES National Office hosts a CES Summer Institute and Fall Forum each year as additional professional development opportunities for schools affiliated nationally or through a center with CES, schools adhering to the model's 10 Common Principles, and schools interested in learning more about CES. The CES Web site also maintains "CES Interactive," an online service that provides access to electronic news bulletins, the CES e-ssential News, information on the Summer Institute and Fall Forum, and CES ChangeLab. ChangeLab is a Web initiative that provides a range of resources on best practices.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The CES National Office has a complete benchmark document used for an annual review of implementation status. However, the degree to which schools engage in this annual review depends on the particular practices and strategies supported by each affiliate center. In most cases, the CES affiliate centers distribute the benchmarks to all schools and teachers. The benchmarks are also available on the model's Web site.

The benchmarks have five interconnected categories: student achievement, classroom practice, organizational practice, community connections, and leadership. Each category has indicators aligned with the principles. For example, Principle 2, which focuses on a limited number of essential skills, states that an indicator for leadership is that school leaders engage in coaching and supporting teachers to establish specific competencies for all students. The CES Small Schools Project includes an additional benchmark category, continuous school improvement. Under this category, schools demonstrate a commitment toward continuous improvement through data-driven processes and structures. These structures are created and sustained to allow all learners to develop intellectually.

The CES benchmarks are organized by principle and are intended to assist schools in assessing their reform effort. Because schools implement the CES model to varying degrees, the benchmarks are examples and indicators of high implementation where the 10 Common Principles are being followed closely. Schools can use the benchmarks to identify strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improvement and to establish goals for subsequent years.

Special Considerations

Various levels of affiliation are available to schools that are interested in participating in the CES network. The most comprehensive implementation of the model entails curriculum and instructional change based on CES's 10 Common Principles and benchmarks. Schools that implement the comprehensive model are often affiliated with the CES affiliate centers and receive all of the CES professional development, technical support, coaching, and Web-based resources. CES schools may also affiliate with the CES National Office, which also provides direct support to schools.

R eferences

Sizer, T. R. (1984a). *Horace's compromise: The dilemma of the American high school: The first report from a study of high schools*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Sizer, T. R. (1984b). *A study of high schools*. Arlington, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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This model ceased operations in 2005. It was reviewed by the CSRQ Center just prior to its closure and is included in this report for informational purposes.

Community for Learning—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Community for Learning (CFL) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of CFL is to create learning environments that address the diverse needs of all students by providing schools with strategies for schoolwide restructuring and improving classroom practices. The model is designed to tap into the strengths of community resources to help students overcome educational challenges. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1990 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 150 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$35,100 | \$21,500 | \$4,500 | N/A | \$9,100 |
| Year 2 | \$35,100 | \$21,500 | \$4,500 | N/A | \$9,100 |
| Year 3 | \$35,100 | \$21,500 | \$4,500 | N/A | \$9,100 |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

The Community for Learning (CFL) model was developed in the 1960s under Dr. Margaret Wang at Temple University’s Center for Research in Human Development and Education (CRHDE). CFL is based on research about what makes schools work and ways to help students learn. CFL was designed to incorporate community resources into the educational plan and to increase interactive learning experiences between community organizations and schools. The model is administered by the Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of CFL: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, instruction, inclusion, student assessment, data-based decision making, and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

CFL seeks to create learning environments that address the diverse needs of all students by providing schools with strategies for schoolwide restructuring efforts and improvement of classroom practices. The model is designed to support schools’ use of community resources—especially human resources—to help students overcome educational challenges. The model suggests that its implementation is suitable for all types of schools and diverse student populations.

Goals/Rationale

The underlying theory supporting CFL is that students’ learning is influenced by a variety of environments outside of the school. Community and social organizations can influence and provide the necessary

support to enhance the learning and academic needs of students. Therefore, CFL believes that learning can take place in different environments such as the workplace, cultural and educational institutions, and business or recreational facilities.

The model has identified four key areas as crucial to successful implementation:

1. Restructuring
2. Principal leadership
3. Adapted and differentiated instruction
4. Curriculum and instruction

Within these areas, CFL designs an implementation plan to build children’s readiness for school, set high academic standards, increase students’ motivation to complete high school, integrate technology, provide school-to-work experiences, foster citizenship and lifelong learning, and establish a safe learning environment.

Costs

CFL costs \$35,100 for each of the 3 years of implementation: \$4,500 for training materials, \$21,500 for professional development and technical assistance, and \$9,100 for the model development fee and an administrative overhead fee that is paid directly to Temple University. CFL requires states to support schools with implementation by providing start-up funds.

The model costs include a series of evaluations and surveys designed to tailor the model to meet each school’s needs; materials to guide implementation including manuals, binders, CDs, and other publications; and a formal professional development plan including leadership training, orientation sessions, training before implementation, and professional development workshops for administrators, teachers, and an optional in-house facilitator. For more specific information on the

costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ∅

The CSRQ Center identified six quantitative studies for effects of CFL on student achievement. No studies met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. The overall rating for evidence of positive effects of this model on student achievement is therefore zero. (Appendix F reports on the six studies of CFL that were reviewed but did not meet CSRQ Center standards.)

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

Since there were no studies of CFL that met CSRQ standards, the impact of this model on student achievement for diverse student populations is unknown. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

With no studies that met CSRQ Center standards to review, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no studies of CFL that met the Center's standards, the CSRQ Center was not able to

evaluate the effects of CFL on additional outcomes. Therefore, the rating is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

There were no studies eligible for review that examined the effects of CFL on parent, family, or community involvement. Therefore the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ∅

Based on documentation provided by the model, its development was based on research conducted by Margaret Wang and other researchers on the influences that school, family, and community have on student learning and educational resilience. However, there were no explicit citations that linked to any of the core components of CFL: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, instruction, inclusion, student assessment, data-based decision making, and family and community involvement. Therefore, based on the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is zero.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: (M)

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers an informal process to help school staff establish

an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Furthermore, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. However, the model does not provide formal benchmarks for implementation. CFL does provide schools with a timeline of the implementation process that is divided into three phases. Each phase is divided into multiple steps, but these steps only offer general guidance. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is limited.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. However, the model does not offer a formal plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is moderately strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to adoption, the CFL model requires collaboration among the school, school district, and state education agency (SEA). CFL encourages the SEA to develop incentive grants that would provide funding for implementation. The SEA is required to provide a liaison between the state and school district to provide information to schools that ensures alignment with state standards.

The local district is also required to participate in the adoption process, secure approval from the school board, and support the schools in procuring funding. Additionally, the district should provide a liaison to facilitate communication between the SEA and schools within the district. Before and during the implementation process, each district has a specific role in supporting CFL implementation. The district role includes the following responsibilities:

- Providing time for staff development
- Supporting a needs assessment
- Making student data accessible
- Assigning a full-time facilitator to each CFL school
- Allocating resources for implementation

At each school, staff work together to develop a plan that would maximize use of available resources and expertise. This plan should include an ongoing professional development and technical assistance program tailored to the needs of the school. The goal of this process is to create a “teaming” of teachers and administrators to help them work together as they seek to address the individual needs of all students.

Principals act as the school leader for restructuring by supporting ongoing staff development. They facilitate team building among staff and ensure that staff members participate in all phases of the model’s implementation process. Some of the principal’s duties include periodic release time for professional development activities and conferences, the identification and installation of school facilitators that oversee the model’s implementation, and fostering shared responsibility for its success among school staff, parents, and community members.

Each school must also have a full-time facilitator that acts as a guide and coach for the implementation process. The facilitator should be an experienced and accomplished teacher.

Curriculum and Instruction

CFL *does not* require schools to implement a specific curriculum. According to the CFL, its model can be applied with any curriculum. The model does, however, recommend that schools chose a curriculum that will meet the diverse learning needs of all students. As such, the model provides participating schools with guidance on meeting the needs of all students.

The model does require schools to adopt the Adaptive Learning Environments Model, an instructional model designed to meet individual student learning needs. Although students may learn at varying rates, all students are expected to learn basic academic skills, develop social skills, and work in a cooperative learning environment. Reading specialists and special education teachers work alongside general education teachers in the classroom to deliver coordinated instruction and services. This instructional model has six design elements:

1. Individualized progress plans
2. Diagnostic-prescriptive monitoring system
3. Classroom instruction-management system
4. Data-based professional development
5. School-based restructuring
6. Family involvement program

The individual progress plans and diagnostic-prescriptive process includes diagnosing learning needs when students enter a new unit of instruction, developing individualized learning plans (prescriptions) for each student, monitoring student progress by checking work and providing feedback, and keeping records to chart student advancement. To ensure adherence to the process, for example, the typical CFL classroom would have a variety of activities occurring simultaneously. Small groups of students, seated at various locations in the classroom, would work on math or reading

assignments geared to their individual levels while others might be rehearsing a play, working on a social studies project, or simply reading a book in the room's library corner. All the while, teachers and classroom assistants would be circulating about the room providing individual attention to students. The intention of this classroom design is to support effective learning by arranging classroom spaces that encourage student movement while retaining a systematic instructional process. The design is meant to encourage student independence and individual responsibility.

The design of the model's instructional process is calculated to encourage achievement of high academic standards and to motivate students by focusing on student-centered teaching and learning. This allows teachers, assistants, and paraprofessionals to work collaboratively toward a common goal as they provide on-the-spot instruction, change student learning plans based on reassessment of student needs, and give reinforcement and feedback to students as needed. Basic instruction in new tasks and review lessons are given in small groups, individually, or for the whole class. In all instances, teachers employ a range of instructional strategies and motivational techniques.

In addition to coordination of support services and extra personnel resources, the model's classroom management strategies require fostering individual student responsibility supported by establishing and communicating desired classroom rules and procedures. Students in a CFL classroom regularly talk in low voices, and occasionally walk from one place to another, all the while following these clearly articulated rules that are designed to maintain order by limiting distractions or disruptions.

Scheduling and Grouping

One of the main principles supporting the CFL model is that all children can learn, and that schools should be structured to foster better learning environments.

The model recommends that teachers use a variety of instructional grouping strategies—including mixed-ability grouping—to promote the academic success of students. Teachers are trained to create and use their own observations and progress assessments to group students individually and in small groups. Students are regrouped periodically within a class. The model recommends schools dedicate two 90-minute instructional blocks to mathematics and reading.

Technology

CFL does not include any specific technology requirements within its design. However, schools are encouraged to promote computer literacy for students and use of the Internet for problem solving and research.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

CFL requires participating schools to implement a diagnostic prescriptive process to monitor student progress and to modify schoolwide plans as necessary. This process includes the following steps:

- Pretesting students to identify their strengths and weaknesses
- Planning interactive lessons for remediation and to develop academic skills
- Administering posttests to evaluate student progress and make teaching adjustments as necessary

Teachers use these steps to assess the learning needs of students at the beginning of a curriculum unit, develop individualized learning plans, keep records of student progress, and monitor student progress on an ongoing basis. The model assists schools in creating their own prescriptive assessments. These assessments support grouping strategies and assist teachers in monitoring student progress.

Family and Community Involvement

CFL requires schools to collaborate with families and communities to improve the learning outcomes of students. The design of the model is based on research outcomes that link families and communities to student learning and educational effectiveness. In particular, the model expects schools to create strong ties with supportive community members and institutions to help “high risk” students improve their educational outcomes. Schools implementing this model must tap into the human resources offered by communities in order to positively affect the achievement of students. The model recommends strategies to achieve these community connections:

- Strengthening communications among the school, families, and the community
- Creating a system that connects health and human services programs to support students’ development and academic success
- Establishing relationships with community organizations such as libraries and museums to extend the learning environment beyond the school

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

CFL requires teachers, administrators, and facilitators to attend professional development workshops prior to and during model implementation. Training before implementation lasts a maximum of 4 days and is designed to expose school staff to the model’s components and requirements. The model requires school staff to attend workshops during the school year that continue to emphasize a focus on their school’s development of the model’s main components. New staff members attend all ongoing workshops, and are only required to go to training workshops before implementation when necessary. CFL also hosts three annual conferences for school staff.

Each CFL school must designate an experienced teacher as a full-time facilitator. The model provides in-depth professional development for the facilitators. These facilitators are trained to provide staff members with onsite technical assistance and are required to make themselves available for daily and monthly coaching and mentoring activities for teachers. The facilitators receive assistance from CFL Implementation Specialists for onsite data-based staff development activities.

The model assigns a CFL implementation specialist to each school to provide ongoing technical assistance. The implementation specialist conducts a range of activities to support the implementation process. For example, the specialist may deliver training before implementation, work with the school in conducting a needs assessment, provide school-based staff development, and assist the school in developing an evaluation plan for the implementation of CFL.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

CFL provides schools with a three-phase approach to implementing its model. Phase I involves the dissemination of model information to district officials, school administrators, and the school board. At this stage, each district needs to establish a district leadership team to develop an implementation plan.

As a district and its schools move into Phase II, staff commitment and consensus should be established. Additionally, each school should conduct a needs assessment which examines available resources, delegates responsibilities for implementation, and establishes

benchmarks and indicators. A CFL implementation specialist works with the schools to develop a site-specific plan for the delivery of instruction and the family/community involvement program.

In Phase III, implementation begins with training before implementation. During implementation, key stakeholders such as district, community, and school-based leaders meet regularly to monitor implementation progress. Progress reviews may include a number of indicators such as student achievement data, interviews with staff, and self-assessment surveys.

The school-based facilitators are also required to conduct annual evaluations on model implementation and model outcomes. Results from these evaluations are used to generate school profiles that include identification of the school's degree of implementation and ways to adjust procedures and strategies for improved implementation in subsequent school years. The profiles also serve as a basis for setting new implementation goals. And, finally, the evaluation provides schools with information on their strengths and weaknesses.

According to CFL, building the capacity of participating schools to implement effective instructional and planning strategies generally takes 3 years.

Special Considerations

CFL is a framework for classroom instruction and schoolwide restructuring. It is not a curriculum-based reform model. Schools implementing CFL must work to tailor the model to their specific needs and curricula.

Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Model Name: | Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | This model promotes whole school literacy reform through ongoing assessment, capacity building, customized site-based training, and continuous involvement with the community. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1994 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 812 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$50,000 for school-wide training | \$5,000 for School-Based Planning Team | \$300/teacher \$165/classroom materials per teacher \$139–\$189/assessment materials, two teachers | \$12,000 for site facilitator | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$15,000 for training and materials | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | | ⊘ |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | | ⊘(NR) |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas | | | | | ⊘(NR) |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | ⊘(NR) |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | | ⊘(■) |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | | ● |
| | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

The Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning (CELL) model, formerly California Early Literacy Learning, began in 1994 with the support of California State University San Bernardino College of Education and the Foundation for California State University San Bernardino. Originally, the CELL model, under the leadership of Dr. Stanley Swartz, provided professional development services and opportunities for pre-K–3 literacy teachers within the California public schools.

In 1997, the scope of the CELL model broadened to include professional development that supported whole school reform throughout the United States. Also, two new programs, Extended Literacy Learning (ExLL) and the Second Chance at Literacy Learning programs expanded services to middle and high school teachers. The ExLL training focuses on reading and content strategy development for teachers in grades 3–8. The Second Chance at Literacy training supports secondary reading specialists and content-area and special education teachers.

The CELL model emphasizes the importance of customized training aimed at schoolwide capacity building. A basic tenet of the training component is the gradual release of responsibility for implementation from CELL trainers to school-based in-house staff development, coaching, and mentoring. Through turnaround training and modeling, CELL aims to help school-based administrators, literacy coordinators, and faculty assume ownership of the CELL model.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of CELL: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to CELL, the primary focus of the training model is the implementation of scientifically based best practices that combine literacy strategies, language development, and literary connections. CELL promotes long-term training approaches that encompass school-based strategic planning, train-the-trainer initiatives, executive-level professional development for administrators, teacher collaboration, and peer coaching. The mission is to support whole-school literacy reform through ongoing assessment, capacity building, customized site-based training, and continuous involvement with parents.

Goals/Rationale

CELL aims to provide onsite literacy training, capacity building, technical support to administrators and faculty, and an annual evaluation of the schoolwide literacy approach. The model’s goals include the following:

- Conducting multiple literacy assessments that measure individual and schoolwide reading achievement
- Integrating reading and writing strategies into all subjects
- Enabling site-based managers to guide the schoolwide literacy approach
- Designing customized staff development that connects with a school’s annual plan, standardized test results, and state standards of learning

Costs

During the 1st year of implementation, CELL schoolwide training costs approximately \$50,000 for staff of an individual school. Multi-School Schoolwide Training is \$15,000 per school with a three-school minimum. Additionally, the training for the School-Based Planning

Team (SBPT) is \$5,000, based on an eight-member team. The Site Facilitator (Literacy Coordinator) training fee is \$12,000. The required professional books for the site facilitator cost \$110. There may be additional costs for the site facilitator for release time and attendance at conferences.

Other 1st-year costs include \$300 per teacher for required professional books, \$189 for the Assessment Kit Part I, grades pre-K–3, and \$139 for the Assessment Kit Part II, grades 4–6. The Assessment Kit Spanish, grades pre-K–3, is \$159. The model recommends one assessment kit for every two teachers. The Guided Reading Starter Set for CELL is \$165, with one set recommended per teacher. There may be additional costs associated with attendance at the conference, such as transportation, per diem for meals, and hotels, depending on the location of each school.

The 2nd-year implementation costs are approximately \$15,000 for both professional development and training materials. In subsequent years, schools are only required to pay to attend CELL conferences and workshops.

Schools may elect to participate in advanced training for the SBPT, which costs \$1,000 per day, additional Schoolwide Training at \$5,000 per day, onsite visits by foundation trainers at \$1,000 per day plus expenses, and Developer Implementation Visits, which cost \$2,000 per day plus expenses. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ⓪

The CSRQ Center reviewed one quantitative study for effects of Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning on

student achievement. Because the study did not meet CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design, the rating for the evidence of positive impact of this model on student achievement is zero. (Appendix G reports a description of the one study on CELL.)

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CELL met CSRQ Center standards, the impact of this model on student achievement for diverse student populations is unknown. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

With no studies that met CSRQ Center standards to review, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

Because no studies of CELL met CSRQ Center standards, the Center was unable to evaluate the effects of CELL on additional outcomes. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

There were no studies eligible for review that examined the effects of CELL on parent, family, or community involvement. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: 

CELL provided documentation that offered explicit citations to support the following core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, instruction, inclusion, student assessment, and data-based decision making. However, the model did not provide explicit citations for its family and community involvement component. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model’s design is moderately strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

Documentation provided by the model shows that it offers only an informal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model does not provide benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is limited.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and

sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The CELL model requires full staff support prior to implementation, including consensus building among teachers. The ultimate goal of the CELL model is to shift the responsibility for school reform to the local school staff. The model requires the support of the principal and site facilitator designated as the literacy coordinator.

The school administrator works collaboratively with a literacy coordinator and the school planning team to examine test data, identify reading and writing objectives based on the test analysis, develop a strategic training plan to respond to the reading and writing objectives, monitor the implementation of the literacy strategies, and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan. The school leadership also plans an evaluation approach to measure the effectiveness of the CELL training and the implementation of the model’s Framework of Instruction.

The literacy coordinator acts as an instructional leader for the implementation of CELL. The coordinator oversees the training plan and models CELL’s Framework of Instruction strategies for classroom teachers. Additionally, the literacy coordinator may work with other CELL schools to schedule observation visits and exchange ideas.

Faculty representatives form the school planning team. This team is responsible for the development of an overall implementation plan.

Schools are expected to form grade-level teams as well. These teams coordinate grade-level training with the literacy coordinator, plan for the implementation of the CELL Framework at each grade level, conduct weekly meetings to review assessments results and other aspects of implementation, and discuss professional literature. The literacy coordinator should work closely with each grade-level team to monitor implementation, including grouping strategies for students and the use of ongoing assessments.

The members of the school planning team provide the foundation for school improvement of the school-wide literacy program. This capacity-building approach was designed by CELL to develop representation from various in-school staff and ensure long-term leadership and investment in the literacy approach. The model defines these leadership roles as integral to the implementation of the CELL. According to the model, the leadership roles are especially critical to the success of the training initiative and the Framework of Instruction.

Curriculum and Instruction

CELL requires schools to implement a specific literacy curriculum, which focuses on reading and writing. Schools use the model’s Framework of Instruction to train teachers to deliver the literacy curriculum to students. According to the model, the framework aligns research-based teaching methods with content standards. The Framework of Instruction addresses five different areas of literacy development:

- Student outcomes assessment
- Direct instruction in reading and writing
- Oral language development

- Content area instruction
- Classroom organization and management

The instructional framework includes direct instruction in phonemic awareness, sound–letter relationships, fluency, comprehension, and independent reading. Teachers provide instruction in strategy development techniques for beginning, emergent, transitional, and independent readers. The model claims that this approach facilitates vertical and horizontal collaboration across grade levels and content teams.

According to the model, essential to the success of the Framework of Instruction is the direct instruction of literacy strategies. Although the direct instruction approach is an explicit role assumed by the teacher, students are actively involved in the approach. Throughout the implementation of the approach, the teacher makes decisions about student understanding of literacy strategies and also acts as an instructional model and mediator to assist students’ implementation of literacy strategies. The teacher focuses on the process by which students can construct meaning to become independent readers and writers.

Using both textual knowledge as well as student abilities to understand the text, the teacher prepares students for reading and writing strategy development. The steps entail activating prior knowledge to connect students with text, modeling literacy strategies for students, using talk-aloud approaches between teachers and students, assisting students in their initial attempts to practice literacy strategies, and gradually releasing responsibility to students as they become more independent readers and writers.

CELL also considers oral language development as a critical component of literacy instruction. Strategies for expanding and developing language acquisition are included in the Framework of Instruction. According to the model, the oral language emphasis prepares the reader for personal connections with text,

recognition of different text structure, creative written expressions, and conversations that encourage higher-level thinking.

The CELL Framework of Instruction also incorporates literacy strategies into content area instruction. The strategies of ongoing assessment, direct instruction, oral language development, and classroom organization and management are considered appropriate for all content teachers. Examples of content strategies are examining text structures, applying required strategies to expository and narrative text, using scaffolding during lessons to improve comprehension, and learning ways to apply strategies across content areas.

CELL provides schools with supplies and materials | to support the curriculum, instruction, parent and family literacy involvement, instructional grouping, classroom evaluation procedures, and professional development. The model provides professional books for teachers, such as *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding* (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000); *No Quick Fix: Rethinking Literacy Programs in America's Elementary Schools* (Allington, 1995); and *Classrooms That Work: They Can All Read and Write* (Cunningham & Allington, 2002). The model also publishes its own books to guide teachers on instructional practices and grouping. However, the model notes that schools may need to seek additional materials to use with the model, such as leveled reading books for students.

Scheduling and Grouping

The CELL model considers classroom management and active learning important in literacy instruction, but does not require a specific instructional schedule. CELL classrooms are arranged with a variety of literacy activities that stimulate critical reading and writing. Additionally, in the CELL model, teachers manage a variety of instructional grouping strategies to conduct read-alouds to the whole class, teach guided reading

lessons to small groups, engage the whole class in shared reading, help students learn from each other through reciprocal teaching, and support students' independent reading.

The CELL Literacy Framework suggests different types of grouping strategies for writing instruction, such as interactive writing, interactive editing, and independent writing. Interactive writing and editing techniques allow the student and teacher to work together to construct and edit written text.

Technology

The CELL model does not have specific technology requirements.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The Framework of Instruction incorporates a comprehensive assessment component that includes formative and summative assessments. CELL requires schools to use student results on state assessments, district assessments, and literacy framework assessments to guide the formation of instructional groups and identify students in need of intervention. The framework involves the assessment of students' understanding of text, implementation of strategies, and the application of strategies as an independent reader and writer. The model also encourages schools to use assessments to adjust teaching practices and to measure the level of support at the site level.

The school planning team analyzes data collected from a needs assessment survey, examines schoolwide standardized test scores, and reviews state standards-of-learning test results. The administration of pre- and posttests for achievement tests provides baseline data to determine student progress in reading and writing. Ongoing diagnostic tests are administered to students to establish a baseline and an appropriate program of instruction for individuals and groups of students.

Through the analysis, the team formalizes a school training plan for its staff to improve schoolwide literacy instruction and establishes school goals and plans for the next year of implementation.

The grade-level teams also work with the school planning team to analyze assessments and identify literacy approaches for instruction across all content areas. The teams analyze diagnostic reading test results and subsequently establish small-group and individualized instructional strategy approaches based on their findings. The grade-level teams closely monitor student progress and adjust or modify groups and individual strategies based upon frequent student observation and continuous diagnostic assessments. The instructional groups are fluid because the composition of the groups frequently changes as the students' literacy progresses.

Family and Community Involvement

CELL suggests that schools collaborate with families to create home-based literacy activities to enhance students' learning. The model offers workshops and materials for interested schools to provide literacy training to families. The purpose of this training is to provide all school staff members with information to plan, implement, and support family literacy programs in the classroom.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

CELL provides professional development and technical assistance to schools prior to and during implementation. The model conducts a needs assessment before the professional development, which helps to identify the training objectives, work plans, targets, and outcomes. The training supports schoolwide involvement of the staff with the ultimate goal for the school to assume ownership of the CELL model and the professional development approach.

CELL's professional development offers the following training components: administrator and literacy coordinator training, train-the-trainer sessions, grade and subject team meetings, and schoolwide in-service workshops. Examples of topics addressed are assessment, shared reading, and the interrelation of reading and writing. This professional development involves varied staff across subject and grade-level goals to achieve desired reading and writing outcomes. The overall professional development and technical assistance plan includes the following elements:

- Optional training before the schoolwide implementation of the CELL model
- Assistance with the development of the school planning team
- Leadership training workshops for administrators, the literacy coordinator, and the school planning team
- Content in-service workshops for faculty
- Methods to increase parent and community involvement
- Strategies for capacity building by gradually reducing the level of support to school staff

Before the school year begins, two optional training packages are available through the CELL model. One option, awareness training, is offered to schools. Through this workshop, under the leadership and guidance of CELL staff, a school critically reviews its current academic program, schoolwide test scores, and the school's annual plan. Through this systemic examination, school staffs identify early schoolwide literacy areas that need improvement. The other training option is an opportunity to plan various implementation approaches for the CELL training. With different scheduling and organizational choices available to school staff, such as training at an

off-campus retreat, CELL believes that faculty commitment can grow.

According to the model, staff participation in training before implementation allows staff to connect with the CELL model, minimizes frustrations and anxieties associated with organizational change, and builds a knowledge base prior to implementation. The process prepares schools for a realistic commitment and consensus agreement before the school year begins.

During the 1st year of implementation, the CELL training is designed to set the stage for schools to eventually assume ownership of the CELL model. Initially, schools establish a school planning team, which guides the implementation of the schoolwide model. Throughout the year, the team participates in five training sessions that focus on leadership building, change agent strategies, and colleague mentoring.

Faculty study groups meet monthly during the initial training year. CELL creates the agendas for these meetings, which are aligned in content and format with the SBPT training.

The CELL model includes a 30-hour training program that focuses on the CELL Framework of Instruction. The program is delivered either to the entire school faculty or the school planning team. The purpose of the training is the introduction of the elements of the Framework of Instruction, the theory that supports the framework, the implementation of the framework, and the integration of the framework with the school's current literacy program.

The literacy coordinators participate in five 1-week training sessions throughout the school year. The session topics are similar to the team workshops and provide more intensive instruction. The workshops also include strategies for coaching and collaboration, which are major responsibilities of the literacy coaches as they provide guidance and assistance to the school planning team and grade-level teams.

Besides assisting the school planning teams, the CELL staff provides technical assistance to school planning teams as they formalize plans for assessing student progress, grouping students, monitoring student progress, and evaluating the effectiveness of the literacy strategies.

Since the administrative and literacy staffs are responsible for mentoring and coaching faculty, the CELL model includes opportunities for visits to schools already implementing the CELL model. Also, CELL staff plan combined training with other CELL schools to provide a forum for discussion of successful techniques for capacity building as well as mentoring and collaboration approaches.

Aside from the training provided to individual schools, CELL also hosts two yearly conferences. The purpose of these conferences is to provide teachers with information and feedback from presenters with experience in teaching and implementing the model. The model encourages both CELL and non-CELL participants to attend these conferences. Additionally, the model sponsors district-wide mini-conferences designed to focus on specific topics.

CELL also provides several specialized training opportunities for teachers. The 1-day Assessment and Test-Taking Training was developed to help teachers integrate assessment and test-taking requirements into classroom activities. The CELL-ExLL-Second Chance Intervention Program trains teachers to meet the needs of students who are struggling in the general education classroom. This training is available to all staff but is specifically geared toward the intervention specialist.

Ultimately, the intent of the CELL model is to shape the CELL training so that all participants—administrators, Literacy Coordinators, grade-level faculty teams, and parents—feel involved in the implementation of the schoolwide literacy approach.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The model requires schools to collect student achievement data as an indicator of implementation and performance. From the achievement data, the model, in collaboration with the literacy coordinator, conducts a school-level analysis with statistical reporting to plan and make necessary adjustments to meet benchmarks set by the state.

The model also contracts with external researchers who conduct yearly summative evaluations on model outcomes for some schools. The model uses the results from the evaluation to provide schools with approaches to improve implementation strategies. Schools are required to adhere to the suggestions developed from the evaluations.

Special Considerations

CELL translates all of its staff development and student materials to Spanish. Workshops are also available for Spanish-speaking staff members and parents. The model director has also published a professional book in Spanish, *Ensenanza inicial de la lectura y la escritura* (Swartz, Klein, Shook, & Hagg, 2001).

The model conducts an optional resource development workshop to provide schools with information on identifying resources and grant money to support the implementation of the model. CELL will also train schools to redistribute available resources.

After the completion of the core training for administrators, literacy coordinators, and school planning teams, schools may choose to participate in advanced training, such as family literacy, assessment, test-taking, and mini-conferences that focus on specialized literacy issues. CELL staff recently developed two new training

initiatives: (1) interrelated literacy programs and (2) instructional aid workshops. CELL executive staff is also available to visit schools to observe classrooms and discuss implementation procedures with administration and faculty.

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Core Knowledge—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Model Name: | Core Knowledge | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of Core Knowledge is to form a more equitable society by providing the same education to all children, regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status, through a shared, sequenced curriculum. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1990 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–8 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 534 | 203 | 192 | 139 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | Varies | \$36,000 | \$1,000/teacher | N/A | \$8/student |
| Year 2 | Varies | \$32,000 | \$1,000/teacher | N/A | \$8/student |
| Year 3 | Varies | \$32,000 | \$1,000/teacher | N/A | \$8/student |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  ¹ |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |  |
| Math, Science, and Social Studies | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹Although the rating in this subcategory is limited, readers should note that most of the studies on Core Knowledge that met standards and also demonstrated evidence of positive overall effects on student achievement, examined the effects of this model in schools that served primarily low-income and minority populations.

Model Description

In 1986, E.D. Hirsch, Jr., a professor at the University of Virginia, launched the Core Knowledge Foundation. The Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, produces teaching materials, conducts research on curricula, and acts as the service provider of Core Knowledge. Core Knowledge is a school reform model based on Hirsch's theory that children need a common base of knowledge to fully participate in the classroom and democratic society.

In the early 1990s, the Foundation designed a Core Knowledge curriculum. The Foundation's efforts resulted in the Core Knowledge Sequence, an outline of specific material to be taught to all students in American elementary school classrooms. A group of administrators, teachers, and curriculum experts reviewed and revised the sequence prior to its publication. The Foundation periodically updates the sequence.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of Core Knowledge: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, and student assessment. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to the Foundation, the model's mission is to form a more equitable society by educating all children with a shared, sequenced curriculum, regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status (SES).

Goals/Rationale

Core Knowledge is designed to provide teachers with a set of specific topics to be taught in language arts,

history, geography, mathematics, science, and the fine arts. The content is presented in a grade-by-grade sequence in order to prevent repetition or gaps in the acquisition of knowledge. The purpose of following this sequence is to raise literacy rates and provide students with a shared language and knowledge base regardless of race, gender, or SES. The model also seeks to increase teacher satisfaction through professional development opportunities.

Costs

The costs of implementing the Core Knowledge model are dependent on the source of funding and the number of staff members and students at a particular school. Schools using Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program funds to pay for Core Knowledge receive extra guidance from CSR-trained Core Knowledge staff and, therefore, fees are higher for these schools.

For a CSR school with 25 teachers and 500 students, the cost for training during year 1 is \$36,000. The cost for training during years 2 and 3 is \$32,000. These costs include 2 days of leadership training for the school principal and Core Knowledge Coordinator, 5 days per year of professional development training for school staff, three follow-up school visits per year by Core Knowledge consultants, a start-up school kit, and new training materials for teachers each year.

For schools adopting Core Knowledge that do not receive CSR Program funds, the Core Knowledge Foundation provides a fee schedule for professional development workshops and follow-up site visits. The cost of each workshop and visit is based on the number of school staff. The cost of workshops ranges from \$1,800 to 4,800 per day, and the cost of site visits ranges from \$2,000 to 4,000 per day. These costs include workshop handouts and travel expenses for Core Knowledge consultants.

There are additional costs for materials and assessment. The Core Knowledge Foundation requires schools to allocate a minimum of \$1,000 per teacher for classroom materials such as reference books and maps, and a minimum of \$8 per student for the administration of Core Knowledge Curriculum-Referenced Tests each year. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ●

The CSRQ Center reviewed 22 quantitative studies for effects of Core Knowledge on student achievement. Of those studies, three met the CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. All three of these studies had findings the CSRQ Center considers *conclusive*, which means that the Center has confidence in the results reported. Within these three studies, half of the reported findings demonstrated positive effects of Core Knowledge on student achievement; those findings yielded an average effect size of +0.34. Together, these results are consistent with a rating of moderate for the overall effects of this model on student achievement. The studies that met standards are described below. (Appendix H reports on the other 19 studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

One of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards compared the performance of 242 fourth graders from two Core Knowledge schools with 82 fourth-grade students from two comparison schools on statewide standardized achievement tests in reading, math, and writing. The schools are located in an urban district, attended primarily by low-SES, predominately Hispanic students. Four years after the implementation of Core

Knowledge, there were no differences between Core Knowledge students' scores and those of comparison students. (There were, however, positive effects of the model for limited English proficiency (LEP) students, discussed in the following section.)

A second study compared 456 students in three Core Knowledge schools to a matched sample of 328 students in similar schools that did not use Core Knowledge, and found mixed results. The school districts included in the study reported low to middle SES and were located in Florida, Maryland, Texas, and Washington. The findings indicated that third and fifth grade Core Knowledge students performed better than comparison students on an achievement test developed by Core Knowledge in reading, science, and social studies. The average effect size was +0.52. However, there were no differences between the same third and fifth graders on the nationally standardized Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) in both reading and math.

A third study compared approximately 300 Core Knowledge students in grades 3–5 in a city in the South Central United States to 300 students who did not receive Core Knowledge, and found positive results. Core Knowledge students scored higher on the reading/language arts, math, and social studies subtests of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills than comparison students. The average effect size across these subtests was +0.17. There was no difference between the groups on the science subtest.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: ●

In the studies that met CSRQ Center standards, one study examined the effects of Core Knowledge on LEP students. This study found that LEP students in Core Knowledge schools performed better on math and writing statewide standardized tests than their LEP student comparison group. The average effect size was

+0.14. Because there were no other studies confirming this finding at the time of this review, the rating in this category is limited. It is important to note that a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that the research on a model provides evidence of positive impact for specific diverse student populations. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met CSRQ standards in this category. Core Knowledge is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met CSRQ standards in this category.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

Two studies that met CSRQ Center standards and are considered conclusive examined the impact of Core Knowledge on reading achievement. One half of findings reported (2 out of 4) demonstrated a positive impact of Core Knowledge. The average effect size for these positive effects on reading was +0.34. The rating is therefore moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

Of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards, one conclusive study demonstrated a positive impact of Core Knowledge on student achievement in math, with an effect size of +0.16. However, two other conclusive studies found no effects in math achievement scores between students who had received Core Knowledge and those who had not. The rating is therefore limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Science

Rating: 

Of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards, one study found positive, statistically significant results on a Core Knowledge-developed test in science, with an

average effect size of +0.41. The rating is therefore limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Social Studies

Rating: 

In the studies that met CSRQ Center standards, one conclusive study found positive, statistically significant results on a Core Knowledge-developed test in social studies, with an average effect size of +0.66. The rating is therefore limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

No studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined additional outcomes of Core Knowledge. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

No studies of Core Knowledge that met CSRQ Center standards examined effects on parent, family, or community involvement. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, its theoretical basis is founded on E. D. Hirsch's books, *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (1988) and *The Schools We Need: And Why We*

Don't Have Them (1996). These publications provide explicit citations for the following core components: organization and governance, and curriculum. Additionally, there are explicit citations that support the core component—student assessment. However, there are no citations that have an explicit link to the following core components of the model: professional development and technical assistance. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is moderate.

Evidence of Services and Support to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model's documentation shows that it offers a formal process to help school staff develop an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development.

Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to adopting the model, Core Knowledge suggests that interested schools schedule an overview presentation of the model and, if possible, visit an official Core Knowledge school. The cost of the overview presentation is \$500 plus any additional travel costs for Core Knowledge consultants. According to a school principal whose school is currently implementing the Core Knowledge model, it is also helpful to attend a National Core Knowledge Conference prior to adopting the model to gather additional information from staff and administrators from schools implementing the model.

If a school chooses to adopt Core Knowledge, the Foundation requires the school to conduct a secret ballot vote to confirm that a minimum of 80% of the staff supports implementing the model. If the required percentage of votes is obtained, the principal is required to sign the model's "Documentation of Staff Support" form and return the document to the Core Knowledge Foundation. The model also requires the school to gain and document the support of the central or district office staff.

Prior to implementation, the school must develop a schoolwide implementation plan that includes strategies for increasing parent involvement, utilizing technology, appointing subject-area specialists, improving assessment methods and formats, and acquiring the necessary materials for implementation. In addition, the Core Knowledge Foundation requires the school to develop a model evaluation plan that includes student

assessment tools and a schoolwide planning document that outlines clear procedures for integrating the Core Knowledge curriculum with state and district standards. Once these documents are complete, principals have the option of sending them to the Core Knowledge Foundation for critical feedback.

During implementation, principals continue to support the model's implementation by monitoring the day-to-day implementation activities, attending leadership workshops, and establishing a regularly scheduled 90-minute common planning time for each grade-level teaching team. A Core Knowledge Coordinator assists the principal with daily implementation. The Core Knowledge Foundation and school principal appoint an existing staff member, with 3 years teaching experience and knowledge of the Core Knowledge Sequence, as the Core Knowledge Coordinator. This staff member agrees to perform the duties of the Core Knowledge Coordinator in addition to his or her current responsibilities. The Foundation expects the coordinator to serve as the liaison between the school and the Foundation. Both the school principal and coordinator receive training in onsite coaching and mentoring during the Core Knowledge leadership workshop. Core Knowledge suggests that schools allocate funds to compensate the coordinator for the increase in responsibilities.

Curriculum and Instruction

Prior to implementation, the Foundation requires schools to adopt research-based reading, math, and history curricula approved by the Foundation. A listing of these materials is available on the Foundation's Web site.

Furthermore, the Core Knowledge Foundation requires schools to purchase and adopt the Core Knowledge Sequence. The sequence is a detailed outline of specific topics to be taught at each grade level in the areas of language arts, history, geography, math, science, and the fine arts. The curriculum's grade-level sequencing

is intended to reduce unnecessary repetition and gaps in knowledge acquisition. The Core Knowledge Sequence makes up one half of the school's curricula. The other half is comprised of state and district standards as well as existing math and reading curricula. Most schools decide to phase in the sequence either by content area or by grade level.

During professional development sessions, Core Knowledge consultants help the school develop a planning document that outlines how the school will integrate the sequence into state and district standards and their existing reading and math curricula. According to school principals contacted by the CSRQ Center, schools should determine if the Core Knowledge Sequence has been aligned with their state standards prior to implementation. This information can be found on the Core Knowledge Web site. If the state standards have not been aligned with the sequence, the Core Knowledge Foundation provides schools with a suggested process for completing the alignment. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center indicated that schools should set aside a significant amount of time for completing this process.

The model requires schools to purchase the Baltimore Curriculum Project (BCP) lesson plans. BCP, a curriculum designer and new school operator, develops lesson plans that cover each of the items on the Core Knowledge Sequence. During professional development workshops, schools incorporate state and district standards into these lesson plans. Teachers develop Core Knowledge units of instruction and modify the BCP lesson plans to align with state standards. If schools submit the units and lesson plans to the Core Knowledge Foundation, Core Knowledge consultants provide feedback to the schools. For more specific information on the BCP lesson plans, schools should directly contact the BCP (<http://www.baltimorecnp.org>).

In light of the sequence's specificity, the model encourages teachers to adapt instruction to meet the individual needs of students by allowing teachers to

select instructional strategies appropriate for each of their students. The model provides instructional strategies appropriate for students with disabilities and for English language learners. Teachers align units and lesson plans with these instructional strategies. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that the Core Knowledge framework is specific but that it provides room for creativity for both teachers and students.

Scheduling and Grouping

The model does not address instructional grouping for students or require devoted instructional blocks. Nonetheless, principals must modify instructional scheduling to include a required 90-minute uninterrupted planning time for each grade-level team.

Technology

Prior to implementation, schools outline how they will acquire and use technology and include this outline in their schoolwide Core Knowledge implementation plan. The Core Knowledge Foundation recommends that schools use technology for instruction. Thus, the Foundation provides guidance on software programs that complement the Core Knowledge Sequence. The model also encourages teachers to use the Core Knowledge computer-based Day-by-Day Planner. For more specific information about the cost of the planner, schools should directly contact the Core Knowledge Foundation.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model requires CSR schools to administer Core Knowledge Curriculum-Referenced Tests in grades 1–5. Although the sequence covers kindergarten through eighth grade, Core Knowledge has not developed curriculum-referenced tests for kindergarten or grades 6–8. These tests monitor both student retention of material and teacher effectiveness. The tests have been

field-tested in schools throughout the United States. Schools need to allocate a minimum of \$8 per student per year to cover the cost of assessment; this cost is included in the overall cost of the model.

Core Knowledge also requires schools to choose a method of formative evaluation. Schools can choose between teacher-designed formative tests or reading and math assessments developed by their curriculum provider.

Family and Community Involvement

Prior to implementation, Core Knowledge schools develop a strategic plan for parent and community involvement. Schools include this plan in the school-wide implementation planning document. The plan should include specific activities that can increase parent and community involvement. Core Knowledge encourages schools to include parents in resource development and day-to-day school activities.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Prior to adoption, Core Knowledge suggests schools schedule an overview presentation of the model offered by the Core Knowledge Foundation. This presentation informs schools about implementation requirements and increases teacher buy-in. The Foundation also encourages principals to either visit other Core Knowledge schools to observe the implementation process or to attend the annual National Core Knowledge Conference. Core Knowledge schools must ensure that all staff participate in the professional development plan. This plan includes a leadership workshop for the school principal and Core Knowledge Coordinator, onsite professional development days, and school visits.

Prior to implementing the model, the school principal and the Core Knowledge Coordinator attend a leadership workshop. The workshop trains these staff members

to build school capacity to conduct onsite professional development and offers strategies for coaching. During implementation, the Foundation also provides school staff members with 5 professional development days per year. During these professional development days, Core Knowledge consultants assist staff in initiating their school planning documents, aligning their curricula with state and district standards, developing assessments, and modifying the lesson plans as necessary. These professional development days also serve as an opportunity to provide new staff with an overview of Core Knowledge.

The professional development plan includes 6 days of onsite visits from a Core Knowledge consultant. The consultant visits classrooms and provides feedback to the school coordinator and principal. The model cost covers these professional development activities.

The Core Knowledge Foundation offers other workshops at additional cost to schools. For more specific information on the topics and dates of these workshops, schools should directly contact the Core Knowledge Foundation.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The Core Knowledge Foundation provides general expectations and implementation guidelines to school administrators upon selecting Core Knowledge. These guidelines can be found on the model's Web site. Schools must adhere to these guidelines in order to be recognized as an official Core Knowledge school. However, schools have autonomy to establish specific implementation and evaluation plans prior to implementation. These plans should be included in the schoolwide implementation planning document. Principals can submit these plans to the Core Knowledge Foundation for feedback and guidance.

Special Considerations

The Core Knowledge Foundation requires schools to purchase research-based reading and math programs approved by the Foundation in addition to adopting the Core Knowledge Sequence. Half of the school's curriculum consists of the sequence, and the other half of the curriculum consists of reading and math programs adopted by the school. According to principals contacted by the CSRQ Center, aligning the Core Knowledge Sequence with district and state standards may require a significant time commitment from school staff members.

The Core Knowledge Foundation seeks to create and nurture Core Knowledge advocates throughout the United States. The purpose of this position is to assist the Core Knowledge Foundation in its objective of educating 3 million students by 2008. Core Knowledge advocates are not employees of the Core Knowledge Foundation. Each Core Knowledge advocate serves as an independent agent of the Foundation. Core Knowledge advocates may present himself/herself as a source of information about the Core Knowledge movement. Advocates are authorized to provide information to local school boards, community groups, schools, state associations, and conferences. However, the Core Knowledge Foundation remains the sole provider of all formal Core Knowledge workshops and professional development.

Rferences

- Core Knowledge Foundation. (2004). *How do we know this works? An overview of research on Core Knowledge*. Retrieved November 1, 2005, from http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/research/eval12_2002.htm
- Hirsch, E. D., Jr. (1988). *Cultural literacy: What every American needs to know*. New York: Vintage Books.

Hirsch, E. D., Jr. (1996). *The schools we need: And why we don't have them*. New York: Doubleday.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a 4-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(2), 143–170.

Stringfield, S., Datnow, A., Borman, G., & Rachuba, L. T. (2000). *National evaluation of Core Knowledge Sequence implementation: Final report*. Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Taylor, G. L. (2000). *Core Knowledge: Its impact on the curricular and instructional practices of teachers and on student learning in an urban school district*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Nova Southeastern University.

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This model ceased operations in 2005. It was reviewed by the CSRQ Center just prior to its closure and is included in this report for informational purposes.

Different Ways of Knowing—Elementary

| Overview: Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Model Name: | Different Ways of Knowing | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of the Different Ways of Knowing school reform model is to provide educators with research-based tools, services, and partnerships that dramatically increase their capacity to develop all children to their full potential. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1989 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 500 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$70,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | ● |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | (NR) |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: Reading, math, science, and social studies | | | | ● |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | (NR) |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | (NR) |
|  | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

All of the information on the Different Ways of Knowing model was collected using the model's Web site and responses from three conversations with principals implementing the model. Although contact was initiated with a representative of Different Ways of Knowing, the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center was unable to conduct a conversation. For more information on Different Ways of Knowing, schools should directly contact the Galef Institute, the model's developer.

The Different Ways of Knowing model was introduced in 1989. The Galef Institute, an educational nonprofit organization that provides education consulting services, oversees implementation of the model. Different Ways of Knowing uses a wide range of the consulting services available through the Galef Institute to help schools and districts meet student achievement goals.

According to the CSRQ Center standards, the following were identified as core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, instruction, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to the model's Web site, the mission of the Different Ways of Knowing model is to provide educators with research-based tools, services, and partnerships that dramatically increase their capacity to help all children develop to their full potential.

Goals/Rationale

Different Ways of Knowing seeks to create a world in which every child and adult can develop to full potential.

The model seeks to meet this goal through a curriculum that uses the performing, visual, literary, and media arts to provide students with different ways to understand themselves and their surroundings.

The model's developers believe that a research-based curriculum that integrates the arts helps students to tap into their prior knowledge base, gain opportunities for real-life learning, practice important habits of mind, and learn from each other. The developers also believe that the model's design allows teachers to perceive student abilities more positively by moving away from standardization.

Different Ways of Knowing offers six service components that schools may choose to implement:

- Planning standards-based curriculum and assessments for all student groups
- Facilitating instruction to support student inquiry
- Teaching strategies that use reading and writing to close the achievement gap
- Teaching strategies that raise performance in mathematics to close the achievement gap
- Integrating the arts into all content areas to accelerate learning
- Developing leadership to achieve desired goals

All of the model's services are based on a set of core beliefs that place high expectations on both students and staff members within a school. Students are expected to surpass expectations and develop habits of successful learners in a classroom that nurtures individual strengths. Teachers are expected to use their talents and skills—in addition to research-based strategies and professional development activities—to accelerate school improvement. Administrators are expected to assist and accelerate the transformation process with support from external coaches. The

Different Ways of Knowing model also espouses the idea that a school can reach high standards without complete standardization.

Costs

The cost of implementing Different Ways of Knowing for 1 year is approximately \$70,000. For more information on the model's costs, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed eight quantitative studies for effects of the model on student achievement. Of these, one study met the CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. The Center considers the findings of this study *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in the study's results. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of this model on student achievement is limited. The study that met standards is described below. (Appendix I reports on the other 7 studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The study that met standards and was found to be suggestive used a longitudinal cohort design to follow students in fourth grade in 24 Different Ways of Knowing schools over 4 years. This study tracked performance trends on reading, writing, math, science, and social studies as measured by the Kentucky Instructional Results System. The results demonstrated positive trends over time in all subject areas that are statistically significant. Notably, scores dropped in 4 out of the 5 subject areas in the 3rd year

of implementation but were still significantly higher than the baseline scores.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

No studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the model's effects on diverse populations. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies

Rating: 

One study of the effects of the model on student achievement met the CSRQ Center's standards. It reported significant positive trends on tests in four subjects. The rating is therefore limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

No studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the model's effects on additional outcomes. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

No studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined effects on parent, family, or community involvement. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: (NR)

As noted previously, the CSRQ Center did not conduct a conversation with the model provider and therefore was not able to collect the evidence necessary to rate this category.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: (NR)

As noted previously, the CSRQ Center did not conduct a conversation with the model provider and therefore was not able to collect the evidence necessary to rate this category.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: (NR)

The CSRQ Center did not conduct a conversation with the model provider, and therefore was not able to collect the evidence necessary to rate this category.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to full implementation, Different Ways of Knowing works with schools to gather baseline schoolwide data including Adequate Yearly Progress scores, other test scores, a list of instructional programs used, district and state mandates, and student and

teacher demographics. Consultants from the Galef Institute use the data to help each school create a customized, written plan for change that includes both benchmarks and professional development activities to reach the desired academic and nonacademic goals. This process includes several meetings with school leaders and staff to clarify the roles and expectations of all stakeholders. The model also requires each participating school to create an “instructional leadership group” at this step.

Different Ways of Knowing places a strong emphasis on principal leadership as the key component to achieving schoolwide success. Principals are expected to share decision-making responsibilities with staff, grant release time for professional development activities, attend staff meetings, and organize and facilitate meetings focusing on the implementation of the model.

Curriculum and Instruction

At the core of the Different Ways of Knowing model is a belief that instructional strategies should be based on a student’s prior knowledge and that the arts should be integrated into all subject areas. The model developers believe that interdisciplinary instructional methods allow teachers to better meet the diverse needs of all students. Different Ways of Knowing does not require schools to implement a particular curriculum, but it does require them to actively support an arts and literacy-infused curriculum.

While the model does not require the use of a specific curriculum, it can provide teachers with detailed, research-based curriculum modules that integrate the visual and performing arts and literacy instruction into social studies, history, math, and science courses. The Galef Institute also provides schools with curriculum modules and instructional strategy guidebooks. The curriculum modules help teachers to integrate the arts in all content areas. The model also provides teachers with instructional strategy guidebooks that

offer recommendations for instructional settings and suggestions for effective classroom practices.

The set of guidebooks, *Strategies for Teaching and Learning Professional Library*, connects the theory behind Different Ways of Knowing to the teaching strategies and evaluations used in the classroom. The guidebooks incorporated in the strategies collection include the following titles: *Second Language Learners* (Cary, 1998), *Writing as a Way of Knowing* (Bridges, 1997), *Literature as a Way of Knowing* (Short, 1997), *Math as a Way of Knowing* (Ohanian, 1996), *Visual Arts as a Way of Knowing* (Gee, 1999), *Dance as a Way of Knowing* (Zakkai, 1997), *Drama as a Way of Knowing* (Heller, 1996), *Music as a Way of Knowing* (Page, 1996), *Assessment—Continuous Learning* (Bridges, 1996a), and *Creating Your Classroom Community* (Bridges, 1996b).

Different Ways of Knowing recommends various instructional strategies in addition to the arts-in-learning curricula. These strategies include student-centered, differentiated (multiple paths), and inquiry-based (problem solving) instructional practices. The model expects teachers to focus on the development of higher-order thinking skills and problem-solving skills using these instructional strategies. Additionally, Different Ways of Knowing provides guidance on classroom management strategies and methods for addressing and shaping the overall school culture.

Scheduling and Grouping

Different Ways of Knowing does not address the areas of scheduling and instructional grouping. Instead, it places a strong emphasis on including all students in regular classrooms. The model offers specific steps for raising the performance of low-income students, special education students, girls, English language learners, and students of different ethnicities. Professional development workshops provide teachers with specific strategies for creating classrooms of “access and equity.”

Technology

Different Ways of Knowing does not indicate that it includes technology guidance or recommendations on the use of technology for instruction in its model design.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The Different Ways of Knowing model uses district and state assessments to monitor student progress. The model encourages all schools to use feedback collected through this monitoring process to adjust implementation and instructional strategies. Galef Institute consultants are available to help schools analyze and interpret student assessment data.

In addition to student assessments, external evaluators also conduct schoolwide formative evaluations in some Different Ways of Knowing schools.

Family and Community Involvement

Different Ways of Knowing strongly encourages schools to use community resources such as museums and art galleries to enhance the arts based portion of the curriculum.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Different Ways of Knowing offers a range of professional development services for schools. Professional development services may include one-on-one teacher training sessions, schoolwide institutes, leadership institutes, professional development workshops, online professional development activities, and school-based or job-embedded coaching strategies. Consultants from the Galef Institute provide each school with a comprehensive implementation toolkit, which is customized to meet the specific needs of the school.

All of the consultants provided by the model are trained in the Different Ways of Knowing strategies and tools.

They use a variety of resources to help each school meet its school improvement plan goals. Coaching is a central part of this training. The coaching process includes modeling of expected teaching practices, co-teaching and co-planning, classroom observations with feedback, and the facilitation of study groups. The coaches regularly use teacher and school data to continuously adapt the professional development plan.

Each school works with Galef Institute consultants to choose the professional development activities best suited to meet its individual needs. This is accomplished through Galef Institute-sponsored institutes for both teachers and administrators. The Different Ways of Knowing school institutes are open to teachers, site administrators, paraprofessionals, and family and community members. The institutes focus on developing an understanding of the model's instructional strategies. Leadership institutes are also available and open to principals, site administrators, and teacher leaders. Topics covered in the leadership institutes include data collection, developing organizational structures, instructional leadership, and meeting organization. One of the goals of the model is to empower principals and site administrators as instructional leaders.

Different Ways of Knowing also holds a series of workshops each year to provide hands-on experience for classroom teachers. Topics covered include designing a standards-based curriculum, integrating the arts into instructional strategies and embedding literacy and mathematical thinking strategies into all curricula. Online professional development activities are also available and include demonstrations on new learning activities, discussions of student work, and interactive discussions.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The model encourages each school to conduct a self-assessment prior to implementation to determine the

needs of both the school and its students and to determine if a significant commitment by staff will occur. Different Ways of Knowing then works with each school to develop a customized set of benchmarks to monitor implementation.

Information is collected through student achievement data and teacher self-assessments. During implementation, Different Ways of Knowing provides each school with a customized “road map” that provides benchmarks to help monitor progress. The model claims that it works with schools during implementation to analyze the data and use the results to establish ongoing school goals, make adjustments to model implementation activities, and adapt professional development strategies to meet reform expectations.

Special Considerations

As stated above, the CSRQ Center was unable to conduct a conversation with the Different Ways of Knowing model director. All information provided is based on the model's Web site and other publicly available materials. For more specific information on the Different Ways of Knowing model, schools should directly contact the Galef Institute, the model's developer.

Different Ways of Knowing does not require schools to implement a predetermined plan. Instead, each school works with Galef Institute consultants to select the components best suited to its unique needs. Conversations with three school principals provided feedback on the customizable nature of the model. One school principal described the model as a school reform “menu” that allowed for complete customization. Another school principal noted that a school might not be offered the kinds of flexibility and choices they would like when implementing some elements of the arts-infusion model. Two principals stressed that the model works best when implemented in a school community whose operational philosophies are similar to those espoused by Different Ways of Knowing.

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Model Study Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Petrosko, J. M. (1997). *Different Ways of Knowing Study A: Implementation of student-centered teaching and learning practices and student assessment results for research demonstration site (RDS) schools participating in Different Ways of Knowing*. Louisville, KY: The Galef Institute-Kentucky Collaborative for Teaching and Learning.

Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model)— Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction is to accelerate student performance using interactive, systematic, and explicit instruction. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1968 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–8 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 56 ¹ | 9 | 12 | 5 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$74,500 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 2 | \$73,500 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 3 | \$68,000 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |  |
| Math | | | | |  |
| Writing | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹Thirty of the 56 schools are located in Guam. The model provider did not identify these schools as urban, suburban, or rural.

Model Description

Siegfried Engelmann's research in the late 1960s on the effects of implementing innovative instructional strategies in classrooms with children from disadvantaged backgrounds resulted in the theoretical foundation for Direct Instruction (DI). The model features a scripted curricular program that incorporates instructional and grouping strategies.

Since 1968, Engelmann and his associates have field-tested and revised DI reading materials and processes while developing additional curricular programs for science, social studies, fact learning, and handwriting. Today, Science Research Associates (SRA), the publisher of most DI materials (<http://www.sraonline.com>), produces over 40 DI curricular programs that serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade throughout the United States as well as overseas.

Reviewing the quality and effectiveness of DI is difficult, since in practice DI curricular materials may be implemented in whole school or individual classroom settings, and with or without the support of an external service provider, which may be an individual consultant or a large national organization. Further, in practice, it is hard to ascribe the DI outcomes reported in the research to an individual provider, since the information is often not provided in studies. Thus, while our research review reports on overall outcomes of DI implementation, the profile below is of only one DI service provider.

This review is based on an in-depth analysis of the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction provided by the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI). NIFDI is a national organization that is often considered the leading DI service provider, as it was founded and directed by Siegfried Engelmann. However, readers should note that a variety of individuals as well as other organizations can provide DI implementation services. For example, J/P Associates, another large-scale

DI service provider, currently works in 12 states (<http://www.jp-online.com/>), and Educational Resources, Inc. works in 16 states (<http://www.erigroup.us/>).

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of DI were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to NIFDI, the focus of the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction is to accelerate student performance using interactive, systematic, and explicit instruction supported by a system of data analysis and problem solving tightly linked to instruction. A major focus of the model is to build the capacity of teachers and administrators to implement the model with fidelity. The model is based on the premise that the district or school cannot properly implement the model without external input and direction unless the site has demonstrated through data that it is self-sufficient.

Goals/Rationale

The Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction has two foundational principles: all students are capable of learning if taught using proper techniques, and all teachers can be effective if provided with research-based strategies and materials. Thus, the model seeks to accelerate learning for all students and provide teachers with appropriate strategies by targeting factors that are within a school's control. These factors include assessment, instruction, grouping, scheduling, professional development, and resource allocation. Notably, the model does not rely on parental involvement or technology; NIFDI believes that school

leaders often cannot control these factors or use them efficiently.

The main component of the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction is Engelmann’s curricular program. Engelmann asserts that an implementation plan, such as DI, seeking to accelerate student achievement should include the following components:

- A scientifically research-based instructional program
- Homogeneous and flexible grouping
- Appropriate student placement within the instructional sequence
- Daily practice and application of skills and strategies
- Scheduling that allows for cross-classroom grouping and provides sufficient daily instructional time
- Instructional activities that motivate, engage, and interest students
- Ongoing data collection for instructional decision making

Costs

When designing DI, Engelmann stated that a school’s budget should reflect its vision for school reform. Thus, if a school plans to reform curriculum and instruction, schools must allocate resources to purchase the appropriate materials. The Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction expects principals and administrators to be instrumental in allocating resources to pay for implementation costs.

Implementing schools design a budget for NIFDI services, which generally includes training, onsite

consultation, training support materials for teachers, and miscellaneous fees. Notably, this budget does not include release time for peer coaches and staff training, conferences, curricular materials for students, or travel to model schools. The following costs are estimates and may vary depending on school size and proximity to other schools implementing the model.

The average cost for 1st-year NIFDI services is \$74,500. During the 2nd year of implementation, NIFDI services cost \$73,500. The cost for NIFDI services during the 3rd year is \$68,000. These costs include training for teachers, onsite consultation, training and implementation support materials, and miscellaneous fees. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 68 quantitative studies for effects of DI on student achievement. Fourteen studies met the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of 11 of these studies to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results reported in the studies. The findings of three studies are considered to be *suggestive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has limited confidence in the results. The findings in the conclusive and suggestive studies showed mixed results: Some studies demonstrated a positive impact of DI on student achievement, and other studies showed no statistically significant effects.² Slightly more than half of the findings (50.3%) reported in the studies that

²Level of statistical significance is determined by a statistical test and demonstrates whether the observed changes are likely to have occurred by chance alone.

met the CSRQ Center’s standards demonstrated positive effects. The average effect size of the significant findings was +0.69. Together, these results are consistent with an overall rating of moderately strong for the effects of DI on student achievement. The 14 studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards are described below. (Appendix J reports on the other 54 studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards used experimental, quasi-experimental matched comparison, and longitudinal research designs to investigate the impact of DI on student achievement in reading, writing, and math. The studies took place in rural, urban, and suburban schools located in different regions of the United States. Four studies reported consistent, positive effects of DI on student achievement, two studies reported no significant effects, and eight studies reported a mix of findings demonstrating positive impact and no significant differences.

Of the four studies that demonstrated consistent, positive effects of DI on student achievement, three are considered to be conclusive, and one was considered to be suggestive:

- One conclusive study (matched comparison) examined math achievement of second-grade students in a suburban district in the midwestern United States. A sample of 26 DI students scored higher than a sample of 93 comparison students on all three math subtests of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS); the average effect size was +0.80.
 - A second conclusive study (quasi-experimental) examined reading achievement of 30 first-grade students in a rural school in the southeastern United States. Students in one class using DI (Reading Mastery) were compared with students in another class using a traditional basal reader. The DI students scored higher on all three subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test; the average effect size was +1.49.
 - A third conclusive study (matched comparison) compared reading achievement of 19 third- and fourth-grade students at two DI schools that used the Horizons reading program with 19 students in two non-DI schools. The DI students at both grade levels scored higher than comparison students on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System; the average effect size was +1.42.
 - The one suggestive study tracked the achievement of students in grades K–3 attending DI schools in urban districts in different regions of the United States for 4 years. Trends showed that student baseline levels of achievement improved significantly on the Wide Range Achievement Test.
- Two studies with findings that were considered to be conclusive found no effect of DI on achievement outcomes:
- One matched comparison study examined reading achievement of students in grades 2, 4, and 6 at six DI schools in an urban, primarily low socioeconomic status (SES) district in the midwestern United States. Using advanced statistical analyses, the results of DI and district comparison students showed no significant differences in scores on the Stanford 9 Total Reading test or the Ohio Proficiency test.
 - A second study compared the achievement of cohorts of students at four urban, primarily low SES DI schools with those at matched schools that were not using DI in the south Atlantic region of the United States. No significant effects of DI were found on two reading subtests (vocabulary and reading comprehension) of the CTBS.
- Eight studies reported on multiple outcome measures on which DI showed a mix of positive impact and no significant effects:
- Two of these studies used experimental research designs with random assignment. One study randomly assigned 42 fourth-grade students to use the

DI math curriculum or a comparison math curriculum. After 1 year, no significant differences were found between each group of students based on math scores from the National Achievement Test (1989) on the concepts/problem-solving and total math subtests. However, scores were higher for DI students on the computation subtest (effect size of +0.14). The second study randomly assigned 94 second-grade students in two urban, high minority schools in the northeastern United States to using the DI reading curriculum or a comparison curriculum. After 1 year, no differences were found between the groups of students on the reading comprehension and total reading subtests of the CTBS. However, DI students scored significantly higher than comparison students on the vocabulary test (effect size of +0.32).

- A third study used a matched comparison group to examine reading achievement of 71 DI and 71 comparison students in grades 3–5. Students attended urban schools that served primarily low SES, high minority student populations in the northwestern United States. After 2 years of using DI, no significant differences were found between the groups of third- and fifth-grade students based on achievement on the State Reading Proficiency Test. However, fourth-grade DI students scored significantly higher than comparison students on the Riverside Publishing Off Grade Reading Proficiency Test (effect size of +0.21).
- A fourth study was a longitudinal study of DI students in two urban schools. Results were mixed, and the findings were considered to be suggestive. In the pilot study with a small sample (17 students), first graders showed no significant improvements after 2 years of DI, but second graders showed a significant improvement in the rate of academic

gain on the WRMT. With a larger sample (65 students) and compared with baseline WRMT scores, results indicated no significant improvements over 2 years of DI in terms of rate of academic gain for students in grades 1–5. However, when scores were converted to normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores, students in grades 1–5 performed better after 2 years of DI than students did before DI was implemented.

- A fifth study used a matched comparison research design to evaluate the effects of a locally developed program based on DI curricula. The study evaluated DI's impact on students in grades K–3 in a school district with a significant minority population in the south-central part of the United States. Although results were reported for four different measures of reading achievement in grades K–3 using a variety of analytic techniques, the CSRQ Center considered only one of the results to be conclusive.³ Kindergarten students who received the intervention scored significantly higher on end-of-year WRMT tests than comparison students who attended schools that did not participate in DI (effect size of +0.41).
- A sixth study compared reading and math achievement of DI students with comparison students in an urban, low SES district that served mostly African American, at-risk students in the midwestern United States. The study included two groups of DI students: those who received DI continually in grades K–3 and those who received DI continually in grades 1–3. The grades K–3 DI sample scored significantly higher in reading and math on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) at the end of grade 3 than comparison students (average effect size of +0.67). The grades 1–3 DI sample scored higher on the math MAT than comparison

³This subcategory is new for the November 2006 version of CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models and is based on additional available research.

students (effect size of +0.79), but no differences were found in reading. Of note, the samples in this study are from a previous evaluation of the impact of DI on student achievement (Stebbins, St. Pierre, Proper, Anderson, & Cerva, 1977). That study was one of the independent evaluations conducted in the late 1970s that provided evidence of the short-term effectiveness of the DI model for teaching at-risk elementary students (also see Becker, 1977). Because these original evaluations were published before 1980, they were not eligible for full review as part of this report. A number of follow-up analyses that are reported in studies published after 1980 support and extend earlier results; however, all but one of these (the fourth study described previously) failed to meet the CSRQ Center’s standards because the comparison groups changed over time and the follow-up research did not sufficiently control for preexisting differences between comparison and treatment groups on prior achievement.

- A seventh study examined outcomes of students in 17 elementary schools in a large urban district in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Student outcomes in reading, writing, and math were examined using the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. Three cohorts of students in grades 3 and 5 were tracked between 1993 and 2000. These cohorts showed small overall achievement gains in all grades and all three subjects before and after implementation of DI, which was implemented as a city–state partnership in 1997. However, gains were not evident each year, and level of statistical significance was not calculated.
- An eighth study examined outcomes of students at three urban schools that served predominantly low-SES, African American populations and at four suburban elementary schools that served primarily high SES, white populations in Wisconsin.

Student outcomes in reading were examined using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. Results after 3 years of implementation showed a statistically significant interaction of district and instructional methods: Suburban DI students outperformed non-DI students, and urban non-DI students outperformed DI students.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

None of the studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined effects for diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: (M)

Twelve studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined the effects of DI on reading achievement. The studies are described previously in the subsection titled “Evidence of Positive Overall Effects.” The majority of the results reported in those studies demonstrated a positive impact on reading: 54% of the findings were statistically significant. The average effect size across those significant findings was +0.69. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderately strong.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: (M)

Four studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined the effects of DI on math achievement. Approximately 57% of the results reported in those studies demonstrated a positive effect on math achievement. The average effect size across those significant findings was +0.62. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Writing

Rating: ○

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the effects of DI on writing achievement. Achievement results by third-grade students in six elementary schools were mixed, but the majority of students showed increased writing achievement over time. However, the study did not test for statistical significance. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is zero.⁴

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: ◐

Two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design reported results on the impact of DI on additional outcomes. One study included the School Climate Inventory (Butler & Albert, 1991) and found no significant differences between DI and control schools. The second study administered a survey on math attitudes. No significant differences were found between first-grade students in DI and control schools, but second-grade students in DI schools showed more positive attitudes than students in control schools. Because of mixed findings in this category, the rating is limited.

Of note, a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that the research on the model provides evidence of positive impact for additional outcomes. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met the CSRQ Centers standards for this category. DI is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met the CSRQ Center's standards for this category.

⁴This subcategory is new for the November 2006 version of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* and is based on additional available research.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

No studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the impact of DI on parent, family, or community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, explicit citations support all of the core components of DI: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by DI, the model offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of DI and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal

benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model's core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to implementing the Full Immersion Model of DI with NIFDI, schools must submit an application that briefly describes their school, including the number of students and teachers by grade, length of school day, and the number of students who receive free or reduced-price lunch. The model provider also recommends that schools unfamiliar with DI visit a model DI school and attend the Association of Direct Instruction's summer workshop on the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction. Three principals that were contacted by the CSRQ Center concurred that a school visit prior to implementation contributes to faculty buy-in and investment.

After selecting the model, NIFDI requires the school faculty to vote on the model's adoption. NIFDI requires at least 80% of the faculty support adoption unless district administrators mandate implementation. As part of the school's commitment, faculty must agree to

changes in daily schedules, instructional grouping, professional development, and instruction. The model also requires schools to gain the support of district administrators. Specifically, the district has to provide a staff person to serve as the school's accountability officer and liaison with the external support provider.

Prior to implementing the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction with NIFDI, schools need to submit an application with a brief description of their school that includes the number of students and teachers, length of the kindergarten school day, and the number of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch. After submitting this information, the principal engages in a phone discussion about the model's requirements with NIFDI representatives. Subsequently, NIFDI sends the school a letter of commitment that includes a plan for implementation and the implementation costs.

During the initial stage of implementation, NIFDI assigns each school two NIFDI consultants: an implementation manager and a project director. NIFDI also requires schools to hire or appoint new personnel. Schools must appoint a building coordinator who is responsible for implementing the model, coordinating peer coaches, grouping students, and scheduling onsite trainings. The model also requires the coordinator to teach during the 1st year of implementation if he or she has not previously taught in a DI classroom. If a current faculty member does not have time to fulfill the coordinator's responsibilities, schools must hire a new faculty member. With the help of NIFDI, schools also appoint teachers to serve as peer coaches and appoint or hire teacher aides for kindergarten and first-grade classrooms.

In order to increase communication and develop a school climate that supports the model, NIFDI requires schools to develop coaching capacity with teachers from each grade level. Coaches meet regularly with the school principal to review data and address problems of implementation. The school management team

includes the school principal, building coordinator, and grade-level peer coaches. The management team supports and monitors the progress of teachers, classrooms, and individual students. The team participates in weekly conference calls with the project director and implementation manager.

In addition to meeting with advisory teams and serving on the management team, the school principal must fulfill other managerial responsibilities, which include maintaining faculty buy-in, clearly defining faculty roles, and creating a positive work environment. The principal is primarily responsible for applying a problem-solving approach that ensures a high fidelity of implementation. The principal also attends DI training and makes certain that DI teaching techniques are implemented in each classroom. With the building coordinator, the principal conducts classroom observations to monitor teaching and student progress. The principal is also responsible for implementing scheduling requirements such as dedicated instructional blocks for reading and math across each grade level.

Curriculum and Instruction

The DI approach is based on the belief that learning is affected by the sequential development of skills, instructional approaches, amount of skill practice and application, ongoing feedback given to students, and continuous monitoring of student progress. Four basic principles guide the DI curriculum and instruction:

- The programs should develop specific skills through continuous practice and later combine these skills to form higher order thinking skills.
- Lessons should emphasize reviewing and practicing already learned skills and integrate new skills as they are mastered.
- Scripted and predictable lessons ensure daily assessment of student progress.

- Field-tested instructional practices should be revised, adjusted, or maintained based on student progress and responses.

The central element of The Full Immersion Model of DI is the scripted curricular program. The curriculum materials include highly interactive yet fast-paced lessons. Each lesson builds on the previous lessons; therefore, the lessons gradually introduce new skills. The lessons require teachers to adopt specific instructional strategies such as directing choral responses and signaling. NIFDI suggests that schools phase in the implementation of the model typically by implementing the reading and language curricula during the 1st year, spelling and math during the 2nd year, and handwriting during the 3rd year.

Prior to implementing the model, NIFDI mandates that schools discontinue their use of other instructional programs that may compete for time and resources unless the programs are approved by NIFDI. For example, schools should not continue to implement programs that take students out of the classroom during instructional blocks.

Schools purchase the DI instructional materials from SRA (<http://www.sraonline.com>). Reading and language materials include *Reading Mastery Classic I and II*; *Reading Mastery Plus III–IV*; *Horizons A–D*; *Corrective Reading (Decoding and Comprehension)*; *Language for Learning*; *Language for Thinking, Reasoning and Writing*; and *Expressive Writing*. DI math and spelling materials include *Distar Arithmetic 1*, *Connecting Math Concepts Levels A–F*, *Corrective Mathematics*, and *Spelling Mastery*. *Understanding U.S. History* by Doug Carnine and colleagues, which can be purchased through the University of Oregon Bookstore, is the recommended core reading program for students who have completed the highest level of *Reading Mastery*. These materials include scripted lesson plans, workbooks, and materials for assessing student performance. NIFDI provides teacher training for implementing these materials in the classroom.

Scheduling and Grouping

Scheduling is essential to the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction. The model requires schools to plan their instructional school day around the DI curriculum. Schools need to establish a dedicated instructional block for each major subject area including math, language, and spelling. Schools are also required to establish two instructional blocks for reading: typically one block in the morning and one block in the afternoon. Schedules are designed to permit cross-class grouping and efficient deployment of teachers, aides, and coaches.

The duration of each instructional block depends on the grade level and subject area. NIFDI provides scheduling guidelines for each grade level and subject area. These guidelines ensure that teachers have sufficient time for instruction, guided practice, and independent work. Throughout implementation, the school management team monitors scheduling.

During the 1st year of implementation, the implementation manager uses DI placement tests to place students within homogenous instructional groups. The implementation manager places all students, including most students with special needs, in instructional groups; for this reason, the model does not generally accommodate pull-out programs. The number of students in each instructional group depends on the grade and skill level of the group.

During a weekly conference call, the school management team discusses group and individual student performance with the implementation manager and the project director. Although students are grouped homogeneously for instruction, they are not permanently tracked. The model requires the management team to closely monitor student performance and regroup students based on their progress. Dedicated instructional blocks for each grade level allow teachers to regroup students within their grade level.

Technology

NIFDI feels that technology is generally peripheral to the mission of accelerating student achievement. For that reason, the Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction does not require schools to use technology for instruction or management. The DI math curriculum does teach students to use a four-function calculator. NIFDI recommends that schools selectively use the Funnix CD-based reading programs (Funnix Beginning Reading and Funnix II) to improve the literacy skills of students in grades 2–4. Other instructional uses of technology are left to the discretion of the school.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

During the initial stage of implementation, students take a placement test that determines their instructional grouping. Throughout implementation, teachers monitor student progress and grouping using daily assessment of student performance on lessons. Teachers are taught techniques to analyze and interpret data from these assessments; the techniques help with reflecting on their instructional practices, evaluating students' responses to instruction, and identifying students who do not demonstrate mastery.

Each week teachers provide the school principal with a summary report of student performance, which notes any students that do not make adequate progress during that week. In return, the principal submits a summary report of student performance to NIFDI. During weekly conference calls, the school management team (principal, building coordinator, and peer coaches) discusses the progress of instructional groups and individual students with the implementation manager and project director.

If individual students do not make adequate progress for 3 consecutive weeks, the management team establishes a plan for remediation. The principal or building coordinator continues to monitor the students'

performance on a weekly basis. The model requires the management team to ensure that teachers receive feedback, coaching, and appropriate instructional materials to meet the needs of students requiring remediation.

Family and Community Involvement

Based on its experience, NIFDI feels that family and community involvement is peripheral to accomplishing its mission to accelerate student achievement. The NIFDI model assumes that since parental involvement cannot be controlled by school leaders, the Full Immersion Model of DI should not require parental involvement.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

NIFDI consultants, an implementation manager, and a project director provide schools with ongoing consulting and training. These consultants have advanced degrees and at least 5 years experience teaching in a DI classroom. The school hires a building coordinator who helps the implementation manager and project director provide day-to-day technical assistance and professional development.

Prior to implementation, the project director arranges a 4- or 5-day training for teachers and administrators. During this training, faculty members learn instructional strategies and practice the first 30 DI lessons for reading and language. Teachers also learn and practice basic behavior management strategies, such as a reinforcement system in which teachers allocate points for appropriate behavior. After pre-implementation training, NIFDI requires schools to submit a summary of teacher assignments. The implementation manager ensures that teachers have received training in all programs they are assigned to teach.

During the 2nd year of implementation, NIFDI typically provides training on the DI math and spelling programs.

NIFDI provides training on advanced techniques during the 3rd year of implementation.

The model supplements this professional development with technical assistance. The implementation manager provides schools with 3 or 4 days of onsite consulting each month. Project directors provide schools with offsite consultation including arranging pre-implementation training and problem-solving.

Throughout each month of implementation, the implementation manager provides schools with an average of 3 or 4 days of onsite consulting. During the first 3 months of implementation, the building coordinator conducts 5-minute observations and communicates problems to the implementation manager.

NIFDI seeks to build school capacity to provide technical assistance and professional development. The implementation manager helps schools select peer coaches for each grade level. NIFDI trains the building coordinator and peer coaches to observe classrooms, model DI techniques, and provide feedback to their peers. Peer coaches also serve on the school management team with the school principal and the building coordinator.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Staff accountability is an essential component of the model. The following accountability principles guide the school's implementation expectations:

- All teachers need to understand the subject they are teaching and the technical details of the instructional approach.
- All teachers need to report problems and implement recommended remedies to problems of student achievement.
- Teachers must have high expectations for all students based on projections of performance provided by NIFDI.

- Problems are defined as discrepancies between actual student performance and projected student performance.
- All problems must be addressed in a timely manner in order to accelerate student performance.
- Schools must continue to maintain a high standard of achievement after the departure of NIFDI staff.

NIFDI provides teachers and administrators with a timeline of services and guidelines for meeting implementation expectations. The implementation manager, building coordinator, and project director monitor the day-to-day implementation of the model. If schools encounter significant obstacles to full implementation, the implementation manager sends a report of these obstacles to the administrative director of NIFDI. The administrative director takes action to resolve serious problems of implementation.

At the end of each academic year, the implementation manager submits a report to the school and NIFDI that addresses the school's implementation strengths and weaknesses. The project director uses this report to guide implementation during the following academic year.

Special Considerations

This model requires schools to purchase DI scripted curricular materials for reading, language, writing, math, and spelling from SRA. The Full Immersion Model of Direct Instruction requires teachers to alter their instructional strategies and teaching style and to adhere to scripted lessons. For this reason, faculty buy-in is critical to the success of this model. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that faculty buy-in gradually increases as student achievement increases.

As noted above, DI curricular materials may be implemented in schools in a variety of ways, with the help of numerous service providers. Given the limitations

of this report, we focused on the Full Immersion Model provided by NIFDI. However, we encourage all schools and districts that are considering DI adoption to carefully consider which implementation provider to use by applying the framework used in this report to review the effectiveness and quality of NIFDI's variant of DI implementation.

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Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

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Expeditionary Learning—Elementary

Overview: Basic Model Information and Review Results

Model Name: Expeditionary Learning

Model Mission/Focus: The mission of the Expeditionary Learning model is to help create and sustain a national network of good and improving elementary, middle, and high schools in places where good and improving schools are not the norm. The model also seeks to use active teaching and learning, a positive school culture, and an equal emphasis on academic and personal growth to bring out the best in administrators, teachers, and students.

Year Introduced in Schools: 1993

Grade Levels Served: K–12

Number of Schools

| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: |
|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 150 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Costs

| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Year 1 | \$55,000–\$65,000 | Included | Included | N/A | \$15,000 (travel to conferences) |
| Year 2 | \$55,000–\$65,000 | Included | Included | N/A | \$15,000 (travel to conferences) |
| Year 3 | \$55,000–\$65,000 | Included | Included | N/A | \$15,000 (travel to conferences) |
| Years 4+ | \$35,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement:

- Evidence of positive overall effects
- Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations
- Evidence of positive effects in subject areas



2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes



3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement



4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design



5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation:

- Evidence of readiness for successful implementation
- Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation



= Very Strong
 = Moderately Strong
 = Moderate
 = Limited
 = Zero
 = Negative
 = No Rating

This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.

Model Description

Researchers developed Expeditionary Learning in the early 1990s based on the Outward Bound model. Although Outward Bound uses outdoor adventure to promote core values and skills, the Expeditionary Learning model is not a wilderness adventure series. Rather, the model applies Outward Bound’s educational principles and practices related to teaching, learning, and school culture. (The organization behind Expeditionary Learning draws upon the educational and developmental ideas of Outward Bound’s founder, Kurt Hahn, and Outward Bound’s significant history of teaching through adventure and service. Expeditionary Learning has its own nonprofit 501(c)(3) status, but operates in close concert with other Outward Bound entities in the United States and around the world.)

In 1992, the New American Schools Development Corporation selected the Expeditionary Learning proposal for 5-year support, and in 1993, Expeditionary Learning started with 10 demonstration schools (nine of which are still active partners). Today there are 150 Expeditionary Learning schools in more than 25 states.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards, the following components of Expeditionary Learning were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to Expeditionary Learning, schools should involve students in active learning projects,

create a caring but demanding culture, and share a common vision for improved student learning and performance. The model developers believe that transformative learning takes place when skills and understanding are connected to the real world and that “authentic” practices in the classroom create academic rigor, character growth, and exemplary social standards.

Goals/Rationale

The goal of the Expeditionary Learning school reform model is to design schools where all students excel, engage in active learning, and connect their learning to the real world. The expected outcomes are (a) students motivated to be responsible for their own learning and the culture of the school and (b) teachers and administrators motivated to be able to improve student learning and achievement.

Costs

The first 3 years of adoption can cost up to \$75,000, but average between \$55,000 and \$65,000 per school. Years 4 and 5 costs are approximately \$35,000. The cost varies depending on the number of onsite and offsite training days provided and travel costs for Expeditionary Learning staff. Also, local schools should allocate funding for substitute teachers during training periods.

In addition, schools should allocate funds (about \$15,000 per year) for travel and lodging for regional and national professional development, the Leadership Conference, and the Expeditionary Learning National Conference. The institutes and summits are residential with Expeditionary Learning covering most board and lodging costs. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 0

The CSRQ Center reviewed 26 quantitative studies for effects of Expeditionary Learning on student achievement. Of those, one study met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. Based on its research design, the Center considers the findings of this study *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in the study's results. Because results of this study were neither statistically significant nor in a positive direction, the overall rating of the effects of this model on student achievement is zero. The one suggestive study is described below. (Appendix K reports on the other 25 studies that were reviewed but did not meet CSRQ Center standards.)

The study that met standards used a matched comparison research design to compare the pre- to post-Expeditionary Learning achievement test score gains to gains in nonrestructuring schools over the same time period (1995–1999). Two Expeditionary Learning schools were compared with 23 nonrestructuring schools. The test scores were composite measures of five subject areas of the TerraNova standardized achievement test (reading, language, math, science, and social studies). Results showed that Expeditionary Learning schools saw decreases in scores, relative to comparison schools, though the difference was not statistically significant. In addition to the problem of having too few Expeditionary Learning schools in the sample, the CSRQ Center has limited confidence in the results of this study because pretest scores at one of the two Expeditionary Learning schools were described as having been extremely high. This means that the decrease in scores at the Expeditionary Learning schools may

have been due to scores returning to more expected or average levels, not to any detrimental effects of the model.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

There were no achievement outcomes of diverse student populations in the one study that met CSRQ Center standards. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

There were no studies that met CSRQ Center standards and examined subject areas separately. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

There were no additional student outcomes in the one study of Expeditionary Learning that met CSRQ Center standards. Therefore, the rating is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no measures of parent, family, and community involvement in the one Expeditionary Learning study that met standards, the rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, there are explicit citations to support all of the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, data-based decision making, and family and community involvement. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building,

and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The full implementation of Expeditionary Learning requires an 80% commitment by teachers because the reform entails structural and cultural changes, mandatory staff development, and acceptance of the Expeditionary Learning design principles and core practices, plus participation in team planning and student advocacy meetings.

After schools decide to participate in the model, the Expeditionary Learning staff collaborates with the local school leadership to develop an implementation plan. The support includes an analysis of student achievement, assessment of current instructional and curriculum practices, review of budgetary constraints and financial resources, and a presentation of the Expeditionary Learning core practices and principles to administration and faculty.

Principals are expected to support implementation of the model by mentoring teachers, attending conferences, sharing decision making, allowing release time for professional development, establishing common planning periods, and attending staff training.

Expeditionary Learning schools participate in a national network that sustains the model. The network provides a forum for sharing project units, "learning

expeditions,” assessment practices, scheduling models, and instructional materials. Districts and regions already involved in the network mentor new schools by scheduling onsite visits, arranging classroom observations, and inviting staff to attend onsite training models.

Site-based autonomy over the instructional model, staffing, and budgets is recommended and pursued by Expeditionary Learning. Initially, assessment practices, organizational approaches, leadership strategies, and evaluation techniques are modeled by Expeditionary Learning staff with an incremental shift in governance to the local school.

Curriculum and Instruction

The Expeditionary Learning model does not include a prescribed curriculum, but each school is responsible for creating an instructional model that aligns with the model philosophy. The philosophy is based on 10 design principles.

- **Self-discovery.** Students participate in tasks that require perseverance, imagination, discipline, and achievement.
- **Wonderful ideas.** Students are involved in activities that require contemplation, reflection, and experimentation.
- **Responsibility for learning.** Both students and teachers are responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.
- **Empathy and caring.** Students participate in small learning communities with adults assuming advocacy roles. Older students also provide mentoring support to younger students.
- **Success and failure.** Students experience accomplishments and hardships and learn to take risks and meet difficult challenges.

- **Collaboration and competition.** Students are encouraged to do their personal best and strive for excellence.
- **Diversity and inclusion.** Students learn about diversity and discover the richness of a mosaic of cultures and communities.
- **Natural world.** Students investigate global issues and learn about the effect of scientific phenomena.
- **Solitude and reflection.** Students engage in activities that include self-reflection and interactive discussions with other students.
- **Service and compassion.** Students participate in service learning activities to learn the importance of social responsibility.

The model also has five core practices intended to guide teaching and learning.

- **Learning expeditions.** These expeditions take place over 6 to 8 weeks and include real-world in-depth study of interdisciplinary topics that promote critical thinking, literacy, character development, and civic responsibility.
- **Active pedagogy.** When students are not on learning expeditions, classroom practices are active and engaging. Teachers talk less, students do more.
- **School culture and character.** Shared traditions and beliefs create a safe climate, sense of adventure, ethic of service, and desire for excellence.
- **Leadership and school improvement.** Schools establish a professional learning community that focuses on exemplary instruction, improving student achievement, and creating a positive school climate.
- **School structure.** Flexible schedules for students and teachers, such as block scheduling and common planning periods, provide a forum for collaborative planning and interdisciplinary units of study.

Students stay with the same teacher for 2 to 3 years to build strong bonds and relationships between students and teachers.

Expeditionary Learning staff provides an average of 30 to 35 days per year of onsite professional development in the application of its design principles and core practices.

Engagement in 6- to 8-week learning expeditions, a primary instructional practice, immerses students in real learning situations. Teachers design long-range interdisciplinary units that shift the learning from the classroom to the community. For example, a biography unit involves interviews with seniors who live in the community. The students prepare interview questions, videotape interviews, and investigate local town archives to learn more about the local history.

All expeditions conclude with presentations to audiences that go beyond one classroom and that have expertise in the area being presented. These authentic demonstrations motivate students to conduct thorough investigations of a topic, because they are responsible for publicly sharing their results. They learn the importance of verifying information through credible sources and identifying multiple resources related to an issue, topic, or problem.

Teachers are encouraged to develop or select units of instruction, fiction and nonfiction books, and multimedia resources that support the core practices. In addition, Expeditionary Learning developers and other Expeditionary Learning schools create supplementary instructional materials that are incorporated into the overall instructional model.

Scheduling and Grouping

The model emphasizes the importance of changing the school structure to optimize learning and teaching. Expeditionary Learning provides professional development strategies to support alternative grouping,

scheduling, and organizational changes. A supportive culture is maintained through advisory meetings with teachers and students, inclusive classrooms, and the required practice of “looping” students so that they are assigned to the same teacher for 2–3 years.

Expeditionary Learning requires block scheduling to allow for more interaction, collaboration, and planning for students. With extended periods of time, students have the opportunity to reflect, expand, and refine projects and assignments. For example, because more time is allotted for completion of a writing assignments, students are able to peer-edit, conference with teachers, and revise within a class period. Common planning time for teachers is essential.

The model design consists of small group instruction for all students within a class. The composition of the groups is based on teacher observations, skill mastery, and ongoing assessments in all disciplines. Block schedules provide extended time for teachers to discuss student progress, regroup students, and adjust instructional strategies across disciplines and grades. Additionally, larger planning blocks allow teachers to organize more in-depth activities, as well as critically examine instructional practices.

An essential component of the Expeditionary Learning model is the “crew” or teacher advisory meetings. The crew (10–15 students and a teacher) helps create a positive relationship between students and teachers. The meetings provide an opportunity for students to get assistance on projects, assignments, and personal matters and serve as a forum for students to discuss schoolwide policies and present proposals for changes or modification to current school procedures.

Expeditionary Learning classrooms are inclusive and heterogeneous. The rationale is that all students are given an equal and equitable opportunity to learn in the least restrictive instructional setting possible.

Technology

The use of technology by teachers and students is recommended, but not required, for implementation. Where availability permits, Expeditionary Learning encourages the use of computers for instructional purposes, as well as non-instructional purposes such as record-keeping and communication.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

A range of diverse assessments is essential to determine student progress in the Expeditionary Learning model. Using these assessments allows schools to create instructional groups and identify students with special needs. In addition to the assessments, Expeditionary Learning schools conduct surveys, observations, and individual conferences to track student achievement.

The Expeditionary Learning model provides technical support and professional development to expand the faculty and administrative capacity for administering, conducting, and interpreting assessments. In addition, students are involved in assessing their own work in ways that make assessment a better strategy for improving student learning. The performance-based approaches embedded in the model lend themselves to a different approach to assessment. Since the model involves student investigations, self-studies, research, demonstrations, and exhibitions, effective assessment can be designed around these active learning activities. These assessments focus on the participatory skills and processes involved in the self-directed activities of Expeditionary Learning. The tools include observation checklists, rubrics, self-evaluations, and portfolio assessments.

Both external and internal evaluators use formative and summative evaluations annually to assess student progress and performance and give feedback to the school regarding strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improved implementation.

Family and Community Involvement

Family and community involvement is core to the Expeditionary Learning model and is encouraged in a number of ways. Family or community members can volunteer in a classroom or the library, serve on a governance committee, or offer their services as a tutor or an expert resource. Recognitions, meetings, and newsletters are other ways in which Expeditionary Learning encourages involvement.

Furthermore, the nature of the Expeditionary Learning model makes involvement integral. Schools must get parental permission for field trips and other expeditions, and the final projects and lessons are often presented to members of the community as public performances, not just to the class or teacher.

The local community plays an integral role in the design of the Expeditionary Learning model. The curriculum requires students to learn and gain knowledge from adults in the school and also from business leaders and residents in their surrounding neighborhoods. For example, a newspaper editor might be invited into the classroom to talk about objective reporting of the news. Or, an environmental specialist could talk to a class about the local water purification process.

Besides school visitations by local members of the community, field trips are scheduled for students to discover the rich resources that are available within their surrounding communities. For example, as students study the concept of a democracy, they could observe a small claims court proceeding to learn about individual legal rights, or they could visit a local broadcasting station to learn more about freedom of speech and its implication for disseminating information through the mass media.

According to Expeditionary Learning, the involvement of the family and community is paramount to the successful implementation of the model. The partnership with these groups fosters the concept of

authentic learning, which is a major component of the model.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Expeditionary Learning model includes a comprehensive program of professional development and technical assistance services to the faculty and leadership of each school over a period of at least 5 years to help schools develop a vision and set of practices rooted in and related to the model's design principles and core practices.

As members of the Expeditionary Learning network, schools receive a tailored package of onsite and offsite professional development and technical services. It includes reading and writing practices, curriculum planning, learning expeditions and active pedagogy, and the development of a strong and positive school culture.

The initial training involves a 1-week leadership institute that focuses on the structural and cultural components of the Expeditionary Learning model. The institute provides an opportunity for schools to determine readiness to implement the model. The staff assists schools in planning schedules, developing team plans, and organizing student groups. Following the institute, the entire school staff participates in a 3-day training program to learn about Expeditionary Learning instructional and assessment practices and to develop learning expeditions.

During implementation, training is required for teachers and administrators in the form of summer institutes, residential summits, and year-round workshops. The delivery of services depends on the contractual agreement between the school and Expeditionary Learning, but can range from 75 to 125 hours offsite and 200 to 250 hours onsite.

The annual national conference showcases Expeditionary Learning teachers' work from across

the model's network. Expeditionary Learning leadership from headquarters, regional areas, and school districts present the latest research and successful school practices and report on school improvement and reform nationwide. For example, the 2005 conference theme focused on the fusion of learning expeditions, active pedagogy, and character development.

During the summer, residential summits are conducted for educators from the Expeditionary Learning schools. The teachers engage in learning expeditions, similar to their students, to experience the impact of authentic learning. Throughout the summit they are given an opportunity to develop their own expeditions, question the process, and plan cooperatively with their colleagues. Another type of residential training offered during the summer is the institute, which is a forum for deepening and renewing understanding of the Expeditionary Learning common principles and core practices. Institutes are also held during the school year.

Schools may also participate in onsite seminars through visits to a model Expeditionary Learning school to observe demonstrations of Expeditionary Learning core practices. During the visits, participants observe classrooms, meet with teachers and administrators, and engage in conversations with colleagues from other Expeditionary Learning schools.

Throughout the school year, release time is provided for teachers to attend onsite workshops. The workshops include topics such as scheduling, data analysis, community service, or collaborative learning. The delivery of the training is determined collaboratively with the local school and Expeditionary Learning staff based on a needs assessment, current instructional practices, and schoolwide student achievement. Direct involvement in crafting the training plan assures teacher investment in the model.

College credit courses are also available through institutes offered during the school year and summer. The

in-service courses are taught by Expeditionary Learning staff and teachers from Expeditionary Learning schools. The courses are offered at different sites and target educators new to the Expeditionary Learning model as well as those schools already implementing the model. For example, during the summer of 2005, a course titled *Leadership for Learning* was conducted for new teachers to become acquainted with the learning expedition approach. Additionally, a focused course titled *Endangered Species* was presented to more experienced schools to develop a learning expedition to investigate fragile ecosystems.

Outward Bound adventure courses provide additional training options and are available to the model schools. Although these courses are field based, the tenets of the courses, such as confidence building, teamwork, and active learning, follow the core practices of Expeditionary Learning.

Expeditionary Learning schools are entitled to multi-year professional development and technical support, provided that funding is available through the local school districts. Also, schools are given opportunities to assume leadership roles in the national conference, summer institutes, and other courses. Schools with exemplary Expeditionary Learning projects are selected to act as demonstration schools and are expected to host staff members new to the network of schools.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The model provides all Expeditionary Learning schools with core practice benchmarks to guide the model implementation process. Formal benchmarks are available to all teachers for all components of the model. Expeditionary Learning uses these benchmarks to provide feedback to schools regarding strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for improved implementation.

The benchmarks align with the five core practices and include the following indicators of student achievement:

- **Learning expeditions.** Implementation of learning expeditions that include compelling topics, field studies, service learning, and student exhibitions.
- **Active pedagogy.** Interactive and engaging instructional practices that include reading and writing across the curriculum, inquiry-based science, and social studies and that integrate arts and ongoing assessment.
- **School culture and character.** An inclusive school climate that ensures high expectations for all, guarantees a safe and respectful community, encourages fitness and adventure, and engages families in school activities and planning initiatives.
- **Leadership and school improvement.** Collaborative leadership in curriculum, instruction, and school culture that links Expeditionary Learning with school improvement and uses multiple data collection sources to evaluate student achievement.
- **School structure.** School organization for students and teachers that creates opportunities for interaction, long-term planning and investigations, conversations and reflections, and continuous assessment of student learning.

Special Considerations

The Expeditionary Learning model is unique in that it incorporates real-world lessons and expeditions within classroom learning. Teachers have the opportunity to go on learning expeditions before bringing the process into their classrooms.

Several principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that this model requires a significant amount of time and staff development, especially at the initial stages of implementation.

Model Study Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (2000). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, The University of Memphis.

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First Steps—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Model Name: | First Steps | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | First Steps is a professional development model and curricular approach to school reform that is based on a premise that schoolwide involvement in professional development leads to increased student achievement and literacy development. The professional development courses provide teachers with the skills to maximize the impact of their current instruction, materials, and resources on student achievement. According to the model, First Steps provides a framework to individualize instruction to improve student outcomes. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1989 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–8 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 335 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 2 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 3 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Years 4+ | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | | ⊘ |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | | (NR) |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas | | | | | (NR) |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| | | | | | (NR) |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| | | | | | (NR) |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| | | | | | ● |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | | (NR) |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | | ● |
| <p> = Very Strong = Moderately Strong = Moderate = Limited = Zero = Negative = No Rating </p> | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

The First Steps model was developed in 1989 by the Education Department of Western Australia. The model was introduced in the United States under the direction of the Heinemann Corporation in 1995. Since then, more than 355 U.S. school districts in 31 states have adopted the model. Recently, STEPS Professional Development and Consulting replaced Heinemann as the model's service provider, publishing curriculum resources and providing schoolwide training and technical support to teachers, administrators, and district officials.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of First Steps were identified as core: professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

First Steps is a schoolwide professional development model designed to help each school improve literacy development and educational outcomes. First Steps is an acronym that defines the following essential educational and instructional beliefs:

- Focus on strategies. Bank of strategies for independent reading.
- Investigative. Active learning with authentic literacy events.
- Reflective. Students reflect, represent, and report on their learning.
- Scaffolding. Support given to students through guiding, sharing, conferences, and modeling.
- Tailored. Balanced literacy that includes a variety of approaches and grouping structures.
- Supportive. Constructive, participatory, and collaborative learning environment.
- Tested. Range of research-based practices.
- Embedded. Making connections between new understandings and current knowledge.
- Purposely practiced. Continuous application of strategies.
- Shared. Ongoing dialogue between staff, students, and parents.

First Steps seeks to support all classroom teachers, provide continuity across the entire school, link assessment and teaching, connect literacy with state and national outcomes, balance research-based strategies with pragmatic approaches, and value teachers as professionals. The model's mission is to assist schools in linking instruction, learning, and assessment by providing them with research-based literary resources.

Goals/Rationale

The First Steps model aims to help schools teach, evaluate, and diagnose the literacy development of students. First Steps helps teachers to identify behaviors during literacy development and to modify classroom instruction and activities to parallel this development. First Step's goals are to help each school

- Support schoolwide literacy development;
- Recognize the principal as a leader and learner;
- Engage students in meaningful and developmentally appropriate learning activities;
- Link assessment with instruction;
- Inform parents about their child's literacy development and the schoolwide literacy model; and

- Plan ongoing evaluations of the schoolwide literacy model and adjust and modify if necessary.

The steps necessary for successful implementation of the model include building consensus and buy-in from all school faculty, selecting one literacy area to focus on during implementation, providing school-based staff development, engaging faculty in school-wide decision making, involving principals in literacy courses and workshops, and offering a variety of follow-up options after the initial implementation.

Costs

The model costs vary according to the size of the school and because these programs are tailored to the needs of the school and are planned in collaboration with faculty and administrators.

The model costs include the following:

- Onsite professional development courses for professional staff
- Offsite professional development courses for facilitators
- Coaching and support for facilitators and administrators
- Facilitator binders for First Steps Reading
- PowerPoint presentations for First Steps Reading
- Facilitator binders for First Steps Writing
- PowerPoint presentations for First Steps Writing
- Technical assistance via phone, fax, and e-mail

In addition, the following print and electronic resources are provided:

- First Steps Linking Assessment, Teaching, and Learning

- First Steps Reading Map of Development
- First Steps Reading Resource Book
- First Steps Reading Carom
- First Steps Reading Course Book
- First Steps Writing Map of Development
- First Steps Writing Resource Book
- First Steps Writing Carom
- First Steps Writing Course Book

For more information on the cost of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ⓪

The CSRQ Center reviewed three quantitative studies for effects of First Steps on student achievement. None of these studies met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. Therefore, the overall rating for the evidence of positive effects of this model on student achievement is zero. (Appendix L reports on the three studies that were reviewed but did not meet CSRQ Center standards.)

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: Ⓝ

Since no studies of First Steps met CSRQ standards, the impact of this model on student achievement for diverse student populations is unknown. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas

Rating: (NR)

With no studies that met standards to review, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

Since no studies of First Steps passed the screening threshold for further review, the CSRQ Center was unable to evaluate the effects of First Steps on additional student outcomes. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

No studies were eligible for review that examined the effects on parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the model rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, its underlying theory was influenced by the following works: *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Bruner, 1986), *Intellectual Development, Birth to Adulthood* (Case, 1985), *Children's Minds* (Donaldson, 1978), and *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, the model's research base for core components such as professional development, technical assistance, curriculum,

instruction, inclusion, time and scheduling, student assessment, and data-based decision making, is explicitly outlined in its resource book, *Linking Assessment, Teaching, and Learning, 2nd edition* (Annandale et al., 2004). Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: (NR)

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, the model does not provide formal benchmarks to monitor implementation progress. The model did not provide information regarding its support for allocating school resources. Therefore, due to the lack of information, there is no rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address *all* of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The intent of the First Steps model is to eventually shift the management and governance of the model from the First Steps staff to the local school staff. The main role of the school principal is to support the effective implementation of the model. Principals are trained to support the model by including other staff members in decision making, granting periodic release time for training and serving as leader during the implementation process. The principal has several primary responsibilities:

- Meet with First Steps staff and facilitators to formulate a strategic plan for implementing the literacy training and curriculum development
- Attend the principal workshop to learn about organizational change, instructional leadership, and the literacy model
- Attend all curriculum workshops to acquire a basic understanding of the literacy approach
- Collaborate with facilitators to design a schoolwide training plan
- Meet routinely with First Steps staff to monitor the implementation of the training and curriculum development
- Collaborate with facilitators to formalize an evaluation approach for monitoring the implementation of the training plan and literacy curriculum

The model requires each school to designate a facilitator. Each facilitator is selected from the school staff to attend a 13-day training session conducted by First Steps. At the training session, facilitators take courses on writing/spelling, reading, and oral language. These courses prepare the facilitators to assist teachers with

the implementation of the model, increase teachers' knowledge of literacy development, integrate the model's design and materials into the school's planning, build relationships between teachers and parents, and provide technical assistance to the school staff. Facilitators have several expectations:

- Collaborate with the principal to formulate a strategic plan for implementing training and the literacy curriculum
- Facilitate the short- and long-term literacy plan
- Attend facilitator workshops to plan schoolwide professional development
- Participate in the principal workshop to learn about organizational change and instructional leadership
- Share the model's mission, assumptions, goals, training plan, schoolwide implementation, and evaluation approaches with faculty
- Conduct four 2-day workshops for faculty that focus on specific literacy strands
- Provide technical support to faculty during the literacy training and curriculum implementation
- Plan with the administration an approach for evaluating the effectiveness of the training plan and literacy curriculum

Although First Steps does not have a formal timeline for implementation, the model does require schools to go through several steps to reach full implementation. After receiving general consensus from staff members, schools should choose a literacy component (i.e., reading, writing, spelling, or oral language) as an implementation focus. The component should be linked to a priority already in place at the school so that teachers can view First Steps as a complement to the school's existing goals. Each school is expected to organize a 2-day schoolwide professional development

workshop to focus on the selected component prior to implementation. The model strongly recommends but does not require that schools receive a commitment from the entire staff and consider state consensus requirements before agreeing to implement the model. First Steps aims to provide schools with the necessary training and materials to achieve site-based autonomy in the areas of curriculum, instruction, budget, staffing, and scheduling.

Curriculum and Instruction

First Steps requires each school to use its model-developed reading and writing curriculum, referred to as the First Steps Map of Development. The curriculum design centers around four areas: reading, writing, spelling, and oral language. The core of the curricular model is the curriculum maps for each of the areas, which are also referred to as literacy strands. The maps identify specific behaviors required at different stages of literacy and parallel specific learning and teaching strategies for each stage of development. For example, the reading map classifies readers into six stages:

- Role playing—connecting with literacy through oral language activities
- Experimental—beginning to “play around” with letters and sounds
- Early—trying to make sense out of the printed word
- Transitional—connecting with whole segments of text
- Proficient—making connections with text, questioning and predicting
- Accomplished—making connections with strategy development and independent reading

The First Steps instructional practices include a range of approaches that actively engage students in the

learning process. Some of these practices include familiarizing (raising awareness and activating prior knowledge), sharing (jointly constructing meaning), applying (independently using a skill or strategy), playing (imagining and creating situations), and reflecting (thinking about the what, why, and how). The model provider offers a series of books that helps teachers integrate the First Steps instructional practices into the Map of Development. The *Map of Development* books provide schools with the curriculum maps for each of the four literacy strands and serve as practical resources to assist teachers in the implementation of a schoolwide balanced literacy program.

Scheduling and Grouping

First Steps has several scheduling requirements that schools are expected to implement in order to ensure successful implementation of the model’s curriculum. The model expects each school to use a three-tiered process that entails long-range, short-term, and daily planning.

Long-range planning provides direction for the year’s activities. In this process, schools develop a class profile of students’ strengths and needs, target student outcomes usually determined by state standards, plan cultural activities, develop interrelated units of study, establish a timeframe for completion of topics, and designate data collection methods. Schools’ short-term planning focuses on a specific literacy strategy for approximately 6 weeks. Through short-term planning, schools identify a theme or topic, decide on student outcomes, select instructional strategies, organize instructional groups, and find literacy resources.

Schools validate long- and short-term planning through daily checks and balances. Teachers are also expected to plan daily instruction and allot time for a dedicated instructional block that addresses the literacy curriculum in their daily schedules. Teachers adhere to the long-range plan, verify that the short-term plan

corresponds with the long-range plan, and develop daily literacy activities that support both levels of planning.

First Steps does not require schools to use a set strategy for instructional grouping. Instead, schools have the option of using a variety of instructional grouping strategies. The model is based on a philosophy that flexibility in grouping affords an opportunity for teachers to develop interest, ability, and strategy grouping. Since ongoing assessment is an integral component of the model, teachers must design grouping arrangements that support the continuous movement of students as they progress through the literacy stages of the Map of Development. If desired, First Steps will provide schools with assistance to develop appropriate grouping techniques.

Materials

First Steps provides each school with the necessary materials to implement the Map of Development curriculum. These materials include resource books and instructional guides for each of the four literacy strands of the Map of Development. The instructional guides describe the foundations of First Steps and the phases of literacy development for each of the four strands. The resource books identify the behaviors associated with each stage of development coupled with the strategies and best practices for assisting students' progression through the Map of Development.

First Steps also provides schools with a comprehensive guide to the model, *Linking Assessment, Teaching, and Learning*. The guide includes an overview of the model, literacy assumptions, implementation plans, assessment approaches, effective instructional practices, classroom planning, and suggestions for communicating with parents. Staff members who attend training workshops are given instructional and curriculum resource books and guidelines for training faculty and parents. Comprehensive instructor manuals with overheads,

handouts, and facilitator notes are also included in the training package.

To help involve families in their children's literacy education, the model also offers the *Parents as Partners* workbook, which is included in the parent workshop offered by First Steps. The book introduces parents to the four literacy strands and explains the phases of literacy development. Activities for parents to practice with their children in each of the four areas are included. For example, a parent who wants to help a child develop his or her spelling skills might use word games or crossword puzzles to raise the child's interest in correct spelling.

The model also provides CD-ROMs to each teacher to help them integrate technology into the First Steps implementation. Four CD-ROMs are included with the model materials, one for each literacy strand. The software is primarily for non-instructional uses and includes reproducible assessments, recording sheets, and parent support cards for teacher use.

Technology

The First Steps model does not have any specific technology requirements for schools, but it does encourage schools to use technology to support implementation of the literacy curriculum. Recently, First Steps designed CD-ROMs for each of the literacy strands to help teachers identify useful assessments, record grades, and increase communication with parents. The CD-ROM is part of every *Map of Development* book.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The primary purpose of the First Steps assessment is to provide teachers with information to develop meaningful and appropriate learning situations to match literacy needs. The approach entails ongoing assessment in varied learning situations, such as guided reading, shared reading, poetry reading, and independent

reading. The essential element for the data collection process is to know what to record, how to record it, and how to recognize the importance of the assessment findings. The assessment tools include tools for reflecting and improving teaching, revealing student interests, analyzing student and class strengths and needs, and recognizing specific behavior characteristics associated with stages of literacy development.

Teachers receive training and resource guides to help them conduct assessments to monitor the progress of students and the implementation process. During the professional development workshops, teachers learn to design evaluations, develop appropriate measurement tools, collect and gather data, map the literacy development of students, and analyze the results. First Steps publishes a resource manual, *Linking Assessment, Teaching, and Learning*, that assists teachers in designing appropriate assessments and matching the results to instruction and learning.

The First Steps model recommends that schools use multidimensional data collection tools. The model suggests that these tools include a balance of observation instruments, individual student conferences, samples of student work, and student self-evaluations to assess student progress. Other types of assessments suggested by First Steps include

- Portfolios, tangible evidence of student outcomes over a given period of time;
- Learning journals, a self report of accomplishments;
- Three-way conferences with teacher, parent, and student; and
- Communication books, which provide a format for connecting school and home literacy development.

First Steps emphasizes the importance of collaboration from different sources: parents, peers, specialists, instructional aides, and other teachers. A wide array of methods is incorporated into the model to verify the accuracy of the assessment results. They include

anecdotal notes, behavior checklists, annotations, rubrics, and maps of literacy development. Teachers use the results of assessments to organize instructional groups and identify students with special needs or intervention needs.

Family and Community Involvement

First Steps believes that schools must develop sustained partnerships with parents. According to the model, parents play an essential role in their children's literacy development and educational progress. The First Steps model encourages schools to communicate routinely with parents to increase their literacy awareness. The model includes various information channels to keep parents connected with the schoolwide literacy initiatives. Channels include newsletters, Web pages, quick notes, bulletin boards, monthly calendars of literacy events, and a parent educational program. Also, First Steps publishes a guide for schools that offers information on strategies to increase awareness, share information, and collaborate with parents.

A more formal approach to parent education is the Parent as Partners workshop, which is offered by First Steps staff to parents, students, teachers, and administrators. During the session, parents are given an opportunity to learn about specific literacy strategies, to practice the strategies with their child, and to assume responsibility for continuing the literacy development at home. First Steps also produces a *Parents as Partners* guide for parents to assist them in supporting the model and helping their children's literacy develop at home. From the guide, parents learn to identify and track phases of literacy development, design supplemental activities, and assist their children in developing literacy skills.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The First Steps formal professional development plan is an essential part of the model. The plan includes a

range of workshops customized to meet the needs of schools or school districts. Training courses are available for the facilitators, members of the administration, and school staff. Three types of courses are available: a facilitator training course to train local school staff to conduct turn-around training; school-based courses designed to focus on different literacy strands; and a workshop for principals that focuses on First Steps implementation procedures, instructional leadership, and the process of change. All training courses are conducted by trained model staff members.

The facilitator training course is designed to increase school capacity for literacy leadership. The “train the trainer” model prepares 15–40 educators to become school facilitators who are certified to provide ongoing professional development workshops and daily support to schools. These educators attend workshops on writing, reading, and oral language literacy development. Including 13 days of training, the workshops focus on components of the literacy curriculum and the implementation process. The model provider presents a training cycle on organizing a school-based course that covers establishing objectives, designing the delivery of the course, organizing logistical support, planning a balance of presentation approaches, creating interactive problem-solving scenarios, and constructing informative evaluation formats.

School-based courses provide information on best practices, links between assessment and instruction, and collaborative planning to 25–50 staff members. The model recommends that all school staff members participate in the four 2-day workshops. Each workshop concentrates on one of four literacy strands (reading, writing, speaking, and viewing). The agenda for each workshop includes foundation and background information, the developmental curriculum associated with the literacy strand, reflection and interactive activities, resource book walk and talk, and planning for schoolwide implementation of the literacy strand.

Participants receive copies of the *Map of Development* and curriculum guides for each of the strands.

Principals may choose to attend a 1-day professional development workshop that trains them to effectively support model implementation. The workshop focuses on the process of change, the instructional role of the principal, and the tenets of literacy initiatives. The workshop emphasizes the shift of responsibility for literacy development from the First Steps staff to local school management. The workshop provides examples to assist in the development of a strategic plan for implementing the literacy model.

The model also provides technical assistance to schools. The model provider supplements the workshop training with videoconferencing, regional networking conferences, advanced facilitator training, and refresher courses for faculty and administration. The model also distributes a newsletter to First Steps schools on a regular basis and provides each teacher with access to the First Steps USA Chat Group, an online network of teachers who discuss their experiences implementing the model. First Steps consultants are available throughout the year via phone or e-mail to assist schools with the implementation process on an as-needed basis.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

First Steps does not require schools to adhere to formal benchmarks to support the implementation process, but the model does provide specific indicators that can track the level of implementation to identify areas of implementation in need of improvement:

- Use of the Developmental Continuum as a basis for student assessment, record keeping, and instructional planning
- Continuous sharing of student progress throughout the student’s schooling
- Inclusion of parents on the educational team

- Involvement of parents in the implementation process
- Schoolwide placement of students on the Map of Development
- Displaying measurable and observable progress by students

The main outcome for the schools is to develop a schoolwide plan supported through training and a literacy curriculum that ensures continuous literacy development for all students. The specific outcomes include meeting state accountability standards through data collection, setting priorities, action planning, and resource allocation; involving teachers in schoolwide decision making; developing literacy strategies appropriate for different learning environments and situations; and educating, informing, and involving parents in their child's literacy development.

Special Considerations

According to First Steps, the model is continuously evaluated to guarantee quality assurance to client schools and school districts. In 2004, the second revision of the *Linking Assessment, Teaching, and Learning* document was published by the STEPS Professional Development and Consulting on behalf of the Department of Education and Training of Western Australia. According to the developers, the new edition reflects recent changes in the direction of literacy and contemporary research findings related to literacy development and best practices.

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Integrated Thematic Instruction—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of ITI is to help local administrators and classroom teachers use research on the human brain to guide the selection of curriculum and instructional strategies so that schools are transformed into safe learning communities that develop responsive citizens. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1984 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 27 | 8 | 4 | 15 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$76,500 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$64,500 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | \$78,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |  |
| Math, science, and language arts | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

In 1982, Susan Kovalik, a classroom teacher and co-founder of the Center for the Future of Public Education, developed Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI). ITI is a K–12 model that the developers claim is based on research on how the human brain functions and how learning takes place. In 1984, Ms. Kovalik formed Susan Kovalik & Associates, Inc. (SK&A), a company that acts as the service provider of ITI. SK&A provides more than 100 trainers who help schools implement ITI in classrooms throughout the United States.

Over 20 years, SK&A has published more than 25 books, audio cassettes, and training videos that outline the theoretical foundation of ITI and strategies to implement the model. The materials are updated periodically to align with new research findings.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of ITI were identified as core: professional development, technical assistance, and instruction. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

The mission of ITI is to help local administrators and classroom teachers use research on the human brain to guide the selection of curriculum and instructional strategies so that schools are transformed into safe learning communities that develop high achieving students who become responsible citizens.

Goals/Rationale

SK&A promotes the following learning principles:

- Intelligence results from real-world situations that illustrate skills and concepts (*being there* experiences).

- Learning occurs as a result of body and brain interaction.
- Learning takes two steps: recognizing patterns and coding information for long-term memory.
- Personality affects learning styles and academic performance.
- Learning occurs through multiple methods of problem solving.

In an ITI classroom, there are nine conditions that enhance and support learning: absence of threat, meaningful content, choices, movement, adequate time, enriched environment, collaboration, immediate feedback, and mastery/application. The model provider seeks to improve academic achievement by providing local administrators and teachers with instructional strategies and classroom management techniques to promote these conditions.

The model also aims to improve school climate by creating a safe environment that supports learning. To meet this goal, the model provides schools with behavioral expectations, 5 Lifelong Guidelines and 18 LIFESKILLS, to be implemented in all classrooms and shared facilities. By improving school climate, the model hopes to improve student achievement, family and teacher satisfaction, student attendance, and student discipline rates.

Costs

ITI recommends that schools commit to a 3-year training sequence for school staff. The following costs are based upon this commitment from a school with 21–50 teachers. Costs may vary for schools that do not commit to the training sequence or for schools with more than 50 teachers.

The model costs \$76,500 for year 1, \$64,500 for year 2, and \$78,000 for year 3. The following professional

development and technical assistance opportunities are included in the model costs:

- Overview of the model (year 1)
- Parent workshop (years 1–2)
- Leadership academy (years 1–3)
- Model Teaching Week (years 1–3)
- Power Packs (years 1–2)
- Bodybrain Basics workshop (years 1–2)
- Networking meeting for teacher leaders (years 2–3)
- Integrated Curriculum seminar (years 2–3)
- Curriculum writing academy (years 3)
- Implementation monitoring (years 1–3)
- Thirty days of onsite coaching from SK&A associates (years 1–3)
- Materials to supplement professional development (years 1–3)

These opportunities are described in more detail in the “Professional Development and Technical Assistance” section of the narrative.

These model costs do not include travel expenses or funds to hire substitute teachers during teacher training. In addition to these costs, the model requires schools to budget for a professional library for teachers and administrators. SK&A provides schools with a list of books to purchase prior to implementation. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 12 quantitative studies for effects of ITI on student achievement. Three studies met the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of one of the three studies to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the study’s results. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of the other two studies to be *suggestive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has limited confidence in the results. Because the three studies demonstrated mixed results, the overall rating of the effects of ITI on student achievement is limited. The studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards are described below. (Appendix M reports on the other nine studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards.)

The one study that was considered to be conclusive used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison design to compare fifth-grade students in two schools that used ITI with one school that did not use ITI. Students at these schools were primarily from low-income families. Findings showed that ITI students had higher reading scores than non-ITI students on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, but the differences were not statistically significant.¹

The first of two studies that were considered to be suggestive used a longitudinal research design to follow students in six schools across the first 3 years of ITI implementation. The study tracked trends in reading,

¹The study compared only 19 ITI students with 45 non-ITI students. Thus, the sample size was likely too small to detect significantly meaningful differences. The study reported a large effect size, +0.77.

math, and science performance on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test. Four of the six schools showed increases in students' scores in all subject areas. The reliability of the trends is unclear because statistical tests of those trends were not conducted.²

The second study that was considered to be suggestive used a longitudinal research design to follow students in one elementary school that served a primarily white, low socioeconomic status population in a suburban school district in Tennessee. Outcomes in reading, language arts, and math among fourth-grade students were examined using the state of Georgia's Criterion Referenced Test.³ Results showed positive trends in math outcomes, but statistical tests of these trends were not conducted.

Evidence of Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

None of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards evaluated the effects of ITI on the achievement of diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.⁴

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: (L)

All the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined reading achievement. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: (L)

The two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards and were considered to be suggestive examined the effect of ITI on student achievement in math. The first study reported increases over time in math achievement on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test at some but not all schools in the study's sample. The second study reported increases in math achievement over 5 years by fourth-grade students at one elementary school. Because no studies of ITI were considered to be conclusive, the rating for this subcategory is limited.⁵

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Science

Rating: (0)

Some of the schools in one study that was considered to be suggestive reported increases in science scores. Because the results are mixed and researchers did not conduct tests for statistical significance, the rating for this subcategory is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Language Arts

Rating: (0)

One study that was considered to be suggestive reported mixed results over 5 years by fourth-grade students in language arts based on scores from the Georgia Criterion Referenced Test. Because the results are mixed and

²Level of statistical significance is determined by a statistical test and demonstrates whether the observed changes are likely to have occurred by chance alone.

³This study also reported findings in science and social science. The CSRQ Center did not review the model's impact in science and social science because tests to determine findings in the subjects did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of design.

⁴One study that was considered to be suggestive also contained a longitudinal examination of students with and without disabilities that did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards because the analysis did not include baseline data. However, this analysis demonstrated the same consistent positive trend for math for students with disabilities as for students without disabilities. The study also reported findings for disadvantaged students separately from those for nondisadvantaged students, but only 2 years of data were reported, and the study did not take baseline data into account.

⁵The rating in this category is upgraded from the 2005 version of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* because of the additional research available that demonstrates a positive impact of ITI on student achievement.

researchers did not conduct tests for statistical significance, the rating for this subcategory is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

None of the studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined additional student outcomes. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

None of the studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined the effects of ITI on parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by ITI, the model’s research base is outlined in the following publications: *Exceeding Expectations: A User’s Guide to Implementing Brain Research in the Classroom* (Kovalik & Olsen, 2002), *Transformations: Leadership for Bodybrain-Compatible Learning* (McGeehan, 2000), and *Making Bodybrain-Compatible Education a Reality: Coaching for the ITI Model* (Olsen, 1999). These publications contain explicit citations to support all of the model’s core components: professional development, technical assistance, and instruction. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by ITI, the model offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of ITI and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. The benchmarks can be found in *ITI Schoolwide Rubric: Planning and Assessing Schoolwide Implementation of Brain-Compatible Education*. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model’s core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Before a school adopts the model, SK&A presents an overview of the model for up to 150 participants in order to increase principal, parent and teacher buy-in.

SK&A recommends that 85% of school faculty agree to adopt the model. After the overview, SK&A associates conduct a climate assessment noting the physical, emotional, and academic environment of the school. The assessment includes interviewing school administrators and touring the facility. Based on this assessment, SK&A helps school administrators and teachers design a school improvement plan. These stakeholders review and revise this plan on a regular basis.

The school improvement plan addresses the emotional, physical, and academic climate of the school. The model seeks to reform the emotional environment of the school by recommending classroom management techniques and a common language for discipline and community building. A plan for adopting this common language is included in the ITI Schoolwide Rubric. The model also expects teachers to incorporate ITI's Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS into their classroom management plan. Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS are behavioral expectations such as common sense, effort, patience, integrity, perseverance, sense of humor, cooperation, and resourcefulness.

The model seeks to transform the physical environment of the school by recommending that teachers change the lighting, cleanliness, and order of all facilities. For example, the model claims that research shows that lighting can have significant effects on children's physical and emotional health. For this reason, ITI recommends that teachers work to reduce exposure to artificial light during the school day while increasing exposure to natural sunlight. ITI also seeks to alter the academic environment of a school by creating microcommunities that use democratic procedures for decision making, by providing a shared educational philosophy for teachers, and by engaging all students in social/political projects.

As the school environment changes, ITI also seeks to change the governance structure. ITI suggests that schools move from a hierarchal governance structure to team decision making. During the 1st year of

implementation, the model encourages schools to develop both long-term and short-term school leadership teams. SK&A recommends that membership and leadership on these teams change on a regular basis so that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate.

The model expects the school to make decisions through the Committee-as-a-Whole, a team composed of parents, administrators, teachers, and the Curriculum Leadership Team. The Curriculum Leadership Team informs the Committee-as-a-Whole about specific curriculum concerns. Examples of other teams are parent work groups, study groups, grade level teams, and school improvement committees. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that the ITI governance framework is flexible and that effective governing teams are critical to the model's success.

ITI does not require schools to hire additional personnel but the model expects principals to be involved in the day-to-day implementation of the model and to be knowledgeable about the model's design.

Curriculum and Instruction

ITI requires schools to adopt the LIFESKILLS curriculum, a set of guidelines for respectful behavior. These guidelines include common sense, caring, curiosity, friendship, integrity, organization, resourcefulness and a sense of humor. The model does not include curricula for reading, math, science, or social studies; SK&A requires schools to design and write their own curricula. The model provider noted that most schools phase in the design and writing of the curricula over three years of implementation.

The curriculum writing process begins by selecting a *being there* experience connected by a year-long theme. For example, a year-long theme for an elementary school could be "communities in harmony" with a focus on the interdependence of lakes, forests, swamps, and grasslands in close proximity to the school. Next,

teachers identify key points and concepts that align with state and district standards. These points and concepts should be tied into the year-long theme. After selecting the theme, key points, and concepts, teachers begin writing. The curriculum should align with the nine conditions that enhance learning (described in the “Goals/Rationale” section) and integrate real-world situations that illustrate skills and concepts. The model’s goal is to develop a curriculum centered on a significant event or concept rather than isolated facts.

During the 2nd and 3rd year of implementation, SK&A provides professional development opportunities focused on curriculum development. Teachers and administrators attend a 4-day curriculum writing “academy.” During the academy, the model seeks to improve teacher’s curriculum writing skills and solidify the school’s curriculum. SK&A also provides teachers with a guide for curriculum design: *Exceeding Expectations: A User’s Guide to Implementing Brain Research in the Classroom* (Kovalik & Olsen, 2005).

In addition to writing a curriculum, the model requires teachers to adopt certain instructional strategies such as movement, group learning, and the use of multiple modes for learning. Teachers are expected to align all instructional strategies with the nine conditions that enhance learning (described in the “Goals/Rationale” section). During the 2nd and 3rd year of implementation, SK&A trainers conduct an onsite model teaching week. During this week, trainers demonstrate appropriate instructional strategies and classroom management techniques in addition to helping teachers modify the physical and emotional environments of their classrooms.

Scheduling and Grouping

ITI recommends but does not require that schools adopt block scheduling to allow schools to establish a daily uninterrupted 3-hour block of instructional time for the school’s year-long theme. The model also

recommends that schools establish a common teacher planning block for each grade level.

ITI provides each school with general guidance on grouping strategies. One goal of the model is to transform the school into a multi-age community of learners. Thus, the model recommends that schools use multi-age grouping strategies and looping—a grouping strategy that requires teachers to move from grade to grade with their students. All grouping strategies are flexible, and students may be regrouped.

Technology

ITI expects schools to use technology for instruction and management. ITI provides professional development and planning materials, including training videos, audio cassettes, and CDs. In addition, SK&A provides a 1-day training session on incorporating technology into the ITI curriculum. For more information on this training session, schools should directly contact SK&A.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

ITI seeks to monitor student progress using performance-based assessments rather than standardized, multiple-choice tests. The model requires teachers to design these assessments using two guiding questions:

- What do you want the students to understand?
- How do you want them to apply this knowledge?

The model requires teachers to outline their expectations for student understanding and learning and to align these expectations with state and district standards. Subsequently, ITI requires teachers to develop methods of assessment including, but not limited to, rubrics, point systems, group assessments, and real-world application. SK&A claims these methods of assessment differ from multiple-choice tests because these assessments test skill mastery rather than the recognition of patterns.

Family and Community Involvement

ITI strongly recommends but does not require parent and community involvement. Prior to implementation, the model recommends that schools develop a library for parents that includes resources on ITI and how the brain learns. SK&A teaches school administrators to educate parents on the model design and to include parents in the model implementation during the Leadership Academy. Specifically, SK&A recommends that administrators hold regular meetings with parents to discuss videos and books on ITI. SK&A also outlines modes of communication between teachers and parents. In *Exceeding Expectations: A User's Guide to Implementing Brain Research in the Classroom* (Kovalik & Olsen, 2005), SK&A provides teachers with letter writing tips, a suggested reading list for parents, and sample parent contracts. In *Character Begins at Home: Family Tools for Teaching Character and Values* (Olsen & Pearson, 2000), SK&A provides families with information about brain research and helpful resources along with opportunities to practice to support implementation of the Lifelong Guidelines and LIFESKILLS at home.

In the 1st and 2nd years of implementation, SK&A associates conduct two parent and community meetings during which the associates describe the model and create a forum to discuss implementation. Principals reached by the CSRQ Center perceived that these meetings were effective for parents from all social and academic backgrounds.

ITI also encourages community involvement through real-world situations that illustrate skills and concepts (*being there* experiences). Teachers plan study trips where students observe skills and concepts applied in their community. SK&A offers suggestions for involving parents and students in their community such as family trips to museums, natural environments, and the public library.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Prior to implementation, SK&A provides school administrators with an ITI Planning Guide that includes a recommended 3-year training sequence, dates and description of each of their professional development opportunities, lists of supplemental materials published by SK&A, guides for organizing training activities, and a toolkit for grant writing. SK&A recommends that schools adopt its 3-year training sequence. If schools commit to this training sequence, SK&A reduces the costs for each training activity.

Through professional development and technical assistance, SK&A seeks to build school capacity to maintain the model after the initial implementation period ends. Additional training builds the capacity of teacher leaders to serve as onsite experts on aspects of the model and to work as peer coaches. ITI encourages schools to create a professional library of books and videos for teachers, parents, and administrators. SK&A provides a list of recommended titles for this library. Examples of recommended titles include *Magic Trees of Intelligence: How to Nurture Your Child's Intelligence, Creativity, and Healthy Emotions From Birth Through Adolescence* (Diamond & Hopson, 1998) and *So You Have to Teach Math: Sound Advice for K–6 Teachers* (Burns & Silbey, 2000). During implementation, ITI strongly encourages schools to organize regular meetings of teachers, parents, and administrators to discuss these books and videos.

During the 1st year of implementation, ITI training focuses on schoolwide awareness of the reform model. Professional development activities provide an overview of research on how the brain functions and how learning takes place. The training also explains how this research can be applied in the classroom. Technical assistance activities translate this research into day-to-day implementation strategies.

First, all teachers and administrators attend a 3-day Bodybrain Basics Workshop that provides the research

foundation and implementation strategies for the model. Subsequently, the model requires school administrators to attend the Leadership Academy, which provides a model overview, strategies for involving parents, and methods for reforming the school climate. Finally, SK&A associates provide an onsite *being there* experience for schools during the Model Teaching Week. During this week, an ITI associate creates an ITI classroom with a multi-age group of 50 students while another associate conducts workshops on ITI instructional strategies. Teachers alternate between attending the workshops and observing the classroom. To supplement these professional development opportunities, SK&A associates provide 30 days of onsite coaching divided between fall, winter, and spring. In addition, a SK&A trainer conducts a biannual overview of the model for parent and community members.

During the 2nd year of implementation, ITI training focuses on solidifying the instructional strategies learned during the 1st year of implementation. SK&A associates conduct a progress assessment to determine the degree of implementation and use this assessment to guide training during the 2nd year. New staff members attend the Bodybrain Basics Workshop at a regional training facility. In addition, teachers and administrators attend the Integrated Curriculum Seminar. Similar to the 1st year, the following professional development opportunities are offered by the model provider:

- Leadership Academy
- Model Teaching Week
- Two parent workshops
- Thirty days of onsite coaching

SK&A also helps schools select teacher leaders during the 2nd year of implementation. These teachers network with other teacher leaders at an annual meeting and receive coaching from SK&A trainers on developing coaching skills. SK&A outlines the ITI coaching model

in *Making Bodybrain-Compatible Education a Reality: Coaching for the ITI Model* (Olsen, 1999).

During the 3rd year of implementation, ITI training focuses on developing curriculum and building capacity to maintain the model. The model provider conducts an implementation assessment to guide planning and capacity building. Similar to the 2nd year of implementation, the model requires attendance at the Leadership Academy, a networking meeting for teacher leaders, and the Integrated Curriculum Seminar. The model also requires teachers to attend a 4-day Curriculum Writing Academy during year 3. SK&A associates conduct a Model Teaching Week focused on curriculum development and implementation of instructional strategies, and provide 30 days of onsite coaching to teachers.

Throughout the 3 years of implementation, SK&A provides optional training sessions—known as Power Packs—for teachers. These 1- or 2-day training sessions cover a range of topics, including classroom management, family involvement, ITI coaching, curriculum development, core content areas, group work, and multiple intelligences. SK&A also provides an optional school LISTSERV, which serves as a tool for disseminating new research and information on the model.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Full implementation of ITI may take schools up to 5 years to complete. SK&A provides school administrators and teachers with two formal sets of benchmarks to guide implementation: (a) ITI's Classroom Stages of Implementation found in *Exceeding Expectations and Your Personal Handbook for Implementing the ITI Model in Elementary/Secondary Schools* (Olsen, 2005) and (b) *ITI Schoolwide Rubric: Planning and Assessing Schoolwide Implementation of Brain-Compatible Education*. The rubric divides the implementation into five stages. Each stage includes language the school should adopt, professional development expectations,

implementation guidelines, and indicators of success. The stages focus on five items:

- Best practice
- Brain-compatible environment
- Real world application
- Curriculum development
- Sustainability

SK&A uses checklists, teacher surveys, timelines, and onsite coaching to monitor implementation and school performance. SK&A recommends that schools gather data throughout the academic year, including the following:

- Class sizes
- Student attendance rates
- Disaggregated test scores
- Logs of library visitation, parent trainings, and student service projects
- Sample curriculums and assessments

At the beginning of each implementation year, SK&A associates conduct a formal evaluation of the school's implementation status. SK&A uses data collected by the school and data from their observations in the formal evaluation. The associates provide feedback to the school to guide implementation plans for that year.

Special Considerations

Schools may take as long as 5 years to implement ITI successfully. All the school principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that teacher buy-in is critical to the model's success as teachers are instrumental in curriculum design and may have to alter their instructional strategies to implement ITI. Principals also believe that

the flexibility of the ITI curriculum allows for meaningful learning rather than rote memorization of facts.

Rferences

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- McGeehan, J. R. (Ed.). (2000). *Transformations: Leadership for bodybrain-compatible learning*. Kent, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates, Inc.
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Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

- Frederick, C. (2004). *Professional development report for selected Tulsa public elementary schools participating in ITI training between June 2000 and*

January 2004. Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Frederick, C. (2006). *Stone Creek Elementary School Integrated Thematic Instruction implementation report*. Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Ruth, N. S. (1998). *A comparative study of Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI) and non-Integrated Thematic Instruction: The differences and relationships in student gender and reading TAAS scores over a two-year implementation period*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University.

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Literacy Collaborative—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Literacy Collaborative | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | Literacy Collaborative is a professional development model for primary and intermediate grade level teachers that presents a comprehensive schoolwide approach to literacy development and includes capacity-building through a school-based literacy coordinator. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1993 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–9 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 430 ¹ | 128 | 131 | 128 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$16,775–\$24,850 | \$16,775–\$24,850 (including materials) | Included in total cost | N/A | Varies |
| Year 2 | \$3,050–\$4,400 | Included in total cost | Included in total cost | N/A | Varies |
| Year 3 | \$3,050–\$4,400 | Included in total cost | Included in total cost | N/A | Varies |
| Years 4+ | \$3,050–\$4,400 | Included in total cost | Included in total cost | N/A | Varies |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹This number includes 43 schools that are not designated as either urban, suburban, or rural.

Model Description

Literacy Collaborative, formerly known as the Early Literacy Learning Initiative, is a national comprehensive school reform project. The model includes three programs: primary (K–2), intermediate (grades 3–6), and middle school (grades 6–8). Schools send teachers to university training sites to receive training to become literacy coordinators within the Literacy Collaborative model at their respective school levels. The trainers at the university sites are typically master teachers and include former and current literacy coordinators, university faculty members, educational researchers, and tenured teachers. After the training year, literacy coordinators work as classroom teachers and spend part of the time providing professional development to other teachers and coaching them in their classrooms. Literacy coordinators receive graduate credit for their training at the university sites.

Development of the primary program began at The Ohio State University (OSU) in 1986 by faculty members from OSU and a group of teachers from the Columbus Public School District. The mission of the group was to research and discover more effective ways to teach students. The OSU group designed a framework for literacy development and in 1993, trained their first group of primary literacy coordinators who began implementing the model in schools.

Development of the intermediate program began at Lesley University in 1996. The intermediate program was initiated in 1999 to address the literacy needs of students in grades 3–6. A pilot program is currently underway to address the literacy needs of middle school students.

The Literacy Collaborative model offers training for the primary and intermediate programs at four universities: Georgia State University, Lesley University, OSU, and Purdue University. District training is offered only at

Lesley University and OSU. Lesley University also offers training in the middle school program. Presently, 430 schools implement Literacy Collaborative in 180 school districts in 27 states.

This information was provided by OSU and Lesley University. The information included in this description is considered representative of the entire national Literacy Collaborative project.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of Literacy Collaborative were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

Literacy Collaborative is a professional development model that provides K–6 teachers with a comprehensive, schoolwide framework and flexible instructional strategies for literacy instruction. The collaborative has professional development training centers at Georgia State University, Lesley University, OSU, and Purdue University.

Goals/Rationale

The goal of the Literacy Collaborative model is to raise the reading, writing, and language arts achievement of all students by providing schools with consistent strategies and professional development to create a schoolwide approach to literacy instruction and development. The model has specific goals:

- Provide a systematic instructional framework that integrates reading, writing, and oral language skills.

- Develop capacity within each school through extensive training for literacy coordinators.
- Support teachers in the use of a set of research-based instructional practices.
- Make Reading Recovery available as a safety net to all first-grade students who are at risk of reading failure. Reading Recovery is an intervention program that provides one-on-one tutoring to bring the reading and writing skills of struggling first-grade students up to grade level.²
- Align literacy instruction with state and federal guidelines.

Costs

For the 1st year of implementation, the Literacy Collaborative model costs between \$16,775 and \$24,850, depending on the selected university training site. This cost includes fees, training, and materials. Travel costs vary by site and are not included in the base cost of the model. In subsequent years, the implementation cost decreases to between \$3,050 and \$4,400, depending on the university training site. Literacy Collaborative schools are expected to provide release time to literacy coordinators to attend university training sessions and to provide funds for creating book collections, with sets of books for use in guided reading lessons and high-quality children's literature for use in reading aloud and writing lessons. Salaries of literacy coaches are not included in the cost of the model.

Literacy Collaborative also provides additional institutes, training, and academies. These include 2-day institutes and 5-day seminars and academies that range from \$250–\$900 per person. For example, a 2-day summer institute for intermediate teachers at OSU costs \$250 per person. For more information on the

costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 19 quantitative studies for effects of Literacy Collaborative on student achievement. Eight of the 19 studies met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design. Based on research designs, the CSRQ Center considers the findings of two studies to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results reported. The CSRQ Center considers the findings of six studies to be *suggestive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has limited confidence in the results reported. Across the eight studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards, more than half of the findings (52.9%) showed positive outcomes, with an average effect size of +0.35. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of Literacy Collaborative on student achievement is moderate. The studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards are described below. (Appendix N reports on the 11 studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards.)

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standards and was considered to be conclusive used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design to examine the impact of Literacy Collaborative on student outcomes in six elementary schools that served primarily low socioeconomic status, high minority student populations. Students in grades K–2 who were taught by teachers with 1–3 years of Literacy Collaborative experience participated in the study. The study focused on reading outcomes by using the Developmental

²For more information on Reading Recovery, go to <http://www.readingrecovery.org>.

Reading Assessment (DRA) measure. The study reported a positive impact of Literacy Collaborative on kindergarten students. Students whose teachers had 1 year of experience with Literacy Collaborative significantly outperformed students whose teachers had no experience with Literacy Collaborative. However, a group of kindergarten students whose teachers had 2 years of experience with Literacy Collaborative had significantly lower scores than comparison students and students whose teachers had 1 year of experience with Literacy Collaborative.³ No statistically significant differences were found for the remaining comparisons of first- or second-grade students whose teachers had been exposed to Literacy Collaborative for 1, 2, or 3 years.

The second study that met the CSRQ Center's standards and was considered to be conclusive examined changes in passing rates of elementary school students, based on the third-grade language arts subtest of the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+). Students in the study came from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds in the state. Students in Literacy Collaborative schools outperformed students in schools that reported no early literacy programming.

The six studies whose findings are considered to be suggestive were longitudinal designs that compared cohorts of second-grade students who received Literacy Collaborative instruction with cohorts of second-grade students who did not receive such instruction. Participants in the studies were predominantly at-risk students who attended primarily low-income, urban and rural schools in the midwestern United States. Samples included students who were English language learners and other students who had reading difficulties.

The findings of these six studies are considered to be suggestive because they included baseline data,⁴ used reliable testing instruments, and did not appear to violate threats to validity. The studies tracked trends on reading performance of second-grade students for up to 6 academic years, during which time Literacy Collaborative was in place. Each study showed increases in reading achievement over time but did not indicate whether the increases were statistically significant. Upon request, the studies' authors provided data that allowed the CSRQ Center to test the findings reported in the studies. The results in all of the studies showed statistically significant pre-post differences over time, and the majority of studies showed statistically significant, distinct upward trends in reading achievement.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the effects of Literacy Collaborative on student achievement in high-poverty and low-poverty schools separately. Literacy Collaborative schools in both settings had higher passing rates on ISTEP+ than comparison schools, but the reported effect size was higher for high-poverty schools (+0.80) than low-poverty schools (+0.46). Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

The eight studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards focused on reading outcomes. The effect size of

³In this study, teachers received a higher amount of training and coaching during their 1st year than during their 2nd year of using the Literacy Collaborative model. According to the study, the negative findings may have resulted from the reduced amount of training that teachers received after their 1st year of using the model.

⁴Literacy Collaborative considers the first 2 years of program implementation to be "baseline." The CSRQ Center defines baseline as preimplementation. In this case, the CSRQ Center allowed the 1st year of implementation to count as baseline.

the positive finding in reading was +0.35. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

None of the eight studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined effects of Literacy Collaborative on additional outcomes. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

None of the eight studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined effects or trends of Literacy Collaborative on outcomes related to parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Explicit citations are available in *Systems for Change in Literacy and Education: A Guide to Professional Development* (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001) to support all core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by Literacy Collaborative, explicit citations support all the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, time and scheduling, instructional grouping, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model's core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The Literacy Collaborative consists of four main components: literacy learning and integration of content areas, school-based leadership, professional development, and assessment and research.

The model expects the school to form a school-based leadership team to provide instructional leadership for the model's implementation. The leadership team should be composed of the literacy coordinator, the principal, representatives for classroom teachers at each grade, the Reading Recovery teacher, a special education teacher, and such other teachers as the Title I teacher and/or the school's reading specialist. During the literacy coordinator's 1st year, he/she attends seven or eight intensive week-long professional development sessions at the university and teaches full time in a classroom. During the 2nd year, half of the literacy coordinator's time is spent teaching and the other half is spent between coaching teachers and leading professional development sessions for teachers. The literacy coordinator provides ongoing support to staff through study groups, modeling lessons, and coaching.

The model requires that an application be submitted; the application includes specific assurances that must be signed by the principal and district superintendent. These assurances include a 5-year commitment by participating schools to implement fully the Literacy Collaborative Framework; select, train, and ensure full participation of a literacy coordinator; select a site coordinator to oversee fiscal matters and the overall implementation of the model; create a school-based professional development plan; provide for Reading Recovery; and form a school-based literacy team.

Curriculum and Instruction

Schools are required to adopt an instructional framework to enhance the literacy development of students. Within the framework, Literacy Collaborative expects teachers to include language, word study, and reading and writing workshops to promote literacy development. Teachers are trained to use particular instructional strategies for the following components of literacy

instruction: phonemic awareness, word analysis, handwriting, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary development. Required instructional strategies include: interactive reading aloud, interactive writing, shared reading and writing, guided reading, and independent reading and writing. These strategies are used for both the primary and intermediate components of the model. Literacy Collaborative requires schools to acquire and build three different types of book collections:

- **Children's books, tradebooks, and sets of books for use during reading instruction.** The children's books are also used for reading- and writing-related activities.
- **Curriculum and instructional guides, which were created by the model's founders.** Instructional guides provide teachers with additional information and samples of literacy lessons.
- **Professional resources.** These resources supplement the information that teachers receive during staff development sessions.

The model requires schools to implement the Reading Recovery curriculum for first-grade students who are struggling with reading, writing, and language skills. Reading Recovery is an intervention in which a specially trained teacher works intensively one-on-one with struggling first-grade students.

The overall instructional approach for the Literacy Collaborative model is a rigorous curriculum that includes oral language, reading, and writing. The model provides explicit instruction and activities through which students practice literacy principles. Teachers provide a high level of instructional support through teacher modeling and gradually release responsibility to the student for assuming ownership of independent reading strategies.

Technology

The model provider suggests but does not require that schools use such technology as computers and audio-visual media in classroom instruction.

Scheduling and Grouping

Literacy Collaborative requires schools to adopt flexible strategies to group students for such activities as guided reading and writing groups. Teachers are trained to organize instructional groups using assessments and observations. The model requires schools to form heterogeneous and homogeneous instructional groups.

Schools must restructure their schedules to dedicate 2.5 hours of uninterrupted time for literacy. Included in the time block is 30 minutes for language and word study, 1 hour for reading instruction and activities, and 1 hour for writing instruction and activities.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

Informal and formal measures are used to guide instruction and monitor student progress. All Literacy Collaborative schools are required to use some specific assessments, for which the results should be used to inform instruction. Teachers keep running records or reading records of student behaviors and analyze student work. To inform instruction, teachers also use other assessments, including the standardized tests that the school routinely administers.

Program evaluation at the school level is conducted by the school's leadership team, which includes the principal, the literacy coordinator, and other school personnel. In the beginning of the school year, members of the school leadership team develop a school-level evaluation plan. The team submits the plan to the university training site. The team then collects and analyzes student data to monitor student progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. At the end

of the school year, the school leadership team is responsible for writing an Annual School Report that presents quantitative and qualitative data on student learning, discusses implementation issues, and states goals for the following year. The Annual School Report gives the leadership team the opportunity to reflect on students' learning during the course of the year and on how program implementation is working at the school. The report also informs the university training sites about learning patterns in Literacy Collaborative schools. Literacy Collaborative staff provide guidelines and support to leadership teams who prepare the Annual School Reports, including training in using a graphing program to depict scores on standardized tests conducted in fall and spring.

In districts that have many Literacy Collaborative schools, district literacy coordinators write Annual District Reports that cover student learning and program implementation for the entire district. These reports also compare student achievement among Learning Collaborative schools and other schools in the district.

Literacy Collaborative also conducts its own national-level research on program effectiveness and either commissions or participates in outside evaluations.

Family and Community Involvement

Literacy Collaborative encourages schools to develop relationships with families to create a home-school literacy program. Lesley University developed a guide, *Help Your Child Learn at Home: A Parent's Guide* (Lesley University, 2004), that contains activities for parents to support children in their reading and writing development at home. For example, the guide suggests specific topics for discussion when parents read aloud to their children, such as talking about the book's title and cover, predicting events that might happen in the story, and comparing the story to other books.

The model provides additional home support for beginning readers through its KEEP BOOKS program. KEEP BOOKS are small paperback books that students may take home and keep as their own. Spanish-language KEEP BOOKS (Libritos míos) also are available. The books reinforce early reading of letters, sounds, and words. Parents may read KEEP BOOKS aloud, engage in a shared reading with the child, or allow the child to read the book aloud or silently.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Literacy Collaborative model requires a school to commit to 5 years of training and participation. Optional professional development sessions are conducted for school staff who are considering the program, and optional and required professional development sessions are conducted for literacy coordinators of the primary, intermediate, and middle school programs. Professional development is provided in the following key areas:

- **Awareness and planning training.** Literacy Collaborative schools participate in a comprehensive planning approach prior to implementing the model. Literacy Collaborative staff meets first with a team from a school that is considering adopting the model to discuss options for delivering the professional development plan. The factors that influence the plan are schoolwide test data, current literacy approaches and strategies, human and material resources, and funding allocation. Throughout the planning year, 5 days of awareness training are available to the team. The intent is to inform teachers about the current status of the model to foster staff buy-in and commitment.
- **School implementation.** The implementation of Literacy Collaborative professional development requires schoolwide commitment to the model from administrators and teachers. The principal's responsibility is to identify a literacy coordinator

and a literacy team with representative teachers from each grade level, special education teachers, and reading specialists. Literacy coordinators teach full-time in classrooms during the 1st year. During subsequent years, the literacy coordinators split their time between teaching and coaching and leading professional development sessions. The literacy coordinators conduct the professional development course, coach and mentor teachers, and analyze schoolwide literacy data. Teachers attend training and implement strategies learned in the professional development course. Lastly, the entire school must buy-in to the model and use a collaborative schoolwide approach to literacy development.

- **Literacy coordinator training.** Literacy coordinators receive training throughout each phase of implementation. The training for coordinators is held at one of the four university training sites. During the 1st training year of the model, primary literacy coordinators are required to attend eight week-long professional development sessions, and intermediate and middle school coordinators attend seven week-long sessions. The sessions are spread across the school year. Coordinators learn about the Literacy Collaborative model, how to implement it, and how to provide professional development and coach other teachers.

After completion of the Literacy Collaborative training, the literacy coordinator conducts a year-long professional development course for primary and intermediate teachers. The course includes assessment procedures, teaching strategies, grouping techniques, and suggestions for working with parents. Subsequently, the literacy coordinators demonstrate strategy lessons in teachers' classrooms and provide follow-up training and coaching as teachers implement the strategies with their students.

After the 1st year of implementation, the university training sites provide coordinators with additional

professional development. They are continuously introduced to a variety of literacy strategies and professional development approaches for providing professional development and coaching teachers.

In addition to the ongoing professional development, the literacy coordinators are taught strategies for collecting and analyzing data to evaluate the effectiveness of the model. The Literacy Collaborative staff trains teachers to administer and interpret ongoing informal assessments of individual and group literacy achievement. Also, administrators and the school leadership team learn methods for assessing and interpreting standardized test scores.

- **Leadership development.** A 5-day professional development workshop is conducted for both primary and intermediate school literacy planning teams. This session requires attendance of the school principal and a teacher representative from each grade level. The school staff members receive information on the literacy framework and strategies to support the implementation of the model. Principals have the option to attend an additional Principals' Academy for Leadership, which presents an overview of the instructional framework, leadership skills for collaborating with teams of teachers, and strategies for enhancing observation and assessment skills.

Literacy Collaborative also provides such additional optional professional development for teachers and literacy coordinators as 2-day summer institutes. Topics of the summer institutes vary each year. For example, "Reading Like a Writer in the Writing Workshop, Grades 3–6" was the topic one summer. This institute focused on reading like a writer, the use of mentor texts, genre instruction within the writing workshop, and planning for a year of writing workshop. The summer institutes typically are conducted by master teachers and include former and current Literacy Collaborative teachers, university faculty members, educational researchers, authors, and tenured teachers.

University teams also use a wide range of scholarly texts and articles that support literacy learning as a complex process.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Implementation of this model takes place in four phases.

- **Phase 1: Awareness and planning.** Schools begin to explore the model and its professional development, achieve faculty buy-in, develop an implementation plan, and submit an application.
- **Phase 2: Literacy coordinator training and start-up.** This phase concentrates on training for the literacy coordinators, creating a school-based leadership team, providing additional awareness sessions, developing the book collection, and developing a school-level evaluation plan.
- **Phase 3: School-level implementation.** The literacy coordinator provides the year-long professional development course for teachers, provides support to staff through modeling and coaching, and begins to collect and analyze data on the program and students. Additionally, schools are expected to develop an adequate book collection to support the model's framework of instruction and initiate a home-school program.
- **Phase 4: Refinement.** Professional development and support for teachers continue at this phase of implementation. The school continues to collect and analyze data to guide instruction and monitor student progress. The school leadership team continues to evaluate and monitor implementation.

The Literacy Collaborative assists school leadership teams in conducting program evaluations. The university training sites provide technical assistance for developing an evaluation plan and interpreting and presenting data. Literacy Collaborative staff assist leadership teams to develop research questions,

determine research and evaluation methodologies, and interpret findings. The process allows members of the leadership team to examine literacy teaching in their school under the Literacy Collaborative model and to reflect on the impact of the model on students and the school.

Each school implementing the Literacy Collaborative framework must submit an annual report to the Literacy Collaborative at its training site. The report is written by the school leadership team and includes the following six elements: current status of implementation at the site, school evaluation plan, student achievement data, documentation of effectiveness of implementation, strengths and challenges in the implementation process, and goals for the following year. A PowerPoint presentation on how to create an evaluation plan and write an Annual School Report is available to Literacy Collaborative schools on the password-protected portion of the Literacy Collaborative Web site (<http://www.literacycollaborative.org>).

The model also developed the Literacy Collaborative Standards, a series of standards to support implementation for schools, literacy coordinators, districts, and university training sites. The standards list and provide the rationale for each step that each stakeholder must follow for successful implementation. For example, one school-level standard states that, “Teachers in the schools will collect, analyze, and use classroom assessment data to inform teaching decisions on a regular basis.” The rationale for this standard is that, “Teachers assess students to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching and the implementation of the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework. This informs the teachers’ instruction, helps them provide interventions, and equips them with strategies for school improvement.” Each year, all Literacy Collaborative schools are required to complete an Affirmation Document that reviews the model’s implementation relative to the Literacy Collaborative Standards.

Special Considerations

According to Literacy Collaborative, the model’s longitudinal data collection procedure provides schools with opportunities to analyze changes in student reading achievement and evaluate school change over time. This type of longitudinal data is meant to help schools examine the long-term effects of the model and any significant changes in instructional practices and student literacy development that appear to be occurring as a result of implementing the model.

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M odel Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

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Modern Red SchoolHouse—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Modern Red SchoolHouse | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | Modern Red SchoolHouse is a professional development model based on the premise that, given the appropriate time, instructional skills, and instructional strategy development, all students are able to meet state standards of learning. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1996 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 300 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$50,000–\$100,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$50,000–\$100,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | \$50,000–\$100,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | \$25,000–\$50,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | |  |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: Reading and math | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

The Modern Red SchoolHouse (MRSH) school reform model grew out of the Hudson Institute as one of New American Schools' original reform designs. In 1996, the model was piloted in six school districts in four states. Full implementation began in 1997 when the MRSH Institute was established as a nonprofit organization. Currently, the model staff has collaborated with more than 300 schools and 80 school districts in 30 states.

The MRSH model seeks to serve the needs of all students. The model is based on the theory that for all students to achieve high academic standards, school and classroom practices should accommodate the different needs of each student. Each MRSH program is custom designed to meet the individual needs of schools and districts.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of MRSH were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

MRSH seeks to help all students master core academic subjects by using research-based findings on elements that lead to higher achievement. The guiding principles are

- All students are able to learn, given appropriate time and instructional strategies;
- Teachers and administrators need flexibility to organize an effective instructional program;

- Schools need research-based instructional programs;
- Teachers need ongoing data collection to continuously assess student progress;
- Schools need advanced technology to improve communication, manage student progress, and offer computer-based learning to students;
- Schools should focus on the richness of diverse cultures; and
- Schools should build collaborative relationships with parents.

MRSH focuses on six elements: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) standards and assessment, (3) school organization and finance, (4) technology, (5) parent and community partnerships, and (6) professional development.

Goals/Rationale

The overarching goals of MRSH are to help schools achieve schoolwide academic progress that aligns with state and local standards, empower local school administrators and staff to manage school planning, monitor schoolwide data collection, design an effective instructional program for all students, and meet state standards of learning requirements. Within these broader goals, MRSH seeks to

- Improve schoolwide achievement for all students;
- Expand building capacity through school-based professional development and technical support;
- Encourage inter- and intracommunication of staff and community;
- Develop collegial relationship among teachers, administrators, and community; and
- Empower staff to manage resources, instructional programs, and professional development.

Costs

The cost of implementing the MRSB model varies based on a number of factors, including the location and size of the school or district and the grade levels served. The location of the school and the associated travel costs depends on the number of other schools in the area. MRSB staff work with all teachers, so the size and grade levels of the school affect the model cost. The average total operating cost for full implementation is \$50,000–\$100,000 for the first 3 years and \$25,000–\$50,000 for the 4th year of implementation. Targeted assistance models, as opposed to comprehensive school improvement plans, are less expensive. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 23 quantitative studies for effects of MRSB on student achievement. Two of these studies met the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. The Center considers the findings of these studies *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in the study’s results. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of this model on student achievement is limited. The studies that met standards are described below. (Appendix O reports on the other 21 studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The first study of MRSB that met CSRQ Center standards and is considered suggestive used a longitudinal cohort design. The researchers tracked the trends on reading and math performance of fourth and fifth graders in one primarily Hispanic MRSB school on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).¹ Although statistical tests were not performed on the findings, trends from the scores in 1996, before implementation, compared to scores in 2000, 3 years after implementation, showed increases in the percentage of students passing TAAS in both reading and math.

The second study of MRSB that is considered suggestive was a longitudinal study that tracked student achievement at one urban MRSB school over 6 years. Student achievement in five subject areas (reading, language, math, science, and social studies) was measured with the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). Scores were also expressed as gain scores using the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). The study reported that average percentile TCAP and TVAAS scores appeared to increase over time, from 1 year prior to implementation to 5 years after MRSB had been in place. The upward trends were not tested for statistical significance, but the study describes them as substantial, particularly relative to other scores in the state over the same time.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

The one study of MRSB that met CSRQ Center standards did not examine the effects of MRSB on the achievement of diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

¹Other results for MRSB schools in Maryland and Tennessee were reported in this study but were considered *inconclusive* because the baseline measures were administered after the program was implemented. We focus here on the findings that are considered suggestive.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

In one of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards, results indicated a positive impact of MRSB on reading achievement. From the year before MRSB was implemented to 3 years after MRSB had been in place, passing rates on the reading section of the TAAS increased from 47% to 91% for third graders, from 55% to 76% for fourth graders, and from 52% to 89% for fifth graders. Whether these improvements were statistically significant is unknown. The rating in this category is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

In the same study, results were suggestive of a positive impact of MRSB on math achievement. From the year before MRSB was implemented to 3 years after MRSB had been in place, passing rates on the math section of the TAAS increased from 56% to 88% for third graders, from 60% to 72% for fourth graders, and from 47% to 94% for fifth graders. Again, the statistical significance of these improvements is unknown, and the rating in this category is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

One study that met CSRQ Center standards included a survey of 1,268 teachers, administered by MRSB. The survey results indicated generally positive effects of MRSB on school and classroom practices.² With one study suggestive of a positive impact in this category, the rating is limited. It is important to note that a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that the

²Outcomes measured included collegial collaboration, alignment of instruction across subjects, instructional strategies, approach to planning, and performance-based assessments.

research on a model provides evidence of positive impact for additional outcomes. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met CSRQ Center's standards in this category. MRSB is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met CSRQ Center's standards in this category.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

No studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined the effects of MRSB on parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore the rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, explicit citations support all the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the rating is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

The model's documentation shows that it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial

understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, the model only offers an informal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is moderately strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to adoption, the MRSB staff meets with district and school staff to develop a profile of the local school or district. School leaders share student achievement data, teacher and student mobility rates, parent and community participation, teacher certification, and other information with MRSB. The MRSB staff also schedules interviews with principals and teachers, and conducts classroom observations to gain a better understanding of the district and schools. Based on the findings, the MRSB staff develops an outline of the services to be provided, which includes a timeline

for implementation and an itemized budget. Generally, MRSB requires that a minimum of 80% of the teachers at a school vote in favor of using the MRSB model prior to implementation.

Implementing the MRSB model does not require districts or schools to make substantial changes to their existing school structure and operations. The expectations and guidance given to schools depend on the specific needs of the school. However, district personnel must collaborate with site leadership and MRSB facilitators to develop a coherent professional development plan. Principals are expected to participate fully in the implementation by establishing common planning periods, granting periodic release time to teachers, mentoring teachers, and attending training sessions. Teachers and paraprofessionals participate in professional development and task forces developed in coordination with MRSB over a period of 3 years. The task forces are developed to address particular school needs, and are comprised of school personnel, parents, small business representatives, and school board members.

No additional staff is required for implementation. However, according to the model, schools that are able to have a full- or part-time MRSB facilitator on staff may experience a smoother implementation. MRSB does not require any formal monitoring of the implementation process. The MRSB staff offers baseline and annual surveys to teachers and principals to help assess implementation efforts.

Curriculum and Instruction

The MRSB model emphasizes the alignment of curriculum with the appropriate standards. The model does not require a specific curriculum and generally relies on the curricula and textbooks that schools are already using. MRSB staff helps teachers think collaboratively about ways to strengthen the instructional program to meet the needs of the student body. As the MRSB

staff plans a curriculum approach, the following questions guide decision making:

- Are learning and instruction progressing in a coherent manner?
- Are distinct and discrete differences occurring at each grade level and across all subject matter?
- Are the same skills taught in the same way each year?
- Are both skills (memory-based) and strategies (application) taught to all students?
- Do all students have an opportunity to master challenging content?

The MRSH instructional approach helps all students through a standards-driven approach, performance-based assessments, differentiated instructional approaches, constructivist methods (“active” and “authentic” learning), and opportunities for reteaching if misunderstanding occurs.

The essential question posed by the MRSH staff is, “What do we expect students to be able to do with what they learn?” The task of identifying the essential knowledge, targets, benchmarks, performance assessments, and criteria for mastery are then assigned to the local school planning team. Crucial to that planning initiative are the roles and responsibilities of the teacher in implementing the instructional plan.

One major emphasis of the MRSH instructional design is the balance between teacher-led instruction and student-centered learning. The model promotes the explicit instruction of both skills and strategies. Along with the direct teaching approach, the design includes opportunities for students to engage in self-directed activities that nurture independence. For students who experience misconceptions and misunderstandings, the instructional design team stresses the importance of reteaching using alternative approaches. MRSH

provides teachers with resource guides to help them implement these instructional strategies and to offer guidance for effective teaching.

The model aims to help the disadvantaged learner, whose limited motivation often interferes with academic learning. The model includes methods for building background knowledge to help disengaged students make connections with subject content. One example cited on the MRSH Web site was the teaching of the concept of renaissance in historically African American urban schools. The suggestion was to first address the idea of change in the Harlem Renaissance and then relate that personal experience to the European Renaissance.

Generally, schools continue to use the curricula and materials they were using prior to implementing MRSH. Teachers are expected to help develop units of instruction and curriculum maps for their schools.

Scheduling and Grouping

MRSH staff collaborates with schools to customize an approach that fits the school culture. Therefore, MRSH does not require dedicated instructional blocks or specific grouping strategies for implementation. MRSH may recommend grouping based on a number of factors including assessments of progress and skill mastery. Periodically, students may be grouped and regrouped within a class, across the same grade level, or across different grade levels. MRSH staff can provide assistance with these grouping strategies.

Technology

MRSH helps schools integrate technology into the classroom, but the use of technology is not required for implementation. The model promotes technology as a way for educators to improve communication, manage instruction, monitor progress, and increase student achievement.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The MRSH advocates ongoing monitoring of student progress and performance through teacher-developed assessments, commercial diagnostics, and state assessments. MRSH staff expects teachers to develop student performance assessments in order to know their students' strengths and weaknesses. The model emphasizes the use of performance assessment data to inform instructional practices and organizational decisions. State assessments and teacher-developed assessments are used to guide instruction. Organizational decisions within schools are based on data from school surveys, test results, and other sources.

During the diagnostic visit by the MRSH staff, the school learns strategies for monitoring schoolwide progress. Through the modeling of data investigation, review of teacher skills and knowledge, classroom observations, and individual interviews both inside and outside of school staff, schools acquire strategies to improve their data collection methods.

Family and Community Involvement

The MRSH model encourages family and community involvement. Parent and community volunteers are asked to participate in student classrooms, work as tutors, support students with their homework, and participate in schoolwide task forces. The MRSH staff assists schools in developing a comprehensive plan to reach out to families and the community for support. The model also offers workshops to inform parents about in-home math and reading support activities.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

MRSH offers a fully developed professional development plan to all schools implementing the model.

MRSH professional development and technical assistance services fall under five general topics:

- Preparing for comprehensive change
- Changing practice to improve student achievement
- Building standards-based curricula, instruction, and assessment
- Strengthening school governance and staff engagement
- Planning for continuous improvement

The MRSH professional development program entails a systematic approach for implementing sustainable change in schools. It is based on a four-step process:

- **Step 1: Conduct a diagnostic visit with local school staff to understand the current organizational challenges.** During the visit, the model staff examines school test data, mobility rates, attendance records, and demographic statistics; reviews teacher certification and staff training to understand the knowledge base of the faculty; visits different classrooms to observe the instructional practices that are taking place; and interviews students, teachers, administrators, and parents to obtain a multidimensional view of the school.
- **Step 2: Prepare a professional development proposal with local schools that entails the services, timeline, and budget required for implementing the training plan.** Although the sequence of the training is basically predetermined by the MRSH model, the methodology and arrangement of training events are tailored to meet the needs of the school. The ultimate goal is to involve the school in the training process so that it may eventually assume ownership of the model.
- **Step 3: Set concrete outcomes with school staff at each professional development session.** The intent is to gather evaluations from school staff

regarding the effectiveness of the training. The important consideration is the transfer of knowledge, skills, and strategies into the classroom. The final goal is for the training to directly impact schoolwide student achievement to meet state accountability standards.

- **Step 4: Build school capacity so that local schools and school districts can independently assume ownership of the training process.** The intent is to provide leadership training with administrators, specialists, curriculum coordinators and professional development staff. Additionally, the MRSB staff assists schools in monitoring yearly progress to meet state accountability requirements. Through a partnership with Learning Technology Systems, an electronically based tracking system is available to monitor student achievement in relationship to state standards of learning. The model also offers specific professional development for the following areas: technology, instructional grouping, data-based decision making, and family and community involvement. After completing professional development offerings, teachers may apply for continuing education units through their district or state.

The model offers a variety of professional development opportunities to administrators, the entire instructional staff, and paraprofessionals. A mentor is assigned to assist each principal during the implementation of MRSB. The mentor also trains the school's leadership team. Leadership team training may include topics such as problem-solving strategies and communication plans.

Another opportunity for professional development for all school staff arises out of the formation of task forces recommended by MRSB. The task forces function similarly to a committee. School personnel, parents, small business representatives, and school board members comprise these task forces. The model proposes six schoolwide task forces: (1) standards and assessments, (2) curriculum, (3) technology, (4) community and parent partnerships, (5) organization and finance, and

(6) professional development. MRSB staff provides assistance with developing action plans for each of these task forces.

An average of 25–30 days of professional development is offered each year onsite by MRSB trainers. MRSB trainers specialize in particular areas of the model and have an average of 20 years of experience in public education. For example, one school may work with a MRSB team onsite that includes a leadership coach, a curriculum specialist, and a classroom management expert. Through these training sessions, MRSB staff conducts all professional development, mentoring, and coaching.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The MRSB model offers implementation benchmarks to guide efforts in the areas of curriculum and instruction, technology, leadership, professional development, standards and assessment, organization and finance, and parent and community partnerships. Each benchmark has three associated levels of implementation indicators. For example, one benchmark for curriculum and instruction focuses on instructional strategies to assist teachers in identifying gaps in student learning. One indicator of this benchmark is that each unit guides teachers to where these gaps might occur.

Progress towards achieving implementation benchmarks is assessed through an annual survey of teachers and principals, onsite observations, a review of student achievement data, and teacher self-assessment. The MRSB model also provides the school staff members that participate in onsite trainings with an opportunity to evaluate each training session.

The school staff, with additional guidance from MRSB, uses implementation assessment data to establish school goals for subsequent years and to adjust model implementation. MRSB staff provides schools with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses with regard to model implementation.

Special Considerations

The MRSH staff will work collaboratively with district schools, school administrators, and Reading First Coordinators to develop a customized professional development plan. Its proposal to schools and districts includes all the essential reading components of an effective reading program and instructional strategies that focus on early identification and remedial approaches, plus intensive training for teachers to become more informed about literacy development.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Jackson Public Schools, Rand Corporation, & San Antonio Independent School District. (2001). *Comprehensive school reform: Research results for Modern Red SchoolHouse*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red SchoolHouse.

Sterbin, A. (2001). *Rozelle Elementary School: A longitudinal analysis, 1995–2000*. Memphis, TN: Mid-South Center for School Evaluation and Reform, University of Memphis.

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National Writing Project—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Model Name: | National Writing Project (NWP) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | NWP is a professional development model that aims to improve writing across all grade levels, build school-based leadership, and provide coaching and technical support to local schools and school districts. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1974 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 190 ¹ | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | N/A | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | N/A | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | N/A | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | |
| | Writing | | | | |
| | Reading | | | | |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: | | | | | |
| | Writing attitudes | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |
| = Very Strong = Moderately Strong = Moderate = Limited = Zero = Negative = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹Thousands of schools (urban, suburban, and rural) work with 190 university sites to implement the model.

Model Description

NWP began in 1974 at the University of California, Berkeley, where its founder, James Gray, established a university-based program for K–16 teachers called the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP). In partnership with Bay Area school districts, the BAWP developed a range of professional development services for teachers and schools interested in improving the teaching of writing and use of writing as a learning tool across the curriculum. From 1974–1991, universities across the country founded their own writing projects, replicating the Bay Area model, in order to provide professional development services to their local schools and districts. In 1991, the NWP began receiving federal funding, which allowed the network to expand to previously underserved areas. As of 2006, the NWP is a network of 190 university–school partnerships in all 50 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These locally based partnerships provide customized professional development programs to hundreds of K–12 schools each year.

According to the CSRQ Center standards, the following were identified as core components of NWP: professional development, technical assistance, and instruction. However, local writing project sites can design professional development that is compatible with many approaches to school governance, curriculum, and design. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

The NWP is a model primarily designed to improve writing. However, it is included in this review because NWP sites can provide a range of services to schools (described below) and the professional development model has been adopted by many schools using federal CSR funds. The NWP provides professional

development through a network of university-based local writing project sites to serve as a resource for local innovation and improvement, build school based leadership, develop a knowledge base on the writing process across the curriculum, and develop a network of NWP trained educators to help both teachers and their students become more successful writers and learners.

Goals/Rationale

The goal of the NWP is to improve the teaching of writing and learning in the nation’s schools. The model seeks to provide teachers, and in turn students, with comprehensive instruction in methodologies for the teaching of writing and use of writing as a learning tool across the curriculum through its professional development programs.

According to the NWP, its goals are based on nine key premises:

- Writing is pivotal to learning, academic achievement, and job success.
- Writing instruction begins in kindergarten and continues throughout life.
- Writing is fundamental to learning in all subjects.
- Effective teachers of writing must write themselves.
- Exemplary teachers make the best teachers of other teachers.
- Teachers are the key to reform in education.
- Professional development begins when teachers enter teaching and continues throughout their careers.
- Universities and schools in collaboration can provide powerful programs for teachers.
- Real change happens over time.

Costs

Local writing project sites offer a range of programs within their service areas, and such programs may be offered at the host university, through districts, or in schools. Costs for NWP professional development programs vary because these programs are tailored to the needs of the school and are designed in collaboration with faculty and administrators.

School districts are expected to pay for professional development programs that occur at their local schools. School districts may provide the funds for individuals from their local schools to attend the NWP annual summer institute held at NWP sites. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ●

The CSRQ Center reviewed 12 quantitative studies for effects of NWP on student achievement. Five studies met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design. Each study's findings are considered to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results reported. Results demonstrated a mix of positive effects and no statistically significant differences.² The average effect size of results showing positive impact was +0.52. Because 44% of the findings demonstrated some overall positive effects, the rating for NWP on student achievement is moderate.³ The

studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards are described below. (Appendix P reports on the seven studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards.)

The five studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards and were considered to be conclusive used quasi-experimental, matched comparison group designs. One study compared 837 students in grades K–5 in three schools that received professional development from the Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project (PAWLP) with 794 students in grades K–5 in two matched comparison schools that did not use PAWLP's professional development model.⁴ The schools were located in a rural area, and the student samples were primarily White and middle class. After teachers had participated in 1 year of professional development from PAWLP, students in grades K–2 outperformed comparison students on a PAWLP-developed writing test that was designed to mirror the state standardized writing assessment. The differences between students in grades 3–5 at PAWLP schools and comparison schools were not statistically significant.

A second study evaluated the impact of NWP on a writing program. The study compared five NWP-trained teachers and their students with five non-NWP-trained teachers and their students. Researchers analyzed the quality of three separate student writing samples. One writing sample showed a statistically significant effect favoring the NWP-trained group. This study also compared writing attitudes of NWP students with those of non-NWP students. One third of the comparisons showed a statistically significant positive effect for NWP students.

A third study examined the effects of NWP on sixth-through eighth-grade students in the mountain region

²Level of statistical significance is determined by a statistical test and demonstrates whether the observed changes are likely to have occurred by chance alone.

³The rating for this category is upgraded from the 2005 edition of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* because of the additional research available that demonstrates a positive effect of NWP on student achievement.

⁴PAWLP is one site of NWP.

of the United States. Researchers analyzed the results of the Six+1 Trait Writing Model on 21 NWP and 21 non-NWP students. One of the six subscales showed statistically significant positive effects on student achievement for the NWP students. Writing attitudes of NWP students compared with non-NWP students were also examined. However, the study did not find statistically significant differences between the groups.

A fourth study examined outcomes of students in several schools in one suburban school district in the mid-western United States. Researchers examined student outcomes in writing and reading using a district-administered writing assessment and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. After 1 year of teacher exposure to the NWP professional development model, students in the treatment schools showed statistically significant positive differences compared with control students on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test and in six out of the seven components of the writing assessment.

A fifth study examined outcomes of students in five treatment and five comparison fourth-grade classrooms at seven elementary schools in Mississippi. NWP teachers were matched with non-NWP teachers. Student outcomes in writing were examined using Mississippi Writing Assessment scores of the Mississippi Curriculum Tests. After 1 year, the study found no significant differences in writing achievement between students in the treatment and comparison classrooms.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

No studies of NWP that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined the effects of NWP on student

achievement for diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Writing

Rating: 

The five studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards focused on the effects of NWP on student achievement in writing. The average effect size for the positive findings on writing was +0.50. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.⁵

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standard examined the effects of NWP on reading. After 1 year of NWP, results showed a statistically significant positive effect on NWP students compared with control students.⁶ Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Writing Attitudes

Rating: 

Two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards evaluated the effects of NWP on students' attitudes about writing. One study analyzed the quality of students' writing assignments. One third of the comparisons showed statistically significant positive effects on NWP student writing attitudes, with an effect size of +0.37. The second study used survey data to determine differences in students' attitudes about writing. No statistically significant differences were found

⁵The rating for this subcategory is upgraded from the 2005 edition of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* because of the additional research available.

⁶The study presented an effect size of +0.04 for the interaction between study condition and time of testing (pretest, posttest). However, no information was provided on the method used to calculate this effect size.

between NWP and non-NWP students. Therefore, the rating for this category is limited.⁷

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

None of the studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards examined the effects of NWP on parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by NWP, explicit citations support all the core components of the model: professional development, technical assistance, and instruction. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.⁸

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation⁹

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by NWP, the model offers a formal process for establishing an initial

understanding of NWP and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.¹⁰

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model’s core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.¹¹

Central Components

Organization and Governance

The organizational structure of the NWP consists of three levels: national, university, and school. The NWP national office oversees the local NWP sites located at universities. The national office monitors the network of NWP sites by reviewing site applications, providing sites with funding, offering sites technical assistance, and evaluating the effectiveness of each site.

⁷The rating in this category is upgraded from the 2005 edition of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* because of the additional research available.

⁸The rating for this category changed from no rating to very strong because the CSRQ Center conducted a conversation with NWP for this updated edition.

⁹The ratings under this category represent evidence of services and support that are provided to university-based sites in accordance with NWP’s design.

¹⁰The rating for this subcategory changed from no rating to very strong because the CSRQ Center conducted a conversation with NWP for this updated edition.

¹¹The rating for this subcategory changed from no rating to very strong because the CSRQ Center conducted a conversation with NWP for this updated edition.

The NWP *does not* require a specific model for governance but seeks to provide teachers with instructional methods for writing through its professional development programs. NWP professional development programs are typically planned in conjunction with school or district faculty and administrators and are customized to suit local governance conditions.

The NWP site directors seek to develop partnerships with schools interested in promoting writing across the curriculum and improving student achievement. NWP sites identify exemplary teachers in local schools and invite these teachers to attend an annual summer institute held at their university. By training these teachers during the summer institute, NWP sites begin partnerships with local schools.

Principals are expected to support the implementation of NWP by collaborating with NWP trained teachers. Specifically, principals are required to grant teachers release time for coaching other teachers and classroom observations.

The model is premised on the belief that the best ideas for change come from those closest to the problem. The NWP design focuses on teachers as agents of change. Thus, at the school level, teachers that attend the summer institute take on a NWP leadership role. These teachers are expected to conduct NWP-sponsored programs in their own schools, as well as in neighboring schools and districts.

Curriculum and Instruction

The NWP *does not* require a specific curriculum but seeks to provide teachers with instructional methods for writing through its professional development programs. Notably, all teachers, including mathematics, social studies, and science teachers, are encouraged to attend NWP professional development programs. The NWP seeks to implement the writing process across the curriculum.

Scheduling and Grouping

The model *does not* require specific scheduling or grouping strategies.

Technology

As NWP professional development programs are customized to meet the needs of the local school, these programs can be designed to include attention to technology in keeping with local needs and technology infrastructure. The NWP national office encourages the effective use of technology through a variety of national programs including the Technology Liaisons Network, Technology Initiative, and E-anthology. The model's Web site provides an extensive description of its technology initiatives. For more specific information on the initiatives, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

Although the NWP *does not* provide local schools with standardized tools for monitoring student progress, NWP professional development programs cover strategies for assessing student progress in writing and addressing student achievement in relation to state and local accountability programs. The NWP does evaluate student progress at the national, university, and school level. At the national level, NWP sponsors evaluations of student achievement in writing across multiple states. NWP also evaluates the impact of university-based professional development programs on student achievement. In addition, universities monitor student achievement in their partner schools through follow-up studies and classroom observations. In response to these evaluations, NWP plans for future professional development programs and expansion of current initiatives.

Family and Community Involvement

Teachers are encouraged to conduct parent and community workshops that cover writing instruction and ways of fostering student writing. One of the resources available to teachers through the NWP is *Because Writing Matters* (NWP & Nagin, 2006).

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The professional development model begins when the local writing project invites exemplary teachers from area schools to attend the invitational summer institute at the university. The summer institute includes professional development and preparation for working as a teacher-consultant with area schools. During the 4- to 5-week summer institute, teachers write extensively, learning to relate to the challenges that students might encounter with writing assignments. During the institute, teachers also study research and share their most effective writing practices. Most writing project sites also offer teachers university credit for completing the institute.

Upon the completion of the institute, teachers may serve as teacher-consultants who are able to work together to provide professional development programs for local schools. Teachers may conduct forums, such as parent and community workshops, new teacher support programs, and teacher research groups. These forums focus on a range of topics related to the writing process such as emergent literacy, English Language Learners, and academic writing. NWP promotes school-based autonomy in planning the training approach and focus, promoting professional development courses, and organizing community outreach initiatives. At the same time, university-based NWP sites support schools in this endeavor and provide teachers with strategies for building school capacity to provide professional development. Local sites, in turn, receive support from the national office to improve local offerings and benefit from programs developed across the country.

The NWP provides NWP sites and local schools with a variety of professional development publications and resources. The NWP national office provides an online resource that allows teachers to communicate with authors and researchers, *NWP Authors and Issues Online*. Another publication, the *Quarterly*, is a professional journal provided by NWP that includes classroom practices, current educational issues, and teacher research. Likewise, *The E-Voice* is an electronic newsletter that consists of teacher testimonials, site reports, summaries of NWP research, and practical suggestions for classroom implementation. Those interested in receiving *The E-Voice* can join NWP Interactive at <http://www.writingproject.org/evoice.csp>.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

According to the model's Web site, the NWP expects university-based NWP sites to continuously build partnerships with local schools and to provide ongoing support to these schools. To monitor implementation, the national office conducts annual reviews of NWP sites to verify that the professional development approach makes a difference in writing instruction and student achievement. The review process consists of onsite visitations at the summer institutes, studies conducted in schools implementing the writing project, and retreats with NWP consultants to gather data about the current writing projects.

Schools implementing the writing project have autonomy to organize training and to develop timelines in accordance with state and local standards and accountability programs.

Special Considerations

Each year, NWP seeks to respond to emerging issues and areas of need at the federal, state, and district levels. Programs and resources are provided to local sites by the national office to support local sites in addressing new priorities. For example, NWP recently

created a specialized network to enable local sites to support teachers of English Language Learners in response to increased student diversity. NWP acknowledges that the delivery of the writing process varies with different learners.

NWP is designed as a national network with 190 university-based sites that oversee the implementation of the model in schools associated with each site. Therefore, the actual implementation of services and support may vary across sites. The ratings provided under the section titled “Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation” represent services and support that are directly provided by NWP to all university sites. The university sites then customize the services and support to meet the needs of each school.

Reference

National Writing Project & Nagin, C. (2006). *Because writing matters: Improving student writing in our schools* (2nd ed). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Buckelew, M., Capelli, R., Dorfman, D., Fishman, A., & Hoch, D. (2005). *Analysis of the effect of the first year of a professional development program*. West Chester: Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project, West Chester University.

Cossey, N. (2004). A comparison of writing score of students taught by National Board Certified teachers who have and have not participated in the National Writing Project. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 65 (06A), 2502. (UMI No. 3136220)

McKinney, M., Lasley, S., & Nussbaum, E. M. (2006). *Through the lens of the Family Writing Project: The Southern Nevada Writing Project's impact on student writing and teacher practices*. Las Vegas: Southern Nevada Writing Project, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Roberts, C. E. (2002). The influence of teachers' professional development at the Tampa Bay Area Writing Project on student writing performance. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 63 (05A), 1792.

Singer, N. R., & Scollay, D. (2006). *Increasing student achievement in writing through teacher inquiry: An evaluation of professional development impact*. St. Louis: Gateway Writing Project, University of Missouri, St. Louis.

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Onward to Excellence II—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Onward to Excellence II (OTE II) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | OTE II seeks to improve schools by engaging all stakeholders in the school system—from parents to students to faculty—in reaching a set of common goals. OTE II is a process for change rather than an established plan that mandates specific changes to a school. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1981 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 1,000+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$18,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | \$18,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | \$18,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | |  |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | |
| | Reading | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

Onward to Excellence (OTE) was first developed in 1981 at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) in Portland, OR. The model is based on research conducted on several school improvement practices, including parent and community involvement, strong administrative leadership, flexible grouping strategies, and progress monitoring. The OTE model was first piloted in schools in three states in 1981 and was made available across the country in 1984.

In 1999, some aspects of the model were strengthened and new components were added to incorporate new research on effective school practices. These changes included an expanded role for the local school board, the addition of a school improvement coordinator and a critical friend team, and more specific techniques for monitoring implementation. The updated model is now referred to as Onward to Excellence II (OTE II) and is used in grades K–12 across the country. The national center continues to be based in Portland, but the model has also opened a series of regional centers in California, Florida, Ohio, and West Virginia.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of OTE II were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

The mission of OTE II is to help school communities work together to set student achievement goals, use data to drive the decision-making process, build capacity for continuous improvement, and use research-based

practices for teaching. The OTE II model uses these practices to focus on the following seven school improvement outcomes:

- Quality and equity in learning of all students
- Agreement to a widespread commitment to a mission and to student learning goals
- Alignment of content, instructional methods, and assessments to the mission and goals, as well as to each other
- Application of the mission and goals to drive human, financial, and other resource decisions
- Involvement of stakeholders who represent the community's diverse perspectives and cultural composition when planning and making improvements
- Collection and use of data to improve decision making
- Creation and sustainability of a “learning organization” that uses its own experience and knowledge, and that of others, in carrying out its work

OTE II is a model that helps schools to choose and implement new practices rather than mandating specific changes. The model implementation is a cycle that lasts 2–3 years and follows seven steps: (1) organizing for success, (2) assessing current status, (3) establishing consensus, (4) aligning to state standards, (5) learning from research, (6) making improvement, monitoring and adjusting, and (7) renewing the continuous improvement cycle. The model encourages a collaborative effort in which students, families, community members, and school faculty members work together to develop a set of goals and a path for change within the school. OTE II developers believe that through this process, schools develop the capacity to design their own

comprehensive school reform efforts based on research and experience.

Goals/Rationale

The model uses a four-step process to help schools build a capacity to improve student achievement:

1. **Setting direction.** Each school brings all stakeholders together to establish a common purpose and a shared mission and vision. All stakeholders work together to establish common standards for student learning and goals for school improvement.
2. **Planning action.** Schools use research-based information to make decisions and develop a strategy for change. Each school maps out its curriculum, aligns it with state standards, develops a full implementation plan, and creates a timeline. Schools also establish a School Leadership Team (SLT) and an External Study Team (EST).
3. **Taking action.** Schools implement agreed-upon changes, schedule professional development opportunities, monitor progress, and troubleshoot.
4. **Maintaining momentum.** Schools review progress and make changes for subsequent years, continue to use professional development resources, and renew the SLT and EST. Each school is responsible for reporting progress back to the community.

All key stakeholders, students, and community members are asked to get involved in the school improvement process. They are expected to work together to establish and reach a common set of goals.

Costs

A 3-year contract with OTE II costs approximately \$54,000, which is payable over the 3 years. Costs

include a formal professional development plan with 20 to 22 days of training, including sessions for the EST, SLT, and entire school staff. OTE II does not supply instructional materials but does provide materials to guide schools through the implementation process, including sample school profiles, research syntheses, and implementation guides for the SLT. The model expects teachers to develop instructional materials, particularly curriculum maps and units of instruction.

OTE II estimates approximately \$30,000 in other costs not included in the OTE II fee. Other costs include a part-time school improvement facilitator (usually a staff member allocated at 25–50% of a full-time employee), release time for three to six team members to attend 8 training days a year, time for the entire faculty to participate in at least 6 days of professional development in the 1st year, consultants for follow-up professional development activities, instructional materials, and a travel surcharge for schools that are not near the national center in Portland, OR. Schools may be able to lower costs by sharing training sessions with up to three other schools in the same area.

The OTE II Web site includes a cost calculation worksheet (<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/ote/costcalc.asp>) to provide a better cost estimate. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ⊖

The CSRQ Center reviewed eight quantitative studies for effects of OTE II on student achievement. Only one of the eight studies met the CSRQ Center's standards

for rigor of research design. The Center considers the findings of this study *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in the results. Findings indicate that student achievement at schools in the study that implemented OTE II did not change significantly over time. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of this model on student achievement is zero. The one study that met CSRQ Center standards is described below. (Appendix Q reports on the other seven studies that did not meet standards.)

The study that met CSRQ Center standards and is considered to be suggestive used a longitudinal cohort design following the performance of fourth- and sixth-graders in OTE II on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT-9) over 4 years.¹ The findings are considered to be suggestive because the longitudinal study had baseline data, used reliable testing instruments, and did not appear to violate other threats to validity. This study tracked trends at four schools where the level of OTE II implementation was reportedly high. Average NCE (normal curve equivalent) scores on the SAT-9 did not appear to change over time. Follow-up analyses conducted by the CSRQ Center confirmed that the changes across 4 years were not statistically significant.²

Evidence of Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

There were no studies of the effects of OTE II on student achievement that met CSRQ Center's standards and examined diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

¹This study reported other findings from a research methodology that was not eligible for full review. Thus, the focus is on the longitudinal data.

²From 1991 to 1994, the average NCE reading scores for fourth graders on the SAT were 45.8, 48.5, 46.6, and 50.9. For sixth graders, the average reading SAT scores were 47, 49.2, 49.3, and 50.1 over the 4 years. NCE gains of less than 8 points are not statistically significant (Slavin & Fashola, 1998; Slavin, 1991).

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: ○

The study that met CSRQ Center's standards and is considered suggestive demonstrated positive gains in reading over time that were not statistically significant. Therefore, the rating in this category is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

No studies that examined effects on additional outcomes for schools using OTE II met CSRQ Center's standards. The rating in this category is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

No studies met the CSRQ Center's standards on effects on parent, family, or community involvement. The rating is therefore no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

The model provided documentation with citations to support all the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, and data-based decision

making. Therefore, the link between research and the model's design is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. However, the model does not provide a process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is moderate.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, and capacity building. However, the model does not offer professional development specifically designed for new staff. The model also provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. Additionally, the model offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

OTE II requires that each school hold an introductory session with staff and community members prior to implementation to acquaint them with the four steps of the OTE II process. Each school must provide the OTE II staff with documentation that such a meeting was held and that the stakeholders reached a consensus to use the OTE II model before implementation can begin. In addition to the school-level meeting, the local board of education and the school's superintendent must attend a 90-minute session conducted by OTE II staff and must agree to actively support the process. The school principal must agree to provide release time for teachers and other staff members to attend training sessions and other professional development activities throughout the year.

Every school is required to form an SLT and EST. The OTE II model places much of the responsibility for implementation in the hands of these two groups. Each school also must select a site facilitator from the staff to oversee the work of the EST and SLT, and to monitor the entire OTE II transition process. The site facilitator needs to devote approximately one half to one fourth of his or her time to OTE II. The selected staff member should have well-developed skills in facilitation and communication.

The EST is heavily involved in the first phase of the OTE II process (setting direction) and is generally composed of members from the community, central office staff, local university professors, and representatives from other schools. At the beginning of the implementation process, the team is responsible for creating a school profile and establishing school improvement goals based on school and student achievement data, classroom observations, faculty and community input, and other sources. The EST team also provides general

support to the SLT by collecting and analyzing data, and acts as a “critical friend” by providing feedback and helping the school to assess its progress. Each school must also select one academic and nonacademic area to focus on as key areas for improvement with the help of the EST. The EST is then responsible for monitoring the school’s progress in these areas.

The School Leadership Team is typically comprised of school staff, community members, and at the middle and high school level, students. The team is responsible for managing transitions within the school and must learn to work with the entire school community to make decisions and implement change. The SLT is actively involved in the second phase of the OTE II process, (planning action), during which time they are responsible for helping schools to implement strategies to address the goals outlined by the EST. The SLT uses the school profile provided by the EST as the basis for carrying out its role as manager of the reform process. OTE II does not require any specific changes to a school structure besides the establishment of the EST and SLT. Instead, the model encourages site-based autonomy in most areas under the guidance of these two teams. The SLT and EST are expected to help schools determine what changes are needed and to successfully implement these changes with support from the model.

Curriculum and Instruction

OTE II does not require or recommend specific curricula, but it does require that schools align their curricula with state and district standards and assessments. The model helps teachers work together to reach an agreement about the alignment of the school’s curriculum and state standards. The model also expects schools to improve alignment across grades and subjects in the primary instructional and noninstructional focus areas.

Although no specific curricula are required, the model recommends that teachers use certain instructional strategies, such as small-group instruction and hands-on activities, in the classroom. OTE II encourages teachers to work in study groups to investigate and develop research-based instructional strategies. The strategies agreed upon become the centerpiece of the school’s improvement plan. While OTE II does not require any specific instructional strategies for the classroom, each school is expected to work with its EST and SLT to develop its own list of instructional strategies for classroom use.

Scheduling and Grouping

OTE II offers general recommendations, but no specific guidance, on inclusion or grouping strategies. The model recommends that schools provide teachers with collaborative work time and staff development time so teachers and administrators can determine their own grouping and scheduling needs.

Technology

The OTE II model does not address technology in its professional development activities and makes no comment on the role technology plays in participating schools. Instead, the model expects each School Leadership Team to make decisions regarding the role of technology in their school.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model places a strong emphasis on the use of data-based decision making to shape implementation. The EST and SLT are responsible for the collection and review of data on student performance changes on a biannual basis. As a part of the OTE II process, the EST must continually collect and interpret data on student achievement and behaviors, teaching and learning practices, and model implementation. The SLT is

responsible for using the information provided by the EST to make changes to the school's implementation plan. Teachers must also complete self-assessments, which are used by the SLT on an "as needed" basis. The model helps teachers use these assessments to align their curricula to state and district standards and to create curriculum maps. Model trainers also help the EST set improvement goals and monitor progress.

The OTE II model also uses state and district assessments to monitor progress and to adjust model implementation for subsequent years. Formative and summative evaluations occur in most schools on a regular basis. The number of schools fluctuates somewhat depending on the level of funding available for research. Formative evaluations are generally conducted every 2 years and summative evaluations are conducted as funding becomes available. Both external and internal evaluators are used for these evaluations.

Family and Community Involvement

OTE II strives to include family and community members in all aspects of the model's implementation. The model has outlined five key strategies for building and maintaining family and community involvement:

1. **Membership on governance committees.** Spots are reserved for family and community members on both the SLT and EST. Family members also are invited to attend regular update meetings held at the school.
2. **Initial goal setting.** Prior to implementation, family and community members are invited to an initial meeting designed to raise awareness about the model. Along with school staff, family and community members also are invited to participate in the goal setting process. All stakeholders must work together to review data and reach a consensus about key areas to target for improvement.
3. **Model implementation.** When possible, the model encourages family and community members to take part in learning, planning, and implementing new practices in key areas such as instruction, curriculum, assessment, and technology.
4. **Home-based involvement.** Parents and family members are expected to help their children with homework and school assignments. Regular communication with teachers is also encouraged. The model publishes regular newsletters to keep parents aware of changes occurring in the school.
5. **Volunteering.** Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer at their child's school. The model's premise is that parents are more likely to understand and buy in to the OTE II process when they are actively involved in the school and the model implementation.

OTE II believes that the involvement of family and community members is critical for an OTE II school to reach its desired goals. As such, it strongly encourages schools to create an open and inviting atmosphere for parents where their participation is actively sought and rewarded. For schools with large populations of hard to reach parents, OTE II is available to help schools work with large-scale parent involvement programs.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

OTE II offers a formal professional development and technical assistance plan to all schools both prior to and during implementation of the model. Prior to implementation, teachers, administrators, and district leaders are expected to attend a half-day summer workshop as an introduction to the model. During implementation, the model offers 20 days of training over the 2- to 3-year implementation period. The training days are split between sessions for the SLT and sessions for the full staff. Additionally, 2 technical assistance days are made available on an as-needed

basis for specific problems that may arise in a school. OTE II also incorporates job-embedded strategies—such as study groups and peer observations—into the professional development plan.

The professional development workshops cover a wide range of areas to help make the necessary decisions for change. Workshop titles include Focusing on School Improvement Goals, Aligning and Mapping the School Curriculum, Deciding on Best Practices, Assessing Current Practices, Developing an Implementation Plan, and Preparing New Leaders. The model helps schools build capacity to provide their own professional development through site-based coaching and administrative roles in building capacity.

OTE II trains experienced staff members to deliver the professional development sessions. The trainers are generally available on a monthly basis. Training sessions are held at predetermined intervals and occur more frequently in the 1st year than in the 2nd and 3rd years. The 1st month of implementation devotes 3 days to introducing the model to school staff, the school board, and the community.

At the end of the process, the model requires a renewal workshop for the SLT, site facilitator, and key central office staff to ensure the improvement cycle is continued. The goal of the renewal session is to explain the importance of continuing the OTE II process, identify steps that will ensure the sustainability of the OTE II process, and implement a renewal plan. At this workshop, the school also makes plans to appoint a new SLT and to take stock of the successes and shortcomings identified during the OTE II process.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The model provides each school with a series of formal benchmarks to guide the implementation process. The benchmarks are distributed through the site facilitator and serve to promote better communication among

stakeholders, encourage commitment to continuous involvement, and clarify self-evaluation processes. The benchmarks are grouped by OTE II workshop themes and cover a wide range of topics including governance, instructional practices, and progress monitoring.

Self-assessments are used as the indicators of implementation. Teachers are asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 5 for each benchmark. For example, one of the professional development workshops, Aligning and Mapping the School Curriculum, focuses on curriculum mapping. One of the benchmarks for this workshop is helping teachers use curriculum maps to plan individualized curricula. A school would rate itself “1” if “All staff design their yearly, weekly, and daily instructional plans by building from the framework provided by the maps;” the rating would be “5” if “The framework provided by the maps is never used in planning the curriculum.”

The information collected from the benchmarks is reviewed by a model trainer and the SLT on an as-needed basis when schools do not make adequate progress.

The model helps the SLT to interpret the data by providing strategies for improved implementation based on the team’s interpretations and recommendations. Schools are encouraged to use the feedback to change implementation for subsequent years.

Special Considerations

The OTE II model should be considered a “process for change” rather than a traditional model with a list of mandated changes. The model places most of the decision-making responsibility in the hands of the school staff and community members, although OTE II helps guide schools through this process. OTE II recommends that schools identify and contract with experts who can provide specific training on the improvement goals selected by the school that go beyond the model’s

materials and training. The model expects each school to reapply yearly to the national center.

In conversations with three principals, each provided a different perspective on OTE II. One principal from a small, rural school noted that the model was challenging to implement in a school that was geographically distant from the national and regional centers. A second principal commented that each school should choose a competent and skillful facilitator to minimize difficulties and enhance implementation. A third principal stated that the OTE II model requires a significant investment of time for full implementation. Each principal seemed confident that given adequate time, resources, and commitment, the OTE II process could be implemented successfully in his or her school.

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- Slavin, R. E. (1991). Normal curve equivalent gains: Handle with care. *ERS Bulletin*, 9, 311.
- Slavin, R. E., & Fashola, O. S. (1998). *Show me the evidence: Proven and promising programs for America's schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Model Study Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

- Kushman, J., & Yap, K. (1999). What makes the difference in school improvement? An impact study of Onward to Excellence in Mississippi schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 4(3), 277–298.

Pearson Achievement Solutions—Elementary (formerly Co-nect)

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Pearson Achievement Solutions (PAS) (formerly Co-nect) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | PAS is committed to improving teaching and ensuring that every child has equal access to an exceptional education through sustained professional learning and teacher support. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1993 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 1,144 | 755 | 297 | 92 | | |
| Costs¹ | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$75,000 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | Varies ² | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | Varies | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement:³ | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of positive overall effects | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | |  |
| c. | Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | |
| | Reading and math | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Student Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. | Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | |  |
| b. | Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹These costs are based on one school purchasing PAS independently. For a district with a cluster of 3–5 schools, the costs for 1 year of PAS are \$36,000–\$40,000. Costs vary based on school size and location.

²PAS is purchased on a yearly basis. The model encourages schools to participate for 2–3 years to experience sustainable changes in student outcomes.

³Ratings have been derived from studies of Co-nect prior to its integration within Pearson Achievement Solutions.

Model Description

Co-nect was founded in 1992 by the Educational Technologies Group at the Bolt, Beranek, and Newman Corporation, a research and development firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1993, the model held its first national conference and in 1995 launched the Co-nect Exchange, a Web-based proprietary professional development and instructional resources service. In 1998, Co-nect became an independent entity headquartered in Cambridge.

In November 2005, Pearson School Companies acquired Co-nect and combined it with LessonsLab Research Institute, a professional development company, to create Pearson Achievement Solutions (PAS). PAS is the provider of the Expanding School Progress model. The model incorporates the primary features of Co-nect.

PAS's Expanding School Progress model seeks to improve schools and districts through continuous improvement of instructional practices of teachers and the leaders who support them. To this end, the model focuses on changing behavior in schools in measured steps and working within existing district and school frameworks to address overall needs. PAS performs an initial learning audit that is designed to uncover the specific needs and strengths of schools. PAS then guides schools regarding appropriate next steps for school improvement. Results are measured by both the school and the model. Although PAS focuses on improving Adequate Yearly Progress during the 1st year of model implementation, implementation can occur over a period of 2–3 years depending on the goals and areas of concentration that are determined for each school.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center's standards, the following were identified as core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development,

technical assistance, instruction, technology, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation of the model.

Model Mission/Focus

By supporting districts' work to improve the quality of teaching through sustained professional learning and teacher support, PAS organizes its schools for success with increased student achievement, improved teacher retention, and lower overall professional development costs. To this end, the model seeks to deliver coherent districtwide professional learning plans that are focused on improving the school and transforming the culture of teaching. PAS's plans can include expanding district and school improvement efforts, developing the decision-making process, enhancing instruction, and maximizing professional growth.

Goals/Rationale

According to PAS, the Expanding School Progress model focuses on changing behavior in schools in measured steps and working with existing district and school frameworks to address overall needs. The model's purpose is to help schools become more capable of successfully implementing data-driven processes while building instructional leadership capacity and improving teaching and learning. The model concentrates on five goals:

- Improving capacity for instructional leadership to focus on a specific, research-based vision of quality in effective instructional practices
- Developing a shared vision of quality instruction among teachers and a common language for collaboration around instructional quality

- Identifying research-based strategies that are tied to students' needs and address high-quality instructional practices
- Improving the use of student assessment data, including authentic student work, to make instructional decisions
- Increasing the frequency of “best practice” instructional strategies in classrooms

These goals are synthesized into four Focused Solutions for school improvement:

- Increasing instructional leadership capacity
- Building professional learning communities
- Using data to inform decision making
- Monitoring model effectiveness

These four Focused Solutions are aimed primarily at the school-based Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). (The ILT is discussed in detail in the section titled “Organization and Governance.”)

Five key features are central to the Focused Solutions:

- District/school leadership seminars
- Instructional audit and strategic school improvement plan
- Leadership team meetings and facilitated instructional study groups
- Focused professional development and critical look at student work
- Progress monitoring and annual school progress review

The model also emphasizes four Focused Intervention Strategies that are provided by the ILT and encourage direct involvement of school faculty members:

- Classroom assessment
- Technology integration

- Project-based learning
- Family support for learning

Each year, a school chooses one or two Focused Intervention Strategies for full implementation, knowing that focused implementation of one or two strategies per year enhances the school's ability to affect school reform.

The four Focused Solutions and four Focused Intervention Strategies make up PAS's Expanding School Progress site-specific, customized model.

Costs

The total operating cost for one school to purchase PAS independently for 1 year is \$75,000. The cost for a district with a cluster of 3–5 schools is \$36,000–\$40,000 for 1 year. The program is purchased on a yearly basis. The model encourages schools to participate for 2–3 years to experience sustainable changes in student outcomes. Costs may vary based on school size and location. Several items are included in the costs:

- A 1-day district/school leadership seminar
- An instructional audit to identify strengths and weaknesses
- A minimum of 5 days of onsite services from PAS field staff in each school
- Annual licenses to PAS's professional development platform, Instructional Quality Toolkit (IQT), and eXchange (the model's proprietary Web site, which is described more fully in the section titled “Curriculum and Instruction”)

PAS's technology tools are discussed in more detail in the section titled “Technology.”

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 25 quantitative studies for effects of Co-nect on student achievement. The studies were conducted before Co-nect was integrated within PAS. Two of the 25 studies met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design. Both studies were conducted in the early 1990s. Based on a review of research designs, the CSRQ Center considers the findings of these two studies to be *conclusive*, meaning that the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results of each study. Because most of the findings reported in these two studies do not show a positive effect on student achievement (the average effect size of the positive effects for PAS is +0.69), the overall rating of positive effects of Co-nect is limited. The two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards are described below. (Appendix R reports on the other 23 studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards.)

Both studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design to examine the impact of Co-nect in different regions of the United States and primarily among students of low socioeconomic status in urban schools with large minority populations. The studies examined differences among Co-nect students and comparison students over time in subject-area achievement.

One study examined the effects of Co-nect on student achievement on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills of students in grades 2–5 in the south-central part of the United States. Two Co-nect schools were compared to a pool of 61 comparison schools, before and after 2 years of Co-nect implementation. Although scores in all subject areas (reading, language, math, science, and social studies) were higher in Co-nect schools

than comparison schools, the differences were not statistically significant.

The second study compared reading and math scores of third- and fifth-grade students in Co-nect schools and matched comparison schools. Results indicated that scores on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program test were higher at Co-nect schools than at matched schools. In particular, Co-nect students in third grade significantly outperformed comparison students in reading, and Co-nect students in fifth grade outperformed comparison students in math. The average effect size of the significant findings is +0.69.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

Both studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards did not examine student achievement for diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

In both studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards, the impact of Co-nect on reading achievement was mixed. All of the results showed reading improvement, but the differences in reading achievement between Co-nect students and comparison students was only statistically significant for one third-grade sample in one study. The effect size was +0.77. Because of the few results, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

In both studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards, the impact of Co-nect on math achievement was

mixed. One study demonstrated a statistically significant benefit of Co-nect on math achievement for fifth- but not third-grade students. The effect size was +0.50. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

The two studies of Co-nect that met the CSRQ Center's standards did not focus on additional student outcomes. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

The two studies of Co-nect that met the CSRQ Center's standards did not measure outcomes of parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, explicit citations support all of the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, instruction, technology, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of a link between research and the model's design is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Documentation provided by the model shows that PAS offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, PAS offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. PAS also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, PAS provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of the model's core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

At the outset, PAS works with the school to establish a solid foundation for ensuring the change process. This phase includes the following services:

- Identify common agreed-upon expectations of the goals and services that will be completed over a given period of time.

- Use a data-driven decision-making process that focuses on the school and classroom levels. The process typically includes a review of available baseline and longitudinal student achievement data and any additional formative achievement data that are available at the school site related to school goals.
- Conduct an instructional audit at each school site. The audit includes interviews with instructional leaders and random classroom observations using PAS's IQT diagnostic tools.

The principal/administrator is the instructional leader and visionary for the school. The principal's vision and hands-on involvement are critical to the partnership between the school and PAS to achieve the intended results. Having support from and working in partnership with PAS's field staff and the ILT, the principal helps the faculty set and meet challenging, concrete goals that are captured in the Strategic School Implementation Plan.

During the implementation process, the principal's support is critical to the following processes:

- Incorporating PAS's methodology within accountability measures and communication with staff
- Reviewing and modifying, when necessary, organizational and scheduling changes that will support faculty communication and student groupings that are conducive to school objectives
- Providing multiple opportunities for teachers to participate in professional development opportunities
- Working to build a process of regular assessment and accountability with staff that uses multiple means to assess progress toward school objectives and builds in incentives and feedback whenever possible
- Leveraging district and community participation within the implementation process
- Actively promoting exemplary teaching and student learning that address school instructional goals

Each school forms an ILT to guide and support implementation. The ILT consists of faculty members, parents, business partners, and other community members. The role of the ILT is to advocate for staff and support implementation throughout the school. The ILT may also support implementation plan activities by providing training to and/or following up with faculty to develop resident experts and sustainability beyond implementation.

The ILT meets regularly (e.g., once or twice a month) to guide the change process, review progress, plan special activities and events, and support the professional development within Instructional Study Groups (ISGs) (grade-level or subject-area teams of teachers). The team meets with PAS field staff during the 1st month of implementation to set expectations and establish roles and responsibilities for the coming year's school improvement process.

ISGs meet regularly (as the school schedule permits, often weekly or biweekly) to analyze lessons, review student work, and identify instructional strategies and resources that are needed to support teaching and learning. PAS field staff guide the study groups in their initial sessions to establish a process for working as a group and then meet with the groups once each quarter.

PAS offers the IQT—a set of diagnostic tools—to help district and school leaders collect multiple forms of data to drive the school improvement process. The toolkit includes the following:

- Evidence of quality teaching—a classroom observational tool
- Instructional practices survey—a self-assessment survey

- Evidence of learning—a set of rubrics for analyzing student work

The ILT and PAS field staffs conduct an instructional audit that includes a review of student achievement test data from the past 2 years, the school improvement plan, Pearson Achievement School Benchmarks Gap Analysis, and Pearson Achievement Instructional Quality Toolkit Data Reports. The information collected, in conjunction with direct observation and information gathered from leadership team interviews, is used to develop an implementation plan that is tailored to the identified needs of each school.

Curriculum and Instruction

PAS does not require specific curriculum, materials, or supplies for subject areas. However, PAS provides extensive instructional resources through eXchange—the model’s proprietary Web site—including the following:

- **Online professional development.** This includes short, self-paced learning modules on planning and assessment, literacy, math, project-based learning, science, English language learners, and technology; such teacher tools as a library of instructional strategies with lesson plans for different subjects; and more than 100 quick guides for classroom technology integration.
- **Integrated project management tools.** This includes resources for administrators to enable district and school staff to view data generated throughout the implementation process, such as IQT reports.
- **Curriculum resources.** This includes a collaboration with Exemplars®, which offers 1,000 standards-based performance assessments with student work samples; the lesson and project builder library of online tools for creating lessons and projects with built-in standards for more than 45 states and a

collection of standards-aligned projects; and the Knowledge Bank database of best-practice lesson plans, performance tasks, research articles, and Web sites.

- **Community tools.** This includes forums for professional development discussions, tools to track professional development participation, and embedded assessments for knowledge acquisition and application.

Scheduling and Grouping

PAS does not require specific scheduling arrangements or grouping practices.

Technology

PAS’s only requirement for technology is the availability of high-speed Internet access in the school. Schools may choose Technology Integration as a Focused Intervention Strategy. This strategy emphasizes the use of a range of technologies—such as videos, computers, and calculators—to improve instruction in alignment with local standards. PAS offers onsite workshops to guide teachers toward more effective use of technology. Sample topics of workshops include “Integrating Technology Into Teaching and Learning” and “Digital Cameras in the Classroom.”

Through PAS, schools have access to extensive technological resources. Each school receives a 12-month subscription to PAS’s professional development platform and eXchange. The eXchange Web site also offers online learning modules that address the use of technology, such as “Creating Technology-Rich Lessons” and “Venturing Into Virtual Learning.” The eXchange Web site also offers resources to facilitate such noninstructional tasks for teachers as management, record-keeping, and communication. Additionally, teachers may assess their use of technology through the Instructional Practices Survey, a self-assessment that

helps to identify areas of strength and weakness, and Evidence of Quality Teaching, a classroom observation tool that looks specifically at technology use.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

According to the model, looking at authentic student work is a critical component for improving teaching and learning. To this end, PAS provides a process and tools for ISGs and other members of school faculty to use when reviewing student work or auditing student portfolios. The Evidence of Quality Work (EQW) is a general-purpose tool for examining the quality of student work. The EQW is intended to assess work that involves significant amounts of writing, including stories, reports, articles, reviews, and carefully worked solutions to multistep problems in math. The EQW can be used from the time that students begin writing connected text (i.e. in first grade) through high school.

The EQW is based on the idea that the best evidence of student learning may be found in a student's own written work. Data from the EQW should be used alongside test data to yield a richer picture of student achievement than is available from test scores alone. These data can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses of each student and the impact of instruction in different classrooms, at different grade levels, and for the school as a whole.

Performance assessments provide an additional means of looking at student work. PAS has partnered with Exemplars to offer a database of 1,000 standards-based performance assessments with student work samples at various levels of proficiency. The database is housed on the eXchange Web site. Exemplars fosters higher-order thinking skills and allows students to evaluate their work against authentic student work samples. Exemplars offers materials for math, science, developing writers, and professional development. Teachers can access the database to provide authentic performance assessments to their students and then

use the student work that is produced in the ISGs and EQW audit.

All Exemplars materials are aligned to national standards and include:

- The performance task and the context for the assignment
- A subject-specific rubric
- Annotated benchmark papers at novice, apprentice, practitioner, and expert levels
- Concepts to be assessed and skills to be developed
- Interdisciplinary links and teaching tips
- Possible solutions
- Suggestions on how students might carry out the task
- Estimated time required for each task

Family and Community Involvement

PAS does not have specific requirements for family and community involvement.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Expanding School Progress model offers professional development that incorporates five key features: district/school leadership seminars, the instructional audit and Strategic School Improvement Plan, leadership team meetings and facilitated ISGs, focused professional development with a critical look at student work, and progress monitoring with an annual school progress review.

PAS offers the following professional development strands to each school:

- Building Instructional Leadership Capacity
- Using Data to Inform Instructional Decisions
- Building Professional Learning Communities

- Enhancing Instructional Quality Schoolwide
- Enhancing Instruction With Differentiated Instructional Strategies
- Enhancing Instructional Quality With a Focus on Literacy
- Enhancing Instructional Quality With a Focus on Math
- Engaging Student Learning Through Standards-Based Project-Based Learning

Each strand is divided into categories: key specifications, expected outcomes, sample timeline, and solutions that address the specific strand. Based on the instructional audit, PAS recommends which strands would be most productive to address specific needs and offers a rationale to accompany the implementation plan. Schools typically choose two strands. According to the model, services provided by PAS are comparable in quality and delivery across all school levels (K–12). Content and resources, however, may be tailored for elementary, middle, and high school needs. PAS field staff offers onsite training and consultations with a focus on effective instructional strategies.

When schools purchase PAS independently, all professional development is delivered at the school. When purchased by a cluster of schools within a district, the school-based ILTs are trained centrally and provided with the appropriate tools and skills to provide turn-around training to faculty at their buildings.

Through the ILT, field staff, and a district-level field service manager, PAS provides ongoing technical assistance and supports capacity building throughout the implementation process. The onsite technical assistance and training at each school may include a combination of the following delivery methods:

- Facilitation of the ISGs
- Small group work sessions

- Classroom observations
- Review of student work
- In-class coaching and support

PAS's Expanding School Progress model encourages full participation by all individuals in planning, setting goals, and monitoring implementation. Furthermore, when this model is offered through the cluster option, an additional ILT Institute on the IQTs is provided.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

School benchmarks guide the model's work with schools. The benchmarks encompass five broad areas of the model's implementation: community accountability for all students, high-quality teaching and learning, comprehensive assessment for continuous learning, team-based school organization, and sensible use of technology.

Although few schools demonstrate all of these features to the fullest degree, according to PAS, together the benchmarks represent a vision to which all schools can aspire. The ILT and PAS field staff assess the extent to which the school meets each benchmark and conduct a gap analysis.

As part of the model's costs, PAS provides the ILT with an annual license to the IQT. PAS recommends that classroom walk-throughs and student work audits be conducted quarterly to monitor progress toward goals of the implementation plan. The IQT data report compiles all data points and can be reviewed in the ILT meetings and working sessions.

The Annual School Progress Review (ASPR) provides another way of tracking school support for the school improvement process and for troubleshooting issues that may arise during implementation. The ASPR is conducted by the ILT, with support from PAS field staff, and may include a panel of all stakeholders, including faculty, parents, and other community

members, in the review process. The panel reviews student assessment results; visits classrooms using the EQT; reviews actual student work using the EQW; assesses current school activities using benchmarks; and interviews students, teachers, parents, and other members of the school community. The panel then issues a report that highlights the school's strengths and any major challenges that lie ahead. This report is made available to all stakeholders and is used in preparing a strategic implementation plan for the upcoming year.

Special Considerations

LessonsLab Research Institute will be evaluating the Expanding School Progress model in the future. Thus, the model will be able to provide additional measures of effects in the near future and will continue to seek additional ways to provide evidence of effectiveness. The CSRQ Center's ratings of effectiveness are based on research studies conducted on Co-nect prior to its integration within PAS.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Two- and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Smith, R. B. (2003). *Effects of Co-nect's comprehensive school reform in Harford County, Maryland*. Cambridge, MA: Social Structural Research, Inc.

Contact Information













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School Development Program—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | School Development Program (SDP) | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The goal of SDP is to mobilize schools and communities to support students' healthy development, resulting in greater academic success, improved school climate, and increased contributions to civic life. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1968 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools¹ | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 246 | 209 ¹ | N/A | 37 | | |
| | Elementary: | Middle: | High: | | |
| | 184 | 29 | 33 | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 2 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Year 3 | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| Years 4+ | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies | Varies |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading and math | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

¹Urban and suburban schools are combined.

Model Description

In 1968, a team of professionals led by Dr. James P. Comer, professor of Child Psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine, provided intervention services to two low-performing elementary schools in New Haven, Connecticut. This original work eventually led to the approach known today as the Comer Process.

The Comer Process equips teachers, administrators, and communities to support child development through systems of organization and management. Principles of child and adolescent development provide the foundation for the Comer Process. According to Dr. Comer, healthy child and adolescent development is a progression along six developmental pathways: physical, cognitive, psychological, language, social, and ethical. The Comer Process requires schools, with the help of parents, teachers, and administrators, to create learning environments that foster maturation along all six pathways. The School Development Program (SDP) incorporates the Comer Process into a comprehensive school reform model.

SDP serves elementary, middle, and high schools. The model has expanded its efforts to the district level. SDP believes that support from district school boards and administrators is critical to the success of the Comer process.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of SDP were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to SDP, the model's goal is to mobilize schools and communities to support students' healthy

development, resulting in academic success, improved school climate, and increased contributions to civic life.

Goals/Rationale

SDP offers a structure and process for mobilizing teachers, administrators, and community members to support students' maturation along six developmental pathways: physical, cognitive, psychological, language, social, and ethical. Underlying the model's structure are three assumptions that provide the foundation for model implementation:

- Many students experience severe developmental gaps due to a lack of support from adult caretakers. While SDP acknowledges these gaps, the model expects all students to meet high standards and, therefore, students are not labeled or tracked.
- All students, regardless of their level of academic achievement, are entitled to opportunities for development. SDP requires schools to provide all students with developmental support and opportunities to meet their highest potential.
- Teachers and administrators alone cannot provide developmental support. SDP encourages schools to partner with parents and community members who can provide additional support and resources. Through the efforts of teachers, parents, and administrators, SDP also targets nonachievement outcomes such as student attendance, student discipline, school climate, teacher satisfaction, and family satisfaction.

Costs

The cost to implement SDP is based on adoption of the model by a school district. For school districts, the minimum administrative fee charged by SDP is \$1,000

for each school. This estimated cost includes training manuals, research data, publications, and other materials that support the implementation process.

The model offers professional development activities for teachers and administrators. SDP holds National Academies at Yale University to train school staff in the Comer Process. These academies cost \$850 per attendee. Teachers, central office staff, principals, parents, and paraprofessionals are all encouraged to attend these academies. SDP consultants conduct these academies and visit SDP schools twice a year. The cost for these site visits is \$1,000 per day for each consultant plus expenses. SDP also provides leadership training at regional SDP Professional Development Centers located in Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; and Prince George's County, Maryland. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should contact the regional centers directly.

SDP encourages schools to adopt curricular services provided by the SDP Learning, Teaching and Development Unit. These services include the Essentials of Literacy Process, the Balanced Curriculum Process, and Teachers Helping Teachers. The model suggests that schools purchase this training with its complementary materials and consultation for full implementation of these processes.

Implementation materials included in the model costs are: SDP publications, benchmarks, and training materials. SDP does not require schools to purchase additional materials. However, the model does not have its own curriculum and, therefore, schools need to supplement the model with curricular programs for reading and math. The costs of these programs are not included in the implementation costs. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed 34 quantitative studies for effects of SDP on student achievement. Five of these studies met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design; of those, three studies met the highest standards for rigor and are considered *conclusive*, which means that the Center has confidence in the results reported. The Center considers the findings of the other two studies *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in its results. One half of the results reported in the studies that met standards demonstrate statistically significant positive effects of SDP; these positive results had an average effect size of +0.19. These results are consistent with an overall rating of moderate for the overall effect of this model on student achievement. The studies that met CSRQ Center standards are described below. (Appendix S reports on the other 29 studies that did not meet CSRQ Center standards.)

The three studies that met standards and are considered conclusive each used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design to examine the impact of SDP on student achievement. One of these studies compared student achievement in two SDP and two comparison schools in an urban, primarily low socioeconomic status (SES) school district. The schools had large minority populations, particularly comprised of Hispanic students. The SDP schools had been implementing the model for 4 years. The results indicated no differences between SDP and comparison students on fourth grade statewide tests of reading, mathematics, and writing (nor were there differences for English language learner subgroups). The average effect size across subject areas for this study was near zero.

A second study compared test scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT-6) of students in 11 SDP schools to students in 17 comparison schools, in grades 2–5, over a 5-year period. The schools were located in an urban area of the Midwest United States, with primarily disadvantaged, minority populations. Using an overall sample of almost 6,000 students and advanced statistical analyses, the study reported no statistically significant differences between SDP and comparison students overall on the reading, math, and science subtests of the MAT-6. However, the authors did observe a positive effect of SDP for fifth graders on all three subject areas at the three highest implementing SDP schools. The average effect size across grade level and subject area for this study was +0.17.

A third study compared standardized citywide test scores of over 2,500 third grade students in SDP schools to those of over 6,000 students in comparison schools, in a large urban district in the Northeast U.S. The schools were comprised of predominantly low SES and high minority student populations. The study examined differences between SDP and comparison students 1, 3, and 5 years after implementation. The results showed a positive impact of SDP on both reading and math tests, with an average effect size of +0.19.

The two studies that met standards and are considered suggestive each used a longitudinal design to follow students in urban, low SES schools that were implementing SDP. The findings are suggestive because the studies had baseline data, used reliable testing instruments, and did not appear to violate other threats to validity. One of these studies tracked trends on reading and math performance of elementary students on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) for the first 3 years that SDP was in place. Though not tested for statistical significance, the trends over time showed modest increases in achievement. (After 3 years of SDP implementation, the percentage of students scoring proficient on the MEAP increased from 37% at baseline to 49% in reading, and from 45% at baseline to

78% in math.) The 2nd study tracked gains on the reading and math tests of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills-4 (CTBS-4) over 3 years in two SDP schools. Again, the trends over time were positive, particularly at the school with stronger implementation. Its academic gains were approximately 20 NCE points over 3 years, which is statistically significant.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

Though all of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards included samples that represent disadvantaged student populations, none of the studies reported results disaggregated by diverse subgroups. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: (M)

All five studies that met CSRQ Center standards included reading achievement as a primary outcome. Sixty percent of the findings on reading achievement in these studies suggested positive effects of SDP. An effect size was reported or calculable for only one of these findings (+0.15). The rating for this subject area is therefore moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: (M)

All of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined math achievement, and 3 out of the 5 studies reported results that suggest positive trends in math achievement for SDP schools and students. However, only one of the studies considered conclusive showed a statistically significant positive impact of SDP on math scores and reported an effect size of +0.22. The evidence of positive effects in mathematics is therefore moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

One of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design measured the impact of SDP on academic climate and school climate. This study measured each outcome from the perspective of both the school staff and the students. Results showed that both staff and students in SDP schools had higher average ratings for both academic and school climate after 5 years of SDP implementation than did comparison schools. SDP schools also showed greater improvement over time in these measures than did comparison schools. However, because there were no other studies that met CSRQ standards that examined these outcomes, the rating for SDP in this category is limited. It is important to note that a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that the research on a model provides evidence of positive impact for additional outcomes. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met CSRQ Center's standards in this category. SDP is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met CSRQ Center's standards in this category.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

One of the studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined the impact of SDP participation on parental assessments of family-school relations and parent-child relations. Results indicated there were no significant differences in parent attitudes in SDP and control schools. The rating is therefore zero.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

SDP provided documentation that offered explicit citations to support all of the core components of the model: organization and governance, professional development, and family and community involvement. Therefore, the rating is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, SDP offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to adopting SDP, the model encourages school principals to learn about the theoretical foundation of SDP by reading SDP publications and the model's online model description. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center suggest that prior to selecting the model, administrators invest time learning about the Comer Process through research and school visits. These principals also emphasized the importance of agreeing with the Comer philosophy and process.

In order to implement the model, SDP requires a minimum commitment from district administrators and four schools within that district to implement the model for 5 years. The district must agree to establish a District Steering Committee that is responsible for ensuring implementation fidelity within each school. In addition, the district must agree to appoint a district SDP Facilitator who guides the day-to-day implementation of the Comer Process in schools, trains school staff members, and provides consultation to school management teams. The district SDP facilitator can be a current staff member, but the district needs to plan for funds to pay the facilitator for the added responsibilities of the position. It is important for the facilitator to have skills in organizing, collaborating with others, and facilitating processes. SDP suggests that the district superintendent oversees the work of the district SDP facilitator.

The model requires schools to replace traditional organization and governance strategies with the SDP operating system. The operating system consists of three structures: the School Planning and Management Team, the Student and Staff Support Team, and the Parent Team.

Three principles guide the work and structure of the SDP operating system. The first principle is “no-fault,” which requires each team member to be accountable for the model's success. The second principle, “consensus,” requires teams to use dialogue and compromise as a means of decision making. If consensus is reached, teams will share a vision for increasing healthy development and academic achievement. The final principle, “collaboration,” encourages team members to work closely with the school principal. Collectively, these principles provide the theoretical groundwork for problem solving and reform within teams and, ultimately, within schools.

The central structure of the SDP operating system is the School Planning and Management Team. The principal leads this team but the decision-making body also includes parent, teacher, student, and support staff representatives. SDP provides guidelines for appointing members to this team. In order to work effectively and efficiently, SDP suggests that schools limit membership to 12 to 15 members and that all team members be selected by their peers. These team members include one support staff member, a teacher representative for each grade level in the school, and a representative from the Student and Staff Support Team. SDP expects all team members to attend biweekly meetings and to report back to their peers after each meeting. According to SDP, the meeting agendas and the notes from the previous meeting should be distributed before each meeting. The School Planning and Management Team is expected to complete three major tasks during its biweekly meetings:

- Compose a comprehensive school plan that outlines curriculum, instruction, and assessment activities and goals for reforming school climate
- Plan and coordinate daily school activities
- Monitor implementation, resource allocation, and staff development

The School Planning and Management Team divides into four subcommittees to accomplish these tasks: (1) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Committee; (2) Social Committee; (3) Public Relations Committee; and (4) the Staff Development/Parent Training Committee. A member of the management team chairs each subcommittee.

The supporting structures of the SDP operating system are the Student and Staff Support Team and the Parent Team. The Student and Staff Support Team addresses problems with individual students and works to prevent recurring student problems. The Parent Team develops strategies to involve parents in daily implementation of the SDP model and appoints representatives to the School Planning and Management Team.

Curriculum and Instruction

The model does not have its own curriculum and does not require the adoption of particular reading or math programs. Because SDP is a model that focuses on organization and governance, schools need to adopt strong academic programs to supplement the model. SDP created the Learning, Teaching, and Development Unit to focus on curriculum and instruction. This unit is a team of SDP consultants that help schools set academic goals (using Comer's six developmental pathways) and allocate the appropriate resources to meet these goals. The unit designs, refines, and field-tests all processes and products before offering them to schools. This unit currently provides three curricular and instructional services:

- Essentials of Literacy Process
- Balanced Curriculum Process
- Teachers Helping Teachers

In the future, the unit plans to address math, early childhood learning, and teacher preparation.

The Essentials of Literacy Process is a pullout model that targets students who are reading significantly below grade level. A SDP consultant helps schools develop a literacy-rich classroom, known as a Comer Reading Room, where teachers, parents, and volunteers serve as facilitators. These facilitators help students develop reading, writing, and listening skills. The classroom is divided into workstations comprised of four students and a facilitator. Facilitators use existing reading materials but receive training from the SDP consultant that aligns with the expectations of the model.

The Balanced Curriculum Process is a method, designed by SDP, for planning a curriculum that accounts for teacher preparation, students' developmental abilities, existing materials and guidelines, and state or local standards. The School Planning and Management Team selects teachers and supporting staff members to join school teams. These teams, along with the school principal, attend five SDP-sponsored workshops to learn the Balanced Curriculum Process. Specifically, the workshops teach the school teams how to do the following:

- Select units of instruction with specific beginning and end dates
- Design shared units of instruction for each grade level and subject area that include 2–5 significant tasks
- Align significant tasks with state and local standards
- Develop formative assessments for classroom use
- Ensure teachers implement the balanced curriculum in their school

After each workshop, the school teams and principal train faculty and formulate a plan for accomplishing the tasks. Although the school teams initiate the process, the entire faculty is expected to contribute to the effort. SDP suggests that schools give faculty 1 year to complete this process.

Teachers Helping Teachers is a process that aims to sharpen teachers' instructional practices. The process has three components: training, group dialogue, and partnership. These components take up to 2 years to implement. Initially, SDP consultants train teachers during a 2-day workshop on instructional models, peer dialogue, and best practices to strengthen their grasp of concepts presented in the workshops. SDP provides teachers with training manuals and follow-up consultation. Following the workshop, teachers form pair teams to maintain dialogue about their teaching strategies and the instructional models covered during the workshop. The process ends with an intensive partnership between two teachers who talk about classroom experiences and observe each other's teaching styles.

Scheduling and Grouping

The School Planning and Management Team, Student and Staff Support Team, and the Parent Team determine scheduling requirements and instructional grouping strategies. According to the model, the School Planning and Management Team should outline scheduling requirements and instructional grouping strategies in its Comprehensive School Plan. This team also plans the annual school calendar, which includes Parent Teacher Association meetings, social and academic events, and professional development activities.

Technology

The use of technology for instruction or management is left to the discretion of the School Planning and Management Team, Student and Staff Support Team, and Parent Team. The technology needs of the school and the community form the basis for decisions made by these teams. The management team should outline the school's use of technology in its Comprehensive School Plan.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model expects the School Planning and Management Team to include goals for assessment and data-based decision making in its Comprehensive School Plan. This plan will include student achievement goals on state and district assessments as well as strategies for modifying instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners.

If schools choose to implement the Balanced Curriculum Process, SDP trains teachers how to align units of instruction and learning objectives with state and district standards. SDP also trains teachers to design formative assessments with formats and content similar to state or district tests. SDP encourages teachers to use the outcomes of these formative assessments to modify instruction and, ultimately, improve achievement on state and district assessments.

Family and Community Involvement

Parent and community involvement is essential to the SDP implementation process. For participating schools, the model provides publications that describe ways to create a school climate that welcomes parents and families. These publications also emphasize the importance of sustained parent involvement. SDP recommends that schools form a parent-teacher organization that meets on a monthly basis. The model also recommends appointing a parent liaison and creating support for all forms of parental involvement including informational notes, phone calls, and e-mail.

The model provides a three-level approach to parental involvement. Level 1 assumes that parents will participate in general information sharing activities, such as parent conferences and fund raising. Level 2 encourages parental involvement in the day-to-day activities at the school including chaperoning field trips, assisting in the library, and tutoring students. For example, parents might assist students in choosing books to read and work with teachers to help students with

classroom projects. Level 3 is limited to parents who serve on the School Planning and Management Team. These parents participate in the decision-making process and work to foster open lines of communication between the community and the school.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Professional Development and Consultation Unit of SDP coordinates all professional development and technical assistance services. The unit provides services at the national and regional level.

SDP suggests that prior to adopting the model, a district team attend a Comer Process institute, Leadership 101. The team may include a district administrator and representatives of the following groups: principals, teachers, parents, and noninstructional staff. The institute provides attendees with an overview of the process and trains attendees to deliver presentations about the Comer Process to other teachers, administrators, and principals. This institute is held annually at Yale University. In addition, SDP has demonstration schools in three districts (Prince George's County, Maryland; New Haven, Connecticut; and Detroit, Michigan) where school teams can get first-hand knowledge of the model implementation process. Schools and districts can arrange visits to demonstration schools through the regional SDP Professional Development Center.

SDP provides other academies and workshops on various topics but does not require administrators or teachers to attend. The events offered at Yale University include a National Leadership Academy, a Literacy Institute, an Institute on Understanding and Managing Student Behavior, and the Academy for Developmentally Centered Education. Special topic sessions are also offered at regional SDP Professional Development Centers. These academies and workshops strive to provide teachers and administrators with knowledge

about child development, effective leadership, and strategies for implementing the SDP operating system.

If schools choose to implement The Essentials of Literacy Process or the Balanced Curriculum Process, SDP provides training on each of these processes. In addition, the model builds school capacity to provide professional development through Teachers Helping Teachers. During the Teachers Helping Teachers process, SDP trains teachers to evaluate their teaching styles and to try various instructional approaches by working in teams and teacher partnerships.

SDP also provides consultation services at the district and school level. SDP staff members offer onsite coaching for the three school teams as well as phone and e-mail consultation to school and district administrators. The model also provides informational sessions and facilitation to the District Steering Committee.

SDP does not provide schools with instructional materials. If schools choose to implement the Balanced Curriculum process, SDP trains teachers to create units of instruction, align their curriculum with state and local standards, and design formative assessments.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Full implementation of the Comer Process usually takes schools 5 years to achieve. SDP provides district administrators and principals with a formal set of benchmarks to guide implementation. The central focus of the benchmarks is the development of the SDP operating system in participating schools, in particular the creation of the School Planning and Management Team, the Student and Staff Support Team, and the Parent Team. Guidelines for curriculum, instruction, technology, and scheduling may vary depending on the school's Comprehensive School Plan.

SDP provides schools with timelines and checklists to ensure that benchmarks are met. SDP consultants also provide onsite observation and distance consulting

throughout the implementation process. If schools are willing, SDP conducts annual implementation evaluations and provides feedback on the schools' implementation progress. SDP does not designate schools as official SDP schools until they complete the 5-year implementation process.

Special Considerations

SDP focuses on organization and governance. As a result, schools should ensure that they adopt strong reading and math programs that align with the mission and goals of the model. The focus on organization and governance by SDP requires schools to revamp their traditional operating systems through the use of the Comer Process. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center commented that the SDP operating system encourages schools to address student achievement in the context of school climate and child development.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

- Haynes, N. M., Comer, J. P., & Hamilton-Lee, M. (2004). The School Development Program: A model for school improvement. *Journal of Negro Education*, 57(1), 11–21.
- Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. A., & Herman, R. (1997). *Urban and suburban/rural special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: Findings and policy implications of a longitudinal study. Final report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

- Bifulco, R. (2001). *Do whole-school reform models boost student performance: Evidence from New York City*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University.
- Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25, 143–170.
- Millsap, M. A., Chase, A., Brigham, N., & Beckford, I. (2000). *Evaluation of Detroit's Comer schools and family initiative, final report*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.

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School Renaissance—Elementary

| Overview: | | Basic Model Information and Review Results | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Model Name: | School Renaissance | | | | |
| Model Mission/Focus: | The mission of School Renaissance is to help educators make data-based decisions in order to meet the needs of diverse learners. | | | | |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1986 | | | | |
| Grade Levels Served: | Pre-K–12 | | | | |
| Number of Schools | | | | | |
| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: | | |
| 189 | N/A | N/A | N/A | | |
| Costs | | | | | |
| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
| Year 1 | \$56,884 | \$42,601 | \$14,283 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Year 2 | \$37,160 | \$17,889 | \$19,271 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Year 3 | \$27,551 | \$11,629 | \$15,922 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Years 4+ | \$17,239 | \$11,149 | \$6,090 | \$0 | \$0 |
| 1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of positive overall effects | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations | | | | |  |
| c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas: | | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |  |
| Math | | | | |  |
| 2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | | | | | |
| 3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | | | | | |
| 4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | | | | | |
| 5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation: | | | | | |
| a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation | | | | |  |
| b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation | | | | |  |
|  = Very Strong  = Moderately Strong  = Moderate  = Limited  = Zero  = Negative  = No Rating | | | | | |
| <p>This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.</p> | | | | | |

Model Description

In 1984, Judi Paul designed a software program, Accelerated Reader, to foster reading motivation and increase reading practice. Two years later, Judi and Terry Paul founded Renaissance Learning, a company that seeks to improve learning for students with varying academic needs and social backgrounds.

In 1992, the Pauls conducted research on best teaching practices associated with Accelerated Reader. Based on this research, Renaissance Learning created Reading Renaissance, a program that includes the Accelerated Reader progress monitoring software, professional development resources, and other tools for assessment including STAR Reading and STAR Early Literacy. By 2002, the company released similar programs for math and writing: Math Renaissance and Writing Renaissance. Designed to support the schools' core curricula, all of Renaissance Learning's progress monitoring software tracks and reports students' overall academic progress for teachers, principals, and district administrators.

Renaissance Learning is the service provider of School Renaissance. School Renaissance is a comprehensive school reform model that includes the Renaissance Place platform on which all the software runs, as well as Reading, Math, and Writing Renaissance; professional development opportunities; organization and management solutions; technical assistance; strategies for parental involvement; and a plan for annual evaluation.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of School Renaissance were identified as core: organization and governance, professional development, technical assistance, curriculum, instruction, technology, time and scheduling, student assessment, and data-based decision making. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to Renaissance Learning, the goal of School Renaissance is to help educators make data-based decisions in order to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Goals/Rationale

The School Renaissance model seeks to reform instructional practices and school management by increasing data-based decision making. Seven principles provide the theoretical basis of the School Renaissance model:

1. Students need adequate time for personalized instruction and practice.
2. Instruction and practice should be developmentally appropriate for students.
3. Students need immediate feedback on their learning and performance.
4. Teachers and principals should set achievable goals for students and monitor progress towards meeting these goals.
5. Technology makes it easy to provide information to teachers to guide instruction.
6. All technology and curriculum should be driven by scientifically based research.
7. Every student and teacher can achieve measurable success with all curricula and standards.

Costs

Renaissance Learning suggests that schools phase in the School Renaissance model. The following costs reflect the recommended implementation timeline. However, these are estimated costs and may vary if a school modifies the model to meet its individual needs.

The cost for the 1st year of implementation is \$56,884, which includes training and materials to implement Reading Renaissance and a pilot of Math Renaissance. The cost for the 2nd year is \$37,160, which includes training and materials to continue Reading Renaissance and to implement Math Renaissance schoolwide. The 3rd year cost for implementation is \$27,551. This price includes materials to continue Reading and Math Renaissance as well as training and materials to implement Writing Renaissance and AssessmentMaster. During the 4th year of implementation, the estimated cost is \$17,239 for materials to sustain the model and professional development workshops.

There are additional costs for technology. The School Renaissance model has software and hardware requirements. The cost of this technology is dependent upon the results of the technology needs assessment. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that implementation costs may fluctuate due to the model's dependency on technology. They also pointed out that administrative support is important to successful implementation because principals are instrumental in obtaining funding for technology.

Renaissance Learning has a funding center that helps schools identify funding sources, apply for grants, and build capacity to perform these functions within a school. Through this center, Renaissance Learning maintains a database that contains possible funding sources and documents that align School Renaissance with eligibility requirements. Funding specialists assist schools in the process of grant writing. In order to build principal and administrator capacity to maintain funding, the center also sponsors a professional development conference, "Successful Grant Writing for Educators." For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ●

The CSRQ Center reviewed 10 quantitative studies for effects of School Renaissance on student achievement. Two of these nine studies met CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design; one of these two studies had findings the Center considers *conclusive*, which means that the Center has confidence in the results reported. The Center considers the findings of the second study *suggestive*, because of a less rigorous research design, which means that the Center has limited confidence in its results. With two studies reporting positive results that are considered conclusive or suggestive, the overall rating of the effects of School Renaissance on student achievement is moderate. The two studies that met standards are described below. (Appendix T reports on the other eight studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The study that met standards and is considered conclusive used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design to follow fifth-grade students in nine School Renaissance schools and nine control schools in the South Central region of the United States. The sample was comprised of students that varied by socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, and other demographics. This study followed achievement scores in reading and mathematics on the Texas Learning Instrument for the first 3 years of implementation of School Renaissance. Using repeated measures analyses controlling for prior achievement, the study showed that School Renaissance students outperformed comparison students in both reading and math. The average effect size in this study was +0.19. Furthermore, this study demonstrated a link between implementation of School Renaissance and achievement: students at

schools with higher levels of implementation scored significantly better on reading and math tests than did students at schools with lower levels of implementation.

The study that met standards and is considered suggestive used a longitudinal design to follow students in grades 1–5 using Renaissance Reading over 3 years. The STAR reading assessment was given as a pretest and a posttest in each year. The results showed an overall positive trend and are statistically significant. Students in grades 1–3 demonstrated accelerated growth in reading achievement across the 3 years of the study. Fourth and fifth graders showed no change in percentile scores relative to the national population.

It is important to note that the CSRQ Center also screened 37 studies that examined the impact of School Renaissance’s software components, Accelerated Reader, and Accelerated Math. Despite using rigorous research designs, over 40% of these studies were not eligible for full review because Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math on their own do not contain the elements of comprehensive school reform.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: (NR)

There were no achievement outcomes of diverse student populations in the two studies of School Renaissance that met CSRQ Center standards. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: (1)

Both studies that met CSRQ Center standards looked at the effect of School Renaissance on reading achievement. Both demonstrated a positive impact of School Renaissance on reading; the findings of the study, considered conclusive yielded a significant effect size of

+0.17. Therefore, with only one study, the rating in this category is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: (2)

One study that met CSRQ standards examined the effect of School Renaissance on math achievement, and the results, considered conclusive, demonstrate a positive impact of School Renaissance with an effect size of +0.20. Therefore, the rating is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: (NR)

There were no other outcomes in addition to student achievement that were eligible for full review in the two studies that met CSRQ Center standards. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: (NR)

Because there were no outcomes measuring parent, family, or community involvement in the two studies of School Renaissance that met CSRQ Center standards, the rating is no rating.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model’s Design

Rating: (2)

Based on documentation provided by the model, it has explicit citations to support the model’s seven principles and the following core components: organization and

governance, curriculum, instruction, time and scheduling, assessment, technology, and data-based decision making. But, the model did not provide explicit citations for its professional development and technical assistance components. Therefore, based on the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is moderately strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by the model, it offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of the model and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. The model also offers a formal process for allocating school resources, such as materials, staffing, and time, and provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

When selecting a comprehensive school reform model, Renaissance Learning encourages school stakeholders to complete the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's *Making Good Choices* needs assessment (<http://www.ncrel.org/csri/choices/index.html>). After completing the needs assessment, Renaissance Learning assigns the school a managing consultant. This consultant helps schools outline their goals, strengths, and weaknesses. During this process, school stakeholders develop a shared vision of their school reform efforts.

The managing consultant also helps the school complete a technology needs assessment resulting in a technology profile and an investment summary. Using both needs assessments and model benchmarks, the managing consultant and the school's stakeholders draft a customized implementation plan and timeline for their school.

Throughout implementation, School Renaissance transforms school culture, communication, and management using data-based decision making. The model strongly suggests that schools adopt (a) Renaissance Place, a reporting system that stores daily student progress monitoring data and results from monthly formative assessments, and annual assessment data, and (b) AssessmentMaster, a Web-based software that measures students' mastery of state standards. Renaissance Learning trains administrators and teachers to use this software to make decisions about instruction, to interpret student test data, to provide students with materials that align with their abilities, and to continue to track student progress throughout the school year.

During the initial stage of implementation, School Renaissance requires schools to appoint a model coordinator and create a leadership team. The managing

consultant helps the school recruit a coordinator from the existing staff. This coordinator coaches and mentors other staff, works collaboratively with the managing consultant, addresses technology concerns, and monitors day-to-day implementation of the model. The school principal assists the coordinator in mentoring teachers and implementing scheduling changes. The coordinator and the school principal receive training from Renaissance Learning.

In addition, the Renaissance coordinator and school principal serve on the school leadership team, which also includes the assistant principal, media specialist, technology coordinator, parents, and lead teachers. The team should represent all school stakeholders. The mission of the team is to address specific school needs and coordinate plans for professional development. If team members voice concerns of individual teachers, the team should develop a subcommittee to address these concerns to ensure confidentiality.

With the intention of monitoring implementation, the school principal and the Renaissance coordinator also observe classrooms. Teachers are strongly encouraged to certify as a Renaissance model master teacher. This process requires school staff to complete model classroom checklists. These checklists document teachers' understanding of the model, implementation of scheduling and instructional requirements, and the use of data-based decision making in the classroom. The coordinator and the managing consultant meet periodically to discuss progress towards implementation.

After each grading period, Renaissance Learning conducts an in-depth analysis of student data. The managing consultant provides the school with strategies for improvement based on the analysis. In addition, Renaissance Learning conducts a formal summative evaluation at the end of each academic year. The evaluation is based on student data, observations, and checklists. The managing consultant and the Renaissance coordinator use the evaluation to revise the implementation plan.

Curriculum and Instruction

School Renaissance does not have its own curriculum or require schools to adopt certain curricular programs. The model assumes that schools have curricular programs for reading, writing, and math in place. To supplement these curricula, School Renaissance requires schools to adopt Reading, Math, and Writing Renaissance. Renaissance Learning notes that these programs are aligned with most major textbook series.

Each supplemental program includes the following core components: progress monitoring software, professional development opportunities, consulting services, and implementation and evaluation materials. Reading Renaissance was the first supplemental program released by Renaissance Learning; therefore, it serves as a prototype. Reading Renaissance includes the Accelerated Reader software package, which is a reading management program that monitors the number and type of books students read and assesses the students' comprehension. Reading Renaissance also includes other software packages: screening and progress monitoring assessments for grades K–12 (STAR Reading and STAR Early Literacy), library management tools (AR BookGuide), vocabulary programs (Accelerated Vocabulary), and fluency progress monitoring software (Fluent Reader). For professional development, Reading Renaissance includes training in library management, intervention strategies, and early literacy. To fully implement this program, teachers use the data generated by the progress monitoring software to personalize instruction.

Renaissance Learning designs Math and Writing Renaissance using the same core components. The model also includes a supplemental program for English language acquisition, "English in a Flash." This program includes Web-based software, a teacher's guide, and technical assistance to maintain the program.

Renaissance Learning expects teachers to integrate the existing curriculum with these supplemental programs

and appropriate instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. The results of daily quizzes and diagnostic assessments provide data to personalize instruction for all students. Teachers may need to develop additional materials to meet students' needs.

Scheduling and Grouping

The School Renaissance model requires teachers to increase the amount of time students spend on personalized practice. The model recommends that teachers design “power lessons” that last 15–20 minutes and concentrate on one objective. This instruction should be followed by personalized practice. Reading Renaissance recommends that students spend 30–60 minutes each day on reading practice. Likewise, Math Renaissance recommends that students spend 30–45 minutes on daily math practice. The school principal and the Renaissance coordinator receive training on ways to modify schedules to include time for practice.

The model does not require specific grouping strategies but strongly recommends that grouping be based on student achievement data. Using STAR Reading and STAR Math software, teachers conduct periodic diagnostic assessments. These assessments, along with reports from Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math, provide a summary of student's ability range. The model recommends that this data be used to place new students in the appropriate classroom and regroup students within classrooms.

Technology

Technology is essential to the implementation of the School Renaissance model. Teachers, students, and administrators use software, designed by Renaissance Learning, for data-based decision making, guided practice, assessment, and goal setting. During the initial stage of implementation, the managing consultant helps the school complete a technology needs assessment (see above). This needs assessment results in two

documents: a technology profile and an investment summary. The profile identifies hardware and Renaissance software currently being used by the school. The investment summary lists the hardware and software needed to implement the School Renaissance model. The school's Renaissance coordinator works with the managing consultant to address these needs. If available, the school's technology specialist collaborates with the Renaissance coordinator and the managing consultant.

Computers are needed in each classroom and the school media center. Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center noted that it is essential to have computers in every classroom due to the amount of time students spend using the Accelerated Math and Accelerated Reading software. The school must purchase multiple software packages including: Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, Accelerated Writer, STAR Reading, STAR Math, Renaissance Place, and AssessmentMaster. Each software package has minimum system requirements.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

School Renaissance includes several options for student assessment and progress monitoring. Reading and Math Renaissance include curriculum-based quizzes that assess students' mastery of reading and math objectives. These quizzes monitor student progress on a daily basis. Teachers use the quiz results to personalize instruction. STAR Reading and STAR Math are software programs that include assessments of students' skill level. These assessments provide monthly monitoring of student progress. Teachers and principals can use the results of these assessments to place new students in classrooms and to evaluate overall student growth.

The Renaissance Learning Funding Center provides documents that correlate School Renaissance with state standards. The model also provides AssessmentMaster, a software program that assesses student progress

towards state standards using pencil-and-paper assessments, online assessments, hand-held responders, and scanning hardware.

School Renaissance also includes Renaissance Place, a database that stores and reports student achievement data. This database houses student data from daily quizzes, STAR assessments, AssessmentMaster, and state assessments. Teachers, principals, and district administrators have access to this information, and Renaissance Learning trains these stakeholders to interpret the data and to make informed decisions about instruction based on these interpretations. Each year, a school's managing consultant uses data stored in this database to perform an in-depth analysis of school performance and implementation.

Family and Community Involvement

School Renaissance encourages the involvement of parents and community members in the model's implementation. Specifically, the model recommends that schools communicate with parents by providing information about the model's design and by disseminating timely reports of student progress. Renaissance Learning provides free materials about the model design that schools can give to parents. These materials include brochures about Renaissance Math and Renaissance Reading. Likewise, Renaissance Learning software assists teachers with providing periodic progress reports to parents. STAR Reading and STAR Math allow teachers to print parent reports that outline students' academic progress.

In addition, the model recommends that parents become involved in their child's education by participating in school activities. For example, parent representatives are encouraged to serve on the school leadership team. Renaissance Learning also provides free materials, such as planning checklists and invitations, to organize regularly scheduled Family Reading Nights.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Prior to implementation, Renaissance Learning provides training on coaching, mentoring, and general implementation strategies for the Renaissance coordinator and the school principal. Renaissance Learning also provides seminars to teachers and administrators on Reading, Math, and Writing Renaissance; classroom management; and assessment. Professional development materials such as videos, charts, and books supplement these training opportunities.

Renaissance Learning suggests that schools phase in the model's components. Therefore, schools might not receive training on Reading, Math, and Writing Renaissance or AssessmentMaster all at once. Rather, schools receive training prior to implementing each of the programs. In addition to face-to-face training, Renaissance Learning also provides Web courses on these programs, which allow teachers to work at their own pace or to relearn implementation strategies.

Schools are able to customize their professional development plan either as onsite workshops or one-on-one technical training. Each 3-hour workshop focuses on a specific subject such as reading, and includes teaching and assessment techniques required for the School Renaissance model. Sample workshops for reading are goal setting, diagnosis and intervention, techniques for struggling readers, and the basics of the Reading Renaissance approach.

While Renaissance Learning trains the Renaissance Coordinator to provide technical assistance to teachers and administrators through mentoring and problem solving, they also provide technical assistance to the school. The managing consultant communicates with the coordinator four to six times a year through teleconferences. The consultant also conducts an annual analysis of student performance and model implementation. Following the analysis, the consultant provides the school with practical feedback for modifying implementation and improving instruction.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

Renaissance Learning provides district administrators and principals with a formal set of benchmarks, “Renaissance Goals and Benchmarks,” to guide implementation. The benchmarks provide formative and summative goals for implementing Reading and Math Renaissance as well as AssessmentMaster. These goals are divided into classroom practices and leadership practices to provide implementation guidance to both teachers and administrators. The benchmarks also include indicators of implementation.

If schools meet certain implementation goals, Renaissance Learning rewards their success by offering the school Renaissance Certification. For more specific information on the requirements for Renaissance Certification, schools should directly contact Renaissance Learning.

Special Considerations

This model focuses on data-based decision making using curricular supplements and computer-based assessments. Therefore, schools must make use of their existing curricula or purchase curricular programs for reading, math, and writing. Schools must also purchase hardware and software to support the model.

Principals contacted by the CSRQ Center stated that classroom management is essential to the model’s success because students spend a great deal of time working independently. Notably, the model includes a professional development workshop and books that train teachers to use effective classroom management strategies.

Model Studies Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Renaissance Learning. (2002). *Results from a three-year statewide implementation of Reading Renaissance in Idaho*. Madison, WI: Author.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Nunnery, J. A., Ross, S. M., & Goldfeder, E. (2003). *The effect of School Renaissance on TAAS scores in the McKinney ISD*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

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Success for All—Elementary

Overview: Basic Model Information and Quality Review Results

Model Name: Success for All (SFA)

Model Mission/Focus: SFA's primary goal is to help all students achieve at the highest possible levels, especially students who are disadvantaged and at risk. The SFA Foundation helps schools identify and implement a set of strategies and instructional programs that support each child who is not making adequate progress.

Year Introduced in Schools: 1987

Grade Levels Served: K–8

Number of Schools

| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: |
|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 1,400 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Costs

| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Year 1 | \$88,580 | \$44,750 | \$40,080 | N/A | \$3,750 (conferences) |
| Year 2 | \$58,200 | \$28,275 | \$28,275 | N/A | \$1,650 (conferences) |
| Year 3 | \$34,566 | \$24,900 | \$8,016 | N/A | \$1,650 (conferences) |
| Years 4+ | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

1. Evidence of Effects on Student Achievement:

- a. Evidence of positive overall effects
- b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations:
Low-achieving students, Spanish-speaking students, and minority students
Special education students
- c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas:
Reading
Math, science, and social studies



2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes:

- Teacher satisfaction and student suspension rate
- School climate
- Attendance and retention rates and time spent in special education classes

3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation:

- a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation
- b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation

= Very Strong
 = Moderately Strong
 = Moderate
 = Limited
 = Zero
 = Negative
 = No Rating

This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2005–2006 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.

Model Description

Success for All (SFA) began through research in the 1970s that focused on cooperative learning strategies. Through these research efforts, the model developers realized that cooperative learning strategies needed to be embedded into curriculum in order to be effective and to bring about change in instructional processes.

Beginning in 1980, the development of the math program was completed, and in 1983, the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition program was developed. Soon thereafter, the prototype for SFA was integrated within Baltimore Public Schools. In 1992, the model developers received funding from the New American Schools Development Corporation to improve existing programs and to develop *MathWings* and *WorldLab*. In 1998, SFA established the Success for All Foundation (SFAF), which is based in Baltimore, MD.

In addition to its K–8 comprehensive school reform model, SFAF also offers SFA-Reading First and Early Reading First.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following were identified as core components of SFA: organization and governance; professional development; technical assistance; curriculum; instruction; inclusion; time and scheduling; instructional grouping; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to SFA, the model’s goal is to help transform schools through programs that are research based. The foundation promotes broader policies that

support a focus on school transformation through the adoption of proven programs.

Goals/Rationale

SFA Foundation is founded on a set of core beliefs: all children can learn, schools can make a difference, family and community involvement is essential, research needs to guide the use of solutions, and all educators need to work relentlessly to help children. According to SFA, programs are designed to provide teachers and schools with a proven set of instructional practices, procedures, materials, understandings, and assessments.

The instructional practices and procedures focus on cooperative learning and aligned professional development and materials. The model targets achievement outcomes in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Additionally, the model targets nonachievement outcomes in student attendance, retention and promotion, and discipline rates.

Costs

In the 1st year of adoption, for an average school of 500 students, the cost for training, ongoing professional development, and coaching is \$44,750. This includes 8 onsite trainer days prior to implementation; 14 onsite days for additional professional development, including classroom observations, group meetings, and coaching; and 8 scheduled phone conversations to provide additional technical assistance. Year 2 cost for the same size school is \$28,275 and includes 12.5 onsite support days and 8 scheduled telephone conferences. Year 3 cost is \$24,900 for the same size school and includes 10 onsite support days and 8 scheduled telephone conferences.

There are additional costs for conferences and materials. Year 1 conferences are \$3,750, which covers registration

for three new SFA school leaders for 5 days or for three participants from experienced schools for 3 days. Travel expenses are not included in this amount. The school is required to provide additional funding for the position of the school-based SFA facilitator.

In year 1, materials cost \$40,080; in year 2, they cost \$28,275; and in year 3, they cost approximately \$8,016. For more specific information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: ●

The CSRQ Center reviewed 121 quantitative studies for effects of SFA on student achievement. Thirty-six of these studies met the CSRQ Center's standards for rigor of research design. Upon review, the CSRQ Center considers the findings of 34 of the studies to be *conclusive*, meaning the CSRQ Center has confidence in the results of the studies. The findings of two studies are considered to be *suggestive*, meaning the CSRQ Center has limited confidence in the results of the studies. Overall, the 36 studies report a mix of results showing positive effects and no effect of SFA. Of the 96 separate achievement test findings that were reported across the 36 studies, slightly more than half (51%) demonstrated a statistically significant¹ positive effect. The average effect size of the positive effects is +0.66. These results are consistent with an overall rating of moderately strong for the overall effects of SFA on student achievement. The 36 studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards are described below.

(Appendix U reports on 85 studies that were reviewed but did not meet the CSRQ Center's standards.)

Of the 34 studies that are considered to be conclusive, all but one used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison group design. The exception was a randomized field trial that examined the effects of SFA on student achievement in several states in different regions of the United States. Most of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards (a) examined students from low-income families who attended schools with large minority populations and (b) focused primarily on reading achievement. The studies represent a mix of sources from peer-reviewed journals, technical reports, doctoral dissertations, and conference presentations. Among the 34 conclusive studies, 11 demonstrated consistent positive effects of SFA on student achievement, 13 studies reported no significant effects, and 10 reported a mix of positive effects and no significant effects. Among the two suggestive studies, one reported positive results, and the other reported no significant effects.

One of the 11 studies that demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on student achievement was a nationwide, large-scale randomized controlled trial. The 2005 version of the CSRQ Center's elementary school report discussed results from the 2nd year of the 3-year trial. Results from the 3rd year are discussed in this updated version of the report. A national sample of more than 5,000 K–2 students in 41 schools were randomly assigned to participate in SFA or a control condition. The schools served primarily low socioeconomic status (SES) student populations and were located throughout the United States. Results from the 3-year study demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on reading achievement, as measured by three of four subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test (WRMT). The average effect size was +0.25 from the complete longitudinal sample.

¹Level of statistical significance is determined by a statistical test and demonstrates whether the observed changes are likely to have occurred by chance alone.

The other 10 studies that demonstrated a positive impact of SFA used quasi-experimental, matched comparison designs, with primarily urban, low SES, high-minority samples. Four studies examined reading achievement of lower elementary (K–3) students in SFA and comparison schools on the WRMT and/or the Durrell Oral Reading subtest. Students from SFA schools significantly outperformed comparison students in these four studies. Another four studies compared achievement scores in several subject areas of students in grades 1–5 of SFA schools with those of comparison students. On reading tests, including the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), the WRMT, Durrell Oral Reading, Gray Oral Reading Test, and the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP), SFA students scored significantly higher than comparison students after as few as 3 and as many as 6 years of SFA implementation. One of these studies also demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on students in grades 2–5 on CTBS scores in language, math, science, and social studies. Another showed positive effects for fifth-grade students on the science and social studies subtests of the MSPAP.² Two of the conclusive studies that showed a positive effect focused on SFA’s Spanish reading program, *Lee Conmigo*, and found that SFA students scored significantly higher on the Spanish WRMT than comparison students. Another study showed a significant positive effect of an enhanced version of SFA—one that includes multimedia content features for English language learners (ELLs)—on the reading achievement of primarily Hispanic students in kindergarten and first grade. Finally, one study demonstrated a positive, sustained effect of SFA on student achievement. A total of 581 eighth-grade students who had participated in SFA as elementary school students were compared to a matched control group of non-SFA students. In support of long-term positive effects of SFA, the SFA students outperformed comparison

students in reading and math achievement, as measured by the CTBS.

Of the 13 studies that found no significant differences, 12 were considered to be conclusive, and one was considered to be suggestive. Each of the 13 studies examined reading outcomes in grades K–6, but one study also examined language arts achievement and two studies also examined math achievement. Six studies found no significant differences between SFA students and comparison students on the WRMT and Durrell Reading Tests for early elementary (K–2) students. (These six studies did not report on student characteristics, including socioeconomic status.) One study reported no differences between SFA kindergarteners and comparison students on the Early Prevention of School Failure Test, and one study found no differences between K–2 SFA students and comparison students on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and the Test of Language Development. Four studies examined reading outcomes for upper elementary students (grades 2–6) on national and state norm- and criterion-referenced tests, including the Stanford-9 Diagnostic Test, the Ohio Proficiency Test, the Criterion-Referenced Competency Test, and the Scholastic Reading Inventory. The samples in these four studies were comprised predominantly of minority, low SES students from urban districts. The differences between SFA and comparison students were not statistically significant. In addition, one study that the CSRQ Center considers to be suggestive reported no impact of SFA. The study tracked tests scores of third-grade students in one school that served at-risk students with limited English proficiency from transient families over a 3-year period from a baseline year to 2 years post-SFA implementation. No significant differences in scores were found over the course of the study.

²Third-grade SFA students also scored higher than comparison students on social studies tests, but no significant differences were found for achievement on science tests.

Each of the eight studies that reported a mix of positive findings and no significant effects examined the impact of SFA on reading performance of K–4 students. Among three studies that broke down results by grade level, a pattern emerged indicating that the impact of SFA is sometimes larger for first-grade students than for students in other elementary school grades. These studies measured reading achievement on the WRMT and Durrell reading tests at sites located in different geographical regions of the United States. Three other studies found positive effects of SFA on just one of the multiple achievement tests given (e.g., positive effects on one subtest of Durrell or the WRMT). These mixed-outcome studies included mostly samples of students from low-income families in both urban and rural settings. Finally, two studies reported mixed results from multiple sites in different geographic regions. One of the two studies examined K–2 students in four different sites on up to four reading tests (WRMT, Durrell, Merrill, and the Test of Language Development); results were mixed within and across sites. The second study examined reading achievement among first-grade students in three sites. SFA students outperformed comparison students at all sites on the WRMT and at two of three sites on the Durrell test.

In sum, a large body of evidence suggests that SFA has a positive effect on student achievement some of the time. More research may provide information about the conditions under which SFA is most likely to positively affect student achievement. Of note, the sample sizes in some of the studies were too small to detect differences that were statistically significant. These studies were categorized for this review as having mixed results or as having results that showed no significant differences between SFA and comparison groups. However, in some cases, these results were associated with large effect sizes. If the sample sizes used for the research were larger, then a greater number of significant positive effects would likely have emerged.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: ●

Of note, a rating of limited or higher in this subcategory indicates that the research on a model provides evidence of positive impact for specific diverse student populations. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center had evidence that met the CSRQ Center’s standards for this category. SFA is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met the CSRQ Center’s standards for this category. The average rating of SFA for this subcategory is moderate.

The studies of SFA that met the CSRQ Center’s standards provided disaggregated results for the following subgroups of students:

- **Low-Achieving Students (Rating: ●).** Five studies that met the CSRQ Center’s standards broke down results to compare SFA students with control students who scored in the lowest 25% on the pretest that was given before implementation of SFA. Results for this population were mixed (i.e., positive, negative, and null). Approximately 40% of the findings demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on low-achieving students. The average effect size of positive findings was +0.82. Because of the mixed results, the rating for SFA on this subgroup of students is moderate.
- **Spanish-Speaking Students (Rating: ●).** Two studies examined SFA’s effects on Spanish-speaking students who attended schools that used *Lee Conmigo*, the Spanish version of SFA. Both studies compared students in an urban SFA school with students in a control school—a large Spanish-speaking student population in an urban school in one district in the northeastern United States. Results demonstrated significant positive effects for Spanish-speaking students (average effect size

of +1.36). Because two studies demonstrated positive effects, the rating for SFA on this subgroup of students is moderate.

- **Minority Students (Rating: ●).** Two studies demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on achievement by minority students. One study found statistically significant positive results on two of the three WRMT subtests (Word Identification and Word Attack) for minority students in an SFA school compared with minority students in a control school. The average effect size of the positive results was +0.17. Another study examined the impact of an enhanced version of SFA that included multimedia features designed for ELLs. This study examined outcomes at four SFA and four control elementary schools that served primarily Hispanic, low-SES populations in school districts in five states. Results demonstrated a significant positive effect on kindergarten and first-grade students on three WRMT subtests: Word Identification, Word Attack, and Passage Comprehension. The average effect size was +0.38. Because two studies demonstrated a positive effect of SFA on achievement by minority students, the rating for this subgroup of students is moderate.³
- **Special Education Students (Rating: ●).** One study examined the effect of SFA on special education students who attended rural, primarily low-income schools. Differences were not found between SFA and comparison students on the Durrell Oral Reading Test. However, SFA students scored higher on three subtests of the WRMT: Word Identification, Word Attack, and Passage Comprehension. The average effect size was +0.98. Because only one study demonstrated mixed results of SFA on special education students, the rating for this subgroup of students is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: ●

All of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined reading outcomes. The average effect size of the results showing a positive impact in reading is +0.64. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderately strong.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: ●

Three studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined math achievement. One study found no effects of SFA on math outcomes on New York City citywide tests. A second study found long-term positive effects on math scores on the CTBS-4 by students exposed to SFA in elementary school. A third study found significant gains in math scores on the CTBS for SFA schools in Memphis over a 3-year period. The average effect size of the findings showing positive impact is +0.44. Because three studies demonstrated primarily positive results, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Science

Rating: ●

Two studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined science achievement. One study showed statistically significant positive effects of SFA on science outcomes by fifth- but not third-grade students, but effect sizes were not reported. The other study also showed statistically significant positive effects of SFA on science achievement for students in grades 2–5, with an effect size of +0.93. Because two studies demonstrated mostly positive effects on science

³The rating for this category is upgraded from the 2005 edition of *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models* because of the additional research available that demonstrates a positive effect of SFA on student achievement.

achievement, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Social Studies

Rating: ●

The same two studies that tested the impact of SFA on science also examined achievement in social studies. One study reported positive effects of SFA on the social studies outcomes of students in grades 3 and 5. The other study also found positive effects on social studies outcomes by students in grades 2–5, with an effect size of +0.70. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: ◐

Of note, a rating of limited or higher in this category indicates that the research on the model provides evidence of positive impact on additional outcomes. Furthermore, few of the models reviewed by the CSRQ Center provided evidence that met the CSRQ Center's standards for this category. SFA is commended for offering detailed additional evidence that met the CSRQ Center's standards for this category. The average rating of SFA for this category is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Teacher Satisfaction

Rating: ◐

Three studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined levels of teacher satisfaction. Based on survey responses, all three studies suggest that SFA teachers were more satisfied than teachers in the control group. However, the differences were not statistically

significant. Therefore, the rating for this additional outcome is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Student Suspension Rate

Rating: ◐

One of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined suspension rates at three SFA schools and three comparison schools. Comparing the number of out-of-school suspensions before implementation of SFA and then over a 3-year span after implementation, both SFA and comparison schools demonstrated an almost identical drop in suspension rates. Despite this decline, the number of suspensions remained high in the SFA schools. No tests of significance were conducted for this outcome. Therefore, the rating for this additional outcome is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: School Climate

Rating: ●

Three studies that met CSRQ Center standards examined SFA's effect on school climate by surveying parents, students, and teachers. Surveys were administered at different SFA schools within each study, and results were mixed. At two SFA schools, teachers reported a school climate that was significantly more positive than the school climate reported by teachers at comparison schools. The effect size was +1.10. However, teachers at one SFA school reported a school climate that was more negative than the school climate reported by teachers at the control school. The effect size was -1.15. One of these studies also reported parent and student opinions about school climate, but the trends over a 3-year period were not tested for statistical significance. Because three studies demonstrated some positive effect of SFA on school climate (as reported by teachers), the rating for this additional outcome is moderate.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Attendance Rate

Rating: 

One of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards compared attendance rates at three SFA schools with those at three comparison schools. Comparing attendance rates before implementation of SFA and then over a 3-year span of implementation, trends in attendance rates at both SFA and comparison schools increased over time. SFA schools demonstrated twice the gain in attendance that non-SFA schools demonstrated, but no tests of significance were conducted. Therefore, the rating for this additional outcome is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Retention Rate

Rating: 

One study that met the CSRQ Center's standards compared the retention rate of students at an SFA school with those of students at a non-SFA school. The retention rate of elementary school students in the SFA school was significantly lower than the rate at the comparison school, for both the overall sample and a subsample of low-achieving students. The average effect size for this outcome was +0.29. Because only one study examined SFA's effects on retention rates, the rating for this additional outcome is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: Time Spent in Special Education Classes

Rating: 

One study of SFA's sustained overall effects, which was described previously, also examined the number of years that SFA students spent enrolled in special education classes, as elementary and middle school students. When compared with students from a comparison school, findings showed that SFA students (the overall

sample and the low-achieving subsample) spent significantly less time in special education classes. The average effect size was +0.21. Because only one study examined SFA's effects on time spent in special education classes, the rating for this additional outcome is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

Two of the studies that met the CSRQ Center's standards examined SFA's effects on parent and family involvement. However, these studies reported only descriptive information and did not provide conclusive information for this category. In one study, both SFA and comparison teachers reported that parents were supportive, but had mixed feelings about the levels of involvement. Another study reported increased communications with families, but the school had problems involving parents in school activities. Teachers reported nonsignificant, negative changes in parent involvement and family support. Therefore, the rating for this category is zero.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, explicit citations support all the core components of SFA: organization and governance; professional development; technical assistance; curriculum; instruction; inclusion; time and scheduling; instructional grouping; student assessment; data-based decision making; and parent, family, and community involvement. Therefore, the rating for this category is very strong.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

Based on documentation provided by SFA, the model offers a formal process to help school staff establish an initial understanding of SFA and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. Additionally, the model offers a formal process for allocating such school resources as materials, staffing, and time. The model also provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides such ongoing training opportunities as workshops, peer coaching, capacity building, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of SFA's core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, the rating for this subcategory is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to adoption, schools should review SFA materials, view the videotape about the model, and hold an awareness session. Principals at three SFA schools that were contacted by the CSRQ Center recommended that schools considering adopting SFA visit a school

that is implementing the model successfully. The SFA Foundation suggests schools to potential visitors based on geographic proximity, level of implementation, and similarities between schools. Schools that are implementing SFA and that host visitors may apply for financial credits for receiving visitors.

Schools must apply to the foundation and demonstrate an understanding of the components of the model, have adequate resources to implement the model, and commit to implement the model with fidelity. There is an 80% buy-in requirement for school staff.

SFA requires schools to make changes to curriculum, instruction, budgets, staffing, and scheduling. Principals are expected to support model implementation through attendance at professional development, shared decision making, common planning periods, provision of release time for teachers for professional development, and service on the family support team.

Each school must designate an individual as the school-based SFA facilitator who leads the day-to-day implementation. The facilitator provides ongoing site-based professional development through strategies that address building capacity for implementation and forming coaching partnerships. Additionally, the facilitator receives extensive professional development from the model for developing expertise in coaching, assisting grade-level teams, and building the internal capacity for sustaining professional development. A school improvement team, comprised of the principal, the SFA facilitator, and representatives of teachers and parents, further supports the implementation process.

Implementation is a goal-focused process. Each quarter, schools complete an achievement plan. The achievement plan has one area of focus with specific targets, measures, and a plan for implementation indicating specific actions to be taken and the person responsible for each action. At the end of the quarter,

school staff compiles and reviews the results with the SFA regional consultant assigned to the school site.

Curriculum and Instruction

The SFA model requires specific curricula for reading, writing, and math and requires optional curricula for science and social studies. The reading and writing curricula—*Kinder Corner* (kindergarten), *Reading Roots* (grade 1), *Reading Wings* (grades 2–6), *Writing from the Heart* (grades 1 and 2), and *Writing Wings* (grades 3–6)—were developed by the model.

Kinder Corner has two components: *KinderRoots* and *BookEnds*. *KinderRoots* introduces phonemic awareness and phonics, while *BookEnds* focuses on vocabulary development, listening skills, comprehension strategies, and literacy concepts.

Reading Roots consists of a 90-minute daily lesson designed to meet the needs of beginning readers. Every lesson includes shared stories that help students practice decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills. Additionally, teachers use a collection of 48 books, both fictional and expository, to engage students in story telling and retelling (STaR) activities. Structured language activities correspond to the stories and offer instruction in oral language development. The *FastTrack* Phonics program has been added to Reading Roots to address instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. Every Reading Roots weekly lesson includes writing instruction that is related to the theme of both the shared story and STaR books. A four-volume set of teacher’s manuals provides guidance with detailed daily lesson plans for phonics, student story reading, teacher read-alouds, oral language, and writing lesson activities. Student materials such as consumable reading books, sound cue strips, strategy cue cards, and parent notes are used to support instruction.

Reading Wings, the reading curriculum for students reading at grade levels 2–6, focuses on vocabulary development, reading comprehension, fluency, oral language development, and written expression. Reading Wings includes the following components: Listening Comprehension, Teamwork, Adventures in Writing, Two-Minute Edit, and Book Club. This curriculum uses a school’s existing reading materials such as novels, trade books, and anthologies to engage in *Treasure Hunts*, which take place during the Teamwork portion of the lesson. *Treasure Hunts* replace traditional workbook materials and include a set of reproducible materials with three main sections for novels or stories: (1) teacher-directed story motivation, vocabulary, and story instruction; (2) 55 minutes of students engaging in Reading Together; and (3) the use of comprehension strategies by student teams, closely monitored by the teacher. Each novel takes approximately 3 weeks for instruction. Reading comprehension materials are also available to complement the reading materials. Comprehensive teachers’ manuals explain the instructional sequence and procedures.

The math program, *MathWings*, for grades K–6 integrates mathematical concept development, problem solving in real-world applications, and the maintenance of mathematical skills. *MathWings* is divided into *Kindergarten MathWings*, which focuses on shapes, patterns, numbers, and space; *Primary MathWings* for grades 1 and 2, which focuses on basic number and concept skills; and *Intermediate MathWings* for grades 3–6, which focuses on mathematical reasoning to solve problems. Materials for *MathWings* included in the model costs are teachers’ manuals, unit guides, and transparencies; student materials (consumable); blackline masters for primary assessments, optional lessons, and partner/team worksheets; teacher resource books; Addison Wesley problem-solving book and blacklines; commercial manipulative kits; consumable manipulative kits; and 15-Minute Math activity materials.

WorldLab, for science and social studies, was developed through funding from New American Schools. WorldLab is an interdisciplinary approach that helps children develop higher order thinking skills. Students work in cooperative groups to simulate real-world problems. These curricula are optional components of the model.

Another optional curriculum, *Getting Along Together*, is a social problem-solving curriculum with units for each grade level. This curriculum consists of three components: Learn About It, Think It Through, and Talk It Out. These components focus on key problem-solving skills embedded with reading lessons, an individual problem-solving model, and an interactive problem-solving model. Students learn teamwork, and listening and decision-making skills in addition to the problem-solving skills.

Additionally, there are three Spanish reading programs, *Descubre Conmigo* for kindergarten, *Lee Conmigo* for beginning reading, and *Alas Para Leer* for reading comprehension. These programs are available for use in Spanish bilingual classrooms. There is also *Juntos Progresamos*, the Spanish version of *Getting Along Together*. SFA also has a preschool program, *Curiosity Corner*.

SFA has also developed a reading intervention program, *Adventure Island*, that provides additional instructional support for students in grades 1–5 who are identified as needing intensive instruction. The program consists of a daily 45-minute reading lesson and can be used flexibly during the school day or after school. There are four levels of focus for the intervention instruction—*Alphie’s Lagoon* for beginning readers who need additional instruction in phonics; *Captain’s Cove* for students in second grade who need additional instruction in advanced phonics and fluency; and *Discovery Bay* and *Treasure Harbor* (for third- and fourth-grade students)—that focus on development of comprehension skills through the use of strategies.

These curricula use a cycle of instruction that provides a standardized set of practices, procedures, and concept demonstration formats. These practices, procedures, and formats do not include a word-by-word script that the teacher is expected to repeat verbatim. However, teachers are expected to follow a specific instructional sequence using a prescribed set of instructional practices and classroom management techniques. Cooperative learning is at the core of these instructional practices. According to SFA, cooperative learning should be organized around teams and include the following three elements: (1) team recognition, (2) individual accountability, and (3) equal opportunity for success. Each SFA lesson is organized around a cycle of instruction. Within this framework, teachers may use slightly different terminology depending on the subject; however, the following procedures are always included:

- Teach—Teacher employs questioning and modeling to prepare students for learning.
- Team—Students work in teams as teacher circulates and monitors learning.
- Test—Teacher formally and/or informally assesses student understanding.
- Team Recognition—Teacher recognizes teams for individual academic contributions of students and team cooperation.

According to SFA, cooperative learning and basic classroom management strategies used by the model are key components of a successful learning experience for students.

Scheduling and Grouping

SFA requires a dedicated 90-minute block of uninterrupted instruction for reading, a 75-minute uninterrupted instructional block for math at the primary

level, and a 60-minute uninterrupted instructional block for math in the intermediate grades.

The model requires homogeneous groupings of students across and within grades for reading instruction. This grouping strategy may require students to move to a different classroom for reading instruction. Teachers provide direct instruction to small groups of students at their instructional level. Grouping strategies are guided by ongoing progress-monitoring assessments and are flexible to allow for regrouping as needed. Students in need of intervention receive additional direct instruction for 20 minutes daily in small groups or individually from teachers, trained tutors, or paraprofessionals.

The SFA Foundation and the school's SFA facilitator provide teachers with guidance on instructional strategies to help them meet the needs of all students. SFA supports inclusion and believes in “never streaming,” which means students are provided with the proper instructional support before they fall behind.

Principals at three SFA schools contacted by the CSRQ Center indicated that the primary advantage of this model is that all students are taught at their instructional level for reading. When students make progress, they are afforded an opportunity to move up to a higher level. According to these school personnel, the grouping strategies help meet the needs of students who have a wide range of achievement levels.

Technology

The use of technology by teachers and with students is recommended based on availability but not required for implementation. The use of calculators in math and WorldLab is recommended and direct instruction is provided on the use of these technology tools.

Technology is used as a learning tool to support instruction. *Reading Reels* for Reading Roots includes a video/DVD program that incorporates short

instructional clips: *Word Play*, *Animated Alphabet*, and *Finger Detective*. In fall 2005, SFA released an optional computer software package, *Alphie's Alley*, for use with reading interventions to support struggling students and students with special needs. The cost of this software is additional to the program cost.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

A range of assessments is used in SFA. The model requires the use of model-specific assessments to assess student progress. It also advocates the use of commercial diagnostic tools as well as district- or state-mandated assessments.

SFA uses Goal-Focused Achievement Planning with model-developed 4Sight Benchmark Assessments. 4Sight assessments parallel state assessments in content and format and are designed to predict student achievement in reading. Teachers administer these benchmark assessments five times a year to monitor student progress. Each quarter, teachers, school leaders, and the SFA facilitator meet to review assessment results and to plan goals for the following quarter. For example, a student who does not make adequate progress may be identified for additional instruction through the use of interventions or identified as having special needs.

A summative assessment is conducted yearly through external and internal evaluations. The SFA model conducts a formative evaluation every 3 months. As part of the formative process, teachers use an Individual Self-Assessment Guide and the school uses the Goal-Focused Achievement Planning process, which is tailored to each school.

Family and Community Involvement

SFA schools are required to establish a Family Support Team and develop a focused program of family support. The components of the family support program

are attendance, school-based intervention, parent involvement, and service integration. The team is responsible for organizing resources to ensure that all students are successful through establishing a strong link between the school and home.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

SFA provides extensive professional development and technical assistance prior to the actual implementation as well as during implementation. This professional development is required for teachers, administrators, and specialized personnel. There are 3 days of training prior to implementation and 5 days of initial training for principals and school leaders. Each year, three individuals attend a mid-year conference for 2.5 days.

SFA consultants provide the equivalent of 24 days to an average size school of 500 students to deliver workshops or to provide onsite technical assistance. The consultants visit the school for 4 days of onsite training to support each school in the development of the Family Support Team. SFA holds conferences at sites across the country for experienced and new schools and school leaders.

The professional development includes the following:

- Two-day initial training in the implementation of Reading Roots or Reading Wings and MathWings
- One-day initial training for the Family Support Team
- One-day initial training for Getting Along Together

Additional technical assistance is provided by the instructional facilitator, as well as three onsite support visits during the school year, follow-up scheduled telephone calls, and unlimited, informal telephone support by the SFA staff.

SFA conducts an optional Leadership Academy for district and school leaders to build capacity for the implementation of SFA. The academy consist of three 1-day sessions for district leaders and eight 1-day sessions for school leaders. The model also provides professional development for the 4Sight Benchmark Assessments for groups of principals and lead teachers.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

The SFA Foundation provides all SFA schools with benchmarks and the Implementation Self-Assessment Guide to assess the model implementation process. Within the guide, each program area is divided into areas of instruction and then subdivided into instructional sections. For example, Reading Roots has seven areas of instruction. One area of instruction is FastTrack Phonics, which is divided into specific areas of instruction such as Alphabet Wall Frieze Review, Alphabet Chart, and Hear Sounds. For each specific area of instruction, benchmarks outline what the teacher and the students do during each phase of instruction.

Each teacher uses the Implementation Self-Assessment Guide to monitor classroom implementation of the reading program. The guide provides a checklist to connect instruction and student learning to the goals for student achievement. The guide is available in electronic format, which allows for flexible use. Teachers can self-assess in different areas such as their use of modeling; the preparation of objectives, questions, and Think Alouds; and the use of team-building activities.

Additional tools to monitor implementation are onsite observations, timelines, checklists, student achievement data, and teacher self-assessment as indicators, which schools use to adjust model implementation and to establish school goals for subsequent years. At the school level, the model provides feedback in the form of successful indicators of implementation,

weaknesses, strengths, and strategies for improvement. Schools are required to use this feedback to guide the implementation process.

Special Considerations

The SFA model is comprehensive and tightly structured. According to principals contacted by the CSRQ Center, implementation requires a strong commitment from school-based personnel. To implement the model with fidelity to its design, teachers must become familiar with the instructional processes and procedures and the materials, which require extensive time and effort from the school. Personnel at three schools who were contacted and have been using the model for a minimum of 5 years reported that student reading achievement has improved and implementation of the model was worth the effort.

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Met Standards (Suggestive)

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Ventures Initiative and Focus System—Elementary

Overview: Basic Model Information and Review Results

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Model Name: | Ventures Initiative and Focus System (VIFS) |
| Model Mission/Focus: | VIFS focuses on providing comprehensive professional development in order for teachers to help students develop higher-level thinking skills. It does not promote a specific curriculum but rather, helps teachers integrate strategies into the pre-existing curriculum. |
| Year Introduced in Schools: | 1981 |
| Grade Levels Served: | K–12 |




Number of Schools

| Total: | Urban: | Suburban: | Rural: |
|--------|--------|-----------|--------|
| 32 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Costs

| | Total Operating Costs | Training: | Materials: | Personnel: | Other: |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|--------|
| Year 1 | Varies | \$2,400.00/full-day workshop | \$250.00/person | N/A | N/A |
| Year 2 | Varies | Varies | Varies | N/A | N/A |
| Year 3 | Varies | Varies | Varies | N/A | N/A |
| Years 4+ | Varies | Varies | Varies | N/A | N/A |

1. Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement:



- a. Evidence of positive overall effects 
- b. Evidence of positive effects for diverse student populations 
- c. Evidence of positive effects in subject areas:
Reading and math 

2. Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

3. Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

4. Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

5. Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation:

- a. Evidence of readiness for successful implementation 
- b. Evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation 

 = Very Strong
  = Moderately Strong
  = Moderate
  = Limited
  = Zero
  = Negative
  = No Rating

This description is based on publicly available information, including the model's Web site, regarding the model and its costs in the 2004–2005 school year. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center attempted to obtain specific information, but this was not always possible. Areas in which exact information was not provided are marked by N/A.

Model Description

Ventures Initiative and Focus System (VIFS) is a model for grades K–12 that was first introduced to schools in 1981. In 1997, the Ventures Education Systems Corporation (VESC) was founded to assist with the broader distribution of the model. Under VESC, the model was refined and the number of schools implementing the model, both nationally and internationally, increased. VESC oversees all professional development, provides VESC Trainers, and guides the integration of VIFS instructional strategies into school curricula.

According to the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards, the following components of VIFS were identified as core: professional development, technical assistance, and instruction. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Model Mission/Focus

According to VESC, the model provides comprehensive professional development that helps teachers move away from traditional lecture-oriented classrooms that focus on passive listening and rote memorization. Through the VIFS model, teachers learn to help students gather information from multiple sources, understand general concepts and principles, and connect ideas across curricular areas. These instructional methods are designed to create classrooms in which students are active and independent learners who understand and master ways to process and synthesize information.

VESC specifically targets low-performing and under-achieving schools. The model provider claims to work with each school or district to customize the model for the particular needs of the school or district.

Goals/Rationale

VIFS has five goals:

1. Establish communication patterns for teachers and students that include active listening, collaborative work, and precise use of words through common terminology. Through these activities, teachers help students to understand and describe their thinking processes and those of other students.
2. Change the ways that teachers respond to students' answers. Teachers learn to ask students to describe the thinking processes they used to arrive at an answer. Thus, students learn to talk about their thinking and understand the steps necessary to completely understand a concept or principle.
3. Develop students' literacy skills in the early years through a focus on phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, reading comprehension, fluency, and language-based literacy. Literacy instruction for students in grades 4–12 emphasizes content area learning through thinking skills that help students to organize information. Through writing activities, teachers instruct students to express information and thoughts coherently.
4. Focus on integrating interdisciplinary projects into a school's or a district's existing curricula. Teachers identify the content to be covered and develop an initial problem statement and a series of activities, including collaborative and independent work, that guide students toward a solution.
5. Integrate the teaching methodologies of the VIFS model into curricula aligned with local, state, and national academic standards.

Costs

The model provider does not have a standard cost for implementation. Instead, the cost of the model is based

on the number of days of professional development provided for a group of 20–25 staff members. Professional development packages may include workshops, technical assistance, onsite visits, and materials. The average cost of a full-day, 6-hour workshop is \$2,400. A half-day, 3-hour workshop costs \$1,200. Most VESC workshops last for several days, and prices vary accordingly. Training materials are not required and are considered an enhancement to the workshops. If purchased separately, these materials cost approximately \$250 per person. Costs may vary because VESC customizes all activities and schedules to meet individual school requirements. The total costs for the model are the sum of the costs of the professional development packages.

For example, the model’s professional development package, “Data Analysis, Assessment, and Curriculum Development,” includes workshops, optional in-classroom coaching visits by a VESC trainer, and materials for participants. These services are provided over 5.5 days and cost \$14,750 for a group of 20–25 people. Also, “Instructional Strategies” includes workshops, in-classroom coaching, and materials for participants. These services are provided over 5.5 days and cost \$16,250.

Package costs range from \$13,000 for “Classroom Management” to \$21,500 for “Literature Study,” both of which last 4.5 days. For more information on the costs of training, materials, and personnel, sites should directly contact the model provider.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Student Achievement

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects

Rating: 

The CSRQ Center reviewed three quantitative studies for effects of VIFS on student achievement. Of the studies reviewed, one study met CSRQ Center standards

for rigor of research design. Based on its research design, the Center considers the findings of this study *suggestive*, which means that the Center has limited confidence in the study’s results. Therefore, the overall rating of the effects of this model on student achievement is limited. The study that met standards is described below. (Appendix V reports on the other two studies that were reviewed but did not meet standards.)

The study that met CSRQ Center standards used a longitudinal cohort design to follow students in one urban school in a large American city in the northeast across the early years of VIFS implementation. This study tracked trends on reading and math performance of third grade students for the first 3 years that VIFS was in place, and tracked trends on reading performance of fourth grade students for the first 2 years. (For both grades, the year prior to VIFS implementation served as a baseline.) The testing measures were standardized state and city-wide assessments. Although the author did not perform statistical tests of the findings, the trends over time show modest increases on reading and math scores.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations

Rating: 

The one study of VIFS that met CSRQ standards did not examine the impact of this model on the achievement of diverse student populations. Therefore, the rating in this category is no rating.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Reading

Rating: 

The one study of VIFS that met CSRQ standards examined the impact of this model on reading achievement, as measured by state and citywide assessments. The study reported that over a 3-year period, the proportion of third grade students achieving passing scores in reading increased by 5.7%; over a 2-year period, the

proportion of fourth grade students achieving passing scores in reading increased by 13.4%. However, no statistical significance is reported for these results. The rating in this subject is therefore limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: Math

Rating: 

The study that met CSRQ Center standards also examined math achievement. The proportion of third grade students obtaining passing scores in math increased over a 3-year period by 10.8%. Again, no statistical significance is reported for these results, so the rating in this subject area is limited.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes

Rating: 

The one study of VIFS that met CSRQ Center standards also reported the number of guidance referrals, the number of suspensions, and the percentage of school days attended over the 3 years of the study. The trend on student discipline indicators suggested a decrease, but the statistical significance of this trend was not tested. Because this indicator was reported only as raw counts of guidance referrals and suspensions per year, the CSRQ Center cannot interpret the effects over time with any confidence. Attendance indicators were reported as percentages, but no changes over time were apparent. Therefore, the rating in this category is zero.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

Rating: 

In the one VIFS study that met CSRQ standards, parent involvement was one of the schoolwide indicators

included. The number of parents attending parent association meetings appeared to increase by the 3rd year of implementation, but again, these trends were not tested for statistical significance and were reported only as raw counts. The rating in this category is therefore zero.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, its design was influenced by research in developmental psychology, cognitive science, and cognitive neuroscience, most notably by the research in *Teaching and the Human Brain* (Caine & Caine, 1991). This work provides an explicit link to one core component, instruction. The model also provides a list of researchers whose work has guided the development of the model: Anders, Bartlett, Burrell, Bos, Gardner, Paul, Swatz, Sylvester, and Vygotsky. However, the model did not provide explicit citations that link directly to two core components of the model: professional development and technical assistance. Therefore, based on the CSRQ Center's standards, the model rating for evidence of link between research and the model's design is limited.

Evidence of Services and Support to Schools to Enable Successful Implementation

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation

Rating: 

Based on documentation provided by the model, it includes a formal process to help school staff establish an initial commitment for implementation and strategies to develop faculty buy-in. The model also offers a formal process for allocating school resources such as

materials, staffing, and time. Additionally, the model provides formal benchmarks for implementation. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of readiness for successful implementation is very strong.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation

Rating: ●

The model provides ongoing training opportunities such as workshops, peer coaching, and sessions for new staff. Additionally, the model provides supporting materials for professional development that address all of its core components. The model also offers a comprehensive plan to help build school capacity to provide professional development. Therefore, according to the CSRQ Center’s standards, the model rating for evidence of professional development/technical assistance for successful implementation is very strong.

Central Components

Organization and Governance

Prior to implementation, VESC works with the administrators from interested schools to develop and customize an initial plan for reform. The plan is created through a series of workshops and meetings that focus on leadership, data analysis, planning, monitoring, and professional development.

The strategic planning process to create the reform plan begins with a half-day meeting of the VESC trainer, the principal, and the administrative team. Meeting participants finalize topics for a series of professional development packages, determine logistics, and review all staff development activities for the entire school.

During the planning process, the model provider and school administrators also agree on the areas that need reform. These areas may vary by school. For each area, VESC and school administrators develop a scope of services, which defines the services to be provided by VESC. For example, a school may contract for services in instructional staff development. Consequently, a scope of services is developed for each professional development topic. Examples of topics are: parental involvement, technology, classroom management, and instructional methodologies. The scope of services is customized for each year of implementation and is tailored to specific school personnel. For example, the language arts teachers may have a different scope of services than the mathematics teachers.

School administrators then participate in a series of half-day workshops covering planning and leadership activities. These workshops cover topics such as preparing for the opening of school, developing the school culture, involving parents and the community, developing instructional leadership and supervision capabilities, developing school policies and procedures, planning for further school development and professional development, designing a budget, and utilizing technology to support instruction.

Principals are expected to attend the Practicum for Principals and Instructional Supervisors (PPIS). The PPIS training is a full- or half-year professional development series that uses seminars, workshops, site visits, and training materials to prepare principals for the responsibility of creating a positive school culture, improving instructional leadership, and promoting school achievement.

Curriculum and Instruction

VIFS does not require a specific curriculum for subject areas, but focuses on providing teachers with instructional methods through staff development

workshops intended to enhance instruction in all subject areas. Through the use of recommended instructional strategies, VIFS provides a framework for learning to be more active, focused on understanding, and explicit about the thinking processes necessary for success.

The VIFS model of instruction focuses on implementing two core practices: constructive communication and student-centered thinking skills. To implement constructive communication, teachers learn to teach students how to work collaboratively, listen attentively, speak coherently, and appreciate different thoughts and opinions. The student-centered thinking skills approach provides specific instructional strategies that help teachers develop students' ability to identify, practice, and internalize a range of thinking skills. The instructional strategies cover skills such as analyzing the parts of a whole, generating ideas, evaluating a prediction, interpreting a metaphor, ordering by time, and uncovering assumptions.

These thinking skills are developed through a specific VIFS approach, problem-based learning (PBL). In order to implement PBL, teachers develop problem statements that include content that needs to be covered. Teachers help students gather the necessary resources to address the problem statement. Then they guide students through a step-by-step process of thinking that is needed to master the relevant content and integrate new information with existing knowledge.

PBL has two components: project learning and paired problem solving. For project learning, the teacher designs student project activities that systematically guide students through the PBL process. Paired problem solving is a technique that teachers apply to help students engage in active listening and collaborate on group projects. Teachers emphasize appropriate ways for students to express their thinking, listen attentively, and ask for clarification. Teachers integrate a range of thinking skills into lessons, such as determining cause

and effect, evaluating a conclusion based on reasons and assumptions, and making predictions.

The model provides a structured literacy instructional program that is not a specific curriculum, but rather, a comprehensive set of instructional strategies and approaches designed to integrate the development of structured thinking skills with reading and writing activities. The structured literacy instruction program has two stages: “Literacy Instruction I: For the Early Grades K–3” and “Literacy Instruction II: For the Later Grades 4–12.”

In the early grades, the literacy instruction emphasizes a balanced approach, which includes instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and language-based literacy instruction. In grades 4–12, students develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through exposure to a variety of literacy forms and styles. Students read and write essays, compositions, reports, journals, stories, and poems in all content areas.

Scheduling and Grouping

The model does not require specific scheduling or grouping strategies. The VIFS strategic planning process is designed to help schools to identify methods for scheduling and grouping that maximize instructional time and minimize disruptions. For example, specific information is provided on grouping strategies in the staff development material that addresses differentiated instruction.

Technology

VIFS advocates the integration of technology into all areas of instruction, but does not require the use of specific technology for instructional or noninstructional purposes. The model offers four workshops that are designed to help schools integrate the use of computer technology into the model's teaching methodologies.

The technology workshops are held in a computer laboratory and guide participants to integrate word processing and the Internet into classroom discussions. Lessons focus on synthesizing information, judging the reliability of information from the Internet, organizing content, and representing content in graphic formats. Additional instruction helps teachers learn to use multi-media and technology for lesson planning as well as standards alignment and self-evaluation.

Monitoring Student Progress and Performance

The model provider considers the use of assessment data to monitor student progress an integral component of its instructional model, VIFS. Through its professional development package, “Data Analysis, Assessment, and Curriculum Development,” VESC helps schools use student assessments to monitor performance. This package includes 5.5 days of workshops that help teachers analyze data to plan classroom instruction and align curricula. During these workshops, schools may choose to receive in-classroom coaching visits from VESC trainers.

In the area of curriculum development, teachers develop a survey on standards and strategies currently in use in classrooms throughout the school, respond to the survey, compile its results, compare survey results with identified weaknesses and strengths of students, and align the results to identify standards and strategies that need to be addressed.

This professional development package also focuses on the development of assessment tools that include a comprehensive plan and a timeline to phase in the plan. Teachers learn a common assessment vocabulary to use within the school community. Classroom-based assessment tools, rubrics, and student self-assessments are also used to guide instructional planning.

In this package, VESC includes a specialized workshop for teachers to learn the technique of conducting an

item analysis comparing students’ standardized test scores against national standards; this identifies individual student strengths and weaknesses. Through this analysis, teachers discuss and restructure, as necessary, existing practices, curricula, and student assignments in order to link instruction to assessment with the goal of raising student performance. The assessment system is tailored to meet the needs of individual schools by preparing students for standardized tests, while considering other factors such as student attendance, student assignments, independent study, and teacher-generated tests.

Family and Community Involvement

The model offers four day-long seminars that educate parents and the community on the model and its instructional strategies. The seminars include the identification of parent–child interactions that can develop a child’s academic abilities and teach ways to identify the child’s way of thinking.

The seminars also provide parents with practice activities to do at home. For example, parents learn to ask their child to describe an object, event, or person without naming it or showing it to the person. The parent tries to guess the object and guide their child to include descriptions of color, size, shape, texture, function, origin, and purpose of the object. Parents are encouraged to use phrases such as “order the steps in . . .,” or “examine the similarities and differences between these two objects.” In this way, children can learn to verbalize thinking processes and build vocabulary.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

VESC collaborates with each participating school to design a customized professional development and technical assistance plan for the implementation of the VIFS model. A full VESC professional development plan includes strategic planning meetings, staff development packages, parent/student seminars, and special

training sessions for school facilitators and district officials. Several professional development and technical assistance options are available:

- Onsite workshops for 20–25 staff members before, during, or after school
- Demonstrations of strategies and skills in classrooms
- Development and facilitation of a school leadership team
- Team teaching with a classroom teacher and professional development specialist
- Assistance in lesson planning
- Facilitation of meetings by grade level or content area
- Summer school instruction or direct student services after school

The company provides specific year-by-year training for teachers and model implementers. VESC trainers also can provide specialized professional development sessions as needed by local schools. Each professional development package has a defined cost—some of which were described in the Costs section.

The specialized VESC professional development packages include technical assistance, workshops, onsite visits, and materials on topics such as curriculum planning, instructional strategies, graphic organizers and assessment tools, literacy instruction, literature study, and balanced literacy for the elementary grades. Other specific programs include, Closing the Achievement Gap in Literacy in Elementary School, Closing the Achievement Gap in Elementary Mathematics, Comprehensive Academic Preparedness for Elementary Students, and Problem Based Learning. A Summer Mathematics Institute is also offered. Workshops, technical assistance, and onsite visits are conducted by VESC trainers who have expertise in an academic discipline and are trained by VESC.

Through professional development customized to meet an individual school's needs, the VIFS model also includes elements to address the needs of English language learners and students with special needs. The model can provide guidance on creating individual education plans, managing student behavior, providing appropriate interventions, using data to guide instruction, differentiating instruction, and developing challenging standards for all students.

VESC also offers PPIS, a full- or half-year specialized professional development course for instructional leaders. It provides instruction for leaders in a range of topics such as defining and developing a positive school culture; accessing and assessing data-driven instruction; and using attendance, budget, state, and district data for school management. For more specific information on this practicum and additional professional development opportunities, schools should contact VESC directly.

VESC recruits local educators from participating schools with 7–10 years of experience and expertise in different curriculum areas to become VESC trainers. These trainers participate in 5–10 days of annual professional development conducted by VESC staff and educational consultants. The VESC Trainers then provide professional development for participating schools in the area.

In order to build school capacity to provide in-house technical assistance, VESC offers the Turnkey Training program, a series of professional development workshops for school-based facilitators. The workshops train school facilitators and selected district personnel to ensure the continued implementation of the VIFS model. The role of these turnkey facilitators is to provide ongoing school-based staff development. The 10 half-day sessions cover the delivery and application of VIFS techniques and the planning of staff development. VESC provides the facilitators with the *Turnkey Facilitator Manual, Volumes 1 and 2*.

Implementation Expectations/Benchmarks

VESC provides schools with benchmarks to guide implementation. During each year of implementation, schools can follow the benchmarks that outline specific indicators and evidence. According to the model, the benchmarks address the 11 areas of a comprehensive school reform design. For example, the first area is “proven methods and strategies based on scientific research.” In year 1 of implementation, one indicator for this area is that “teachers regularly attend training.” Samples of evidence of this indicator are agendas and sign-in sheets.

The model also provides an “Administrator’s Self-Assessment Rubric for Building-Level Whole School Reform Implementation.” Administrators may use this rubric to conduct a self-evaluation of the level of implementation in the following areas:

- Workshop attendance, participation, and application
- Classroom implementation of the model’s strategies and techniques
- Student participation and demonstration of the strategies and techniques
- Creation of an academic environment that supports student-centered classrooms
- Performance of the whole school reform facilitator as turnkey leader
- Integration of assessment with student-centered instruction
- Establishment of in-class coaching
- Fostering of collegial relationships among staff and the school management team

For each area, VESC offers specific indicators listed for each stage of implementation. In this way, administrators can self-assess their work by stages: beginning, developing, proficient, or exemplary implementation.

Additionally, as part of the scope of services for school administration, the model helps school administrators monitor implementation. A senior VESC trainer conducts a walkthrough with administrators three times each year to monitor the instructional strategy implementation, to determine the progress made in improving instruction in mathematics and literacy, and to assess the school’s support for district curriculum initiatives. The trainer then provides a walkthrough assessment for review and discussion with the school’s administration.

VESC trainers also monitor implementation using the “Rubric for Level One Implementation.” Trainers apply this rubric to a school to determine its implementation progress. In this way, the trainers can identify impediments to effective implementation as well as factors that contribute to implementation success. National and regional VESC staff examine these results and suggest corrections or changes to enhance implementation and improve student performance.

The model also provides two informal tools for monitoring school progress in implementation: “Profile of a Fully-Implemented Whole School Reform Model” and “A VESC Elementary Environment for Learning.”

The “Profile of a Fully-Implemented Whole School Reform Model” provides a complete picture of the characteristics and elements of a fully implemented model:

- Improved student performance
- Research-based program
- School-based leadership and decision making
- Integration and alignment of school functions
- Educational technology
- Professional development
- Improved safety of school environment

- Student and family services
- Reward systems and accountability

The second informal tool, “A VESC Elementary Environment for Learning,” describes the specific characteristics of the environment, teachers, and students in a VESC elementary classroom. It includes a “VIFS Strategies in the School” checklist that can be used by school personnel to indicate levels of implementation and areas for improvement.

An external evaluator conducts an annual formative evaluation for schools that are implementing the model. This evaluation can be used with participating schools to assess progress, identify areas of weakness, and to plan for implementation changes to address these areas.

Special Considerations

Schools that have an established curriculum and have no interest in changing it may be interested in VIFS, as it does not offer or require specific curricula. Rather, VIFS offers professional development designed to help teachers implement a set of instructional strategies. These strategies may be new to many teachers and may require a major shift in instructional methodology. One principal contacted by the CSRQ Center commented that teachers need to buy in to the model and its instructional strategies in order to feel a sense of ownership and fully participate in the required instructional changes.

VESC allows schools to create a flexible model that specifically meets the school’s needs and aligns with its district and state goals. With this customized approach in mind, one principal emphasized the importance of establishing a good working relationship with the VESC trainers as well as with staff at the company’s

headquarters. A positive relationship facilitates smooth interactions between VESC staff and school personnel and provides support for organizing finances.

Reference

Caine, R. N., & Caine, G. (1991). *Making connections: Teaching and the human brain*. Lebanon, IN: Dale Seymour Publications.

Model Study Reviewed

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Opperman, P. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform program: Ventures Education Systems Corporation at CES 70: Three year evaluation, 2000–2003*. New York: Author.

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Appendix A: Accelerated Schools PLUS—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Four of the 36 studies of Accelerated Schools: Powerful Learning Unlimited Success (AS PLUS) that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design were eligible for full review but were considered to be *inconclusive* because of a lack of critical information about implementation, analyses, and results.

The remaining 32 studies were not eligible for full review for the following reasons. Seventeen studies were survey or descriptive studies that did not focus and/or report on the impact of AS PLUS on student achievement. Eight studies that set out to test the impact of AS PLUS on student achievement were not sufficiently rigorous: four observed only posttest performance of AS PLUS students, three examined differences in achievement of AS PLUS students from pretest to posttest with no comparison group, and one did not use a true pretest. In five studies, AS PLUS or techniques related to it were only one component of the treatment under examination; these studies did not isolate the effects of AS PLUS. Finally, two studies reported on versions of findings that were already reported in other studies reviewed for this analysis.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. A. (2003). *Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A resource guide to research-based programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Biddle, J. K. (2000). *The world of wonder accelerated learning community: A case study*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Camburn, E., Rowan, B., & Taylor, J. E. (2003). Distributed leadership in schools: The case of elementary schools adopting comprehensive school reform models. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(4), 347–373.

Davidson, B. (1994). *School restructuring: A study of curriculum and instruction in selected accelerated schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of

- the Southwest Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX.
- Davidson, B., & Dell, G. L. (2000). *Discovering the meaning of unity of purpose: A case study of fourteen Accelerated Schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Dallas, TX.
- Davidson, B., & Dell, G. L. (2004). *Transformation of teaching and learning through inquiry*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Davidson, B. M., & Dell, G. M. (2003). *A school restructuring model: A tool kit for building teacher leadership*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Davidson, B. M., Dell, G. L., & Walker, H. (2000). *The use of the inquiry process to redesign and implement innovative teaching practices*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED452190)
- Davidson, B., & Taylor, D. L. (1999). *Examining principal succession and teacher leadership in school restructuring*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Desimone, L. (2000). *The role of teachers in urban school reform* (ERIC/CUE Digest No. 154). New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED442912)
- Erland, J. (1999). *Brain-based accelerated learning and cognitive skills training using interactive media expedites high academic achievement*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED437650)
- Finnan, C. (1994). Studying an Accelerated School: Schoolwide cultural therapy. In G. Spindler & L. Spindler (Eds.), *Pathways to cultural awareness: Cultural therapy with teachers and students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Finnan, C. (2000). *Implementing school reform models: Why is it so hard for some schools and easy for others?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Jacobus, K. (1997). A study of the change process utilized by Colorado high school principals: The concordance of practice and theory. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Jervis, K. (1996). *Eyes on the child: Three portfolio stories*. New York: National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching, Columbia University.
- Kallianis, E. (2001). *A follow-up study of trained adolescent students in the workforce who graduated from Robert E. Abbott Accelerated Middle School, Waukegan, Illinois*. Unpublished master's thesis, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.
- Lockwood, A. T. (2004). *A synthesis of four reforms*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Lumsden, L. (1993). Taking stock of school restructuring. *Research Roundup*, 9(3).
- Lunenburg, F. C., & Irby, B. J. (2002). *Parent involvement: A key to student achievement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, Burlington, VT.
- Mathews, M., & Karr-Kidwell, P. J. (1999). *The new technology and educational reform: Guidelines for*

- school administrators*. Texas Woman's University, Denton.
- Mims, J. S. (2000). *Expanding the accelerated schools coaching model: New applications to enhance parallel reform movements*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Patterson, D. (2004). The charter school option. *Leadership*, 32(1), 26–28, 38.
- Peters, S. J. (1996). *Inclusive education in Accelerated Schools: The case of Vista Middle*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Peters, W. H. (1994). The empowering process of Accelerated Schools: An essential link in school reform. *The English Journal*, 83(7), 62–65.
- Picus, L. O. (2004). *How schools allocate and use their resources* (ERIC Digest No. 143). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED452578)
- Poetter, T. S. (1999). *Mapping school change in an accelerated school: The case study of Miami East North Elementary School*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State Department of Education.
- Rowan, B., Camburn, E., & Correnti, R. (2004). Using teacher logs to measure the enacted curriculum: A study of literacy teaching in third grade classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal*, 105(1).
- Schauble, L., & Glaser, R. (1996). *Innovations in learning: New environments for education*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Sand, bricks, and seeds: School change, strategies, and readiness for reform*. Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Slavin, R. E. (2001). Expecting excellence. *American School Board Journal*, 188, 22–25.
- St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. (2001). *Improving early reading: A resource guide for elementary schools*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.
- St. John, E. P., Loescher, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards)*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473721)
- Steaffens, S., McCarthy, J., Putney, L., & Steinhoff, C. (2002). *The organizational culture and structure of accelerated schools*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED471363)
- Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
- Viadero, D. (2001, January 9). Study shows test gain in accelerated schools. *Education Week*, 21.

Not Eligible for Full Review

- Barnes, C. L. (2004). *School leadership and instructional improvement in CSR schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Barnett, W. S. (1996). Economics of school reform: Three promising models. In H. Ladd (Ed.), *Holding schools accountable*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Bensman, D. (1994). *Lives of the graduates of Central Park East Elementary School: Where have they*

- gone? *What did they really learn?* New York: National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching, Columbia University.
- Benson, J. T. (2000). *The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program in Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction second year evaluation*. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
- Biddle, J. K. (2004). *Accelerated schools as professional learning communities*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Bloom, H. (2003). Using “short” interrupted time-series analysis to measure the impacts of whole-school reforms: With applications to a study of accelerated schools. *Evaluation Review*, 27(1), 3–49.
- Bloom, H. S. (2001). *Measuring the impacts of whole-school reforms: Methodological lessons from an evaluation of accelerated schools*. New York: MDRC.
- Chasin, G., & Levin, H. M. (1995). Thomas Edison Elementary School. In J. Oakes & K. H. Quartz (Eds.), *Creating new educational communities, schools, and classrooms where all children can be smart*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Davidson, B. M., Dell, G. L., & Walker, H. (2004). *Teacher leadership + learner-rich environment = project math*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in elementary and middle schools*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 370–379.
- Finnan, C., Schnepel, K. C., & Anderson, L. (2003). Powerful learning environments: The critical link between school and classroom cultures. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 8(4), 391–418.
- Ignatz, M. (2000). *The effectiveness of the read, write & type! program in increasing the phonological awareness of first grade students*. Tallahassee: The Accelerated Schools Regional Center, Technical Assistance Site, Florida A& M University.
- Koh, M. (2002). *A study of the relationship between school reform models and special education in Title I elementary schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Memphis, Tennessee.
- Koh, M., & Robinson, J. S. (2003). School reform models and special education. *Education and Urban Society*, 35(4), 421–442.
- McCarthy, J., & Still, S. (1993). Hollibrook Accelerated Elementary. In J. Murphy & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Restructuring schooling: Learning from ongoing efforts* (pp. 63–83). Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press.
- McCarthy, J., & Wallace, M. (1999). *Significant results in an accelerated school: One school's story*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- McCullum, H. (2004). *Lessons for school-based reform*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.
- Medina, A. E. (2005). Performance of at-risk students in Accelerated Learning Schools vs.

- non-Accelerated Schools. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 66 (10A), 3527. (UMI No. 3189808)
- Miron, L. F., St. John, E. P., & Davidson, B. (1998). Implementing school restructuring in the inner city. *The Urban Review*, 30(2), 137–166.
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- Peters, W. H., & McBride, R. E. (1997). *A descriptive assessment of accelerated schools instruction in the state of Texas*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Plucker, J. A., Simmons, A. B., Lim, W., Patterson, A. P., Wooden, O., Jones, M. H., et al. (2004). *Comprehensive school reform: Effect on teachers and teaching in three states*. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates.
- Ross, S. M., Wang, L., Sanders, W., Wright, S., & Stringfield, S. (2000). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Ross, S., Sanders, W. L., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Teacher mobility and effectiveness in restructuring and non-restructuring schools in an inner-city district*. Cary, NC: SAS Institute.
- Ross, S., Tabachinick, S., & Sterbinsky, A. (2002). *Using comprehensive school reform models to raise student achievement: Factors associated with success in Memphis schools*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Slack, J. B., & St. John, E. P. (1999). *A practical model for measuring the effect of school reform on the reading achievement of non-transient learners*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Slack, J. B., & St. John, E. P. (2004). *A model for measuring math achievement test performance: A longitudinal analysis of non-transient learners engaged in a restructuring effort*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- St. John, E. P. (1992). *The Louisiana Accelerated Schools Project first year evaluation report*. New Orleans: Louisiana Accelerated Schools Center, University of New Orleans.
- St. John, E. P., Manset, G., Chung, C., & Worthington, K. (2001). *Assessing the rationales for educational reforms: A test of the professional development, comprehensive reform, and direct instruction hypotheses* (Policy research report). Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.
- Wiley, J. H. (1999). *A study of teacher empowerment and organizational commitment in Texas accelerated schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Austin.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

- Ignatz, M., Bauman, G., & Byrd, N. (2003). *A longitudinal study of the accelerated schools project in northwest Florida, 1993–2001: A school-college*

partnership between schools in Gadsden and Leon School Districts and Florida A&M University.
Tallahassee: Florida A&M University.

Knight, S. L., & Stallings, J. A. (1993). The implementation of the accelerated schools model in an urban elementary school. In R. Allington & S. Walmsley (Eds.), *No quick fix: Rethinking literacy programs in American elementary schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ross, S. M., Alberg, M., & McNelis, M. (1997). *Evaluation of elementary school school-wide programs: Clover Park School District, year 1: 1996–97—Final Report to Clover Park School District (Tacoma, WA)*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Alberg, M., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (2001). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Bloom, H., Rock, J., Ham, S., Melton, L., & O'Brien, J. (2004). *Evaluating the accelerated schools approach*. New York: MDRC.

Ross, S. M., Alberg, M., McNelis, M., & Smith, L. J. (1998). *Evaluation of elementary school-wide programs: Clover Park School District, year 2: 1997–98*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Two- and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Appendix B: America’s Choice School Design— Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

There were 10 studies of America’s Choice School Design (America’s Choice) that did not meet CSRQ Center standards. All 10 studies were ineligible for full CSRQ Center review for the following reasons. Five studies were not investigations of America’s Choice impact on student achievement, but rather, were descriptive reviews (two studies), used survey methods to examine implementation (two studies), and did not include student achievement outcomes (one study). Two studies that did examine the impact of America’s Choice were not eligible for full review because they used pretest–posttest designs without comparison groups. Finally, three studies were not eligible for full review because effects of America’s Choice were combined with effects of multiple comprehensive school reform models and could not be disaggregated.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

- Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. A. (2003). *Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A resource guide to research-based programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

- Camburn, E., Rowan, B., & Taylor, J. E. (2003). Distributed leadership in schools: The case of elementary schools adopting comprehensive school reform models. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 25*(4), 347–373.
- The Consortium for Policy Research in Education, National Center on Education and the Economy. (2002). *America’s choice school design: A research-based model* (2003). Washington, DC: Author.
- Jossey-Bass Publishers. (2001). *The Jossey-Bass reader on school reform*. San Francisco: Author.
- Kansas Association of School Boards. (1992). *Kansas school reform: A quest for quality. A guide for board members*. Topeka, KS: Author.
- Legters, N., Balfanz, R., & McPartland, J. (2002). *Solutions for failing high schools: Converging*

visions and promising models. Washington, DC: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education.

McChesney, J. (1998). *Whole-school reform* (ERIC Digest No 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)

National Center for Education and the Economy. (2004). *Results! From schools, districts and states using the America's Choice design.* Washington, DC: Author.

New American Schools. (1999). *Working toward excellence: Examining the effectiveness of New American Schools designs.* Arlington, VA: Author.

Poglinco, S. M., Bach, A., Hovde, K., Rosenblum, S., Saunders, M., & Supovitz, J. (2003). *The heart of the matter: The coaching model in America's choice schools.* Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Ray, C. A., & Mickelson, R. A. (1993). Restructuring students for restructured work: The economy, school reform, and non-college-bound youths. *Sociology of Education*, 66(1), 1–20.

Renaissance Group. (1993). *Educating the new American student.* Cedar Falls, IA: Author.

Rowan, B., Camburn, E., & Correnti, R. (2004). Using teacher logs to measure the enacted curriculum: A study of literacy teaching in third grade classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal*, 105(1).

St. John, E. P., Loescher, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards).* Naperville, IL: North Central Regional

Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473721)

Supovitz, J., & Poglinco, S. M. (2001). *Instructional leadership in a standards-based reform.* Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform.* Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Bach, A., & Supovitz, J. (2003). *Teacher and coach implementation of writers workshop in America's Choice schools, 2001 and 2002.* Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Barnes, C. L. (2004). *School leadership and instructional improvement in CSR schools.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Berends, M. (1999). *Assessing the progress of New American Schools: A status report.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Berends, M., Bodilly, S. J., & Kirby, S. N. (2002). *Facing the challenges of whole-school reform: New American Schools after a decade.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Dere, M. (2004). "Success for All" and "America's Choice": A comparative evaluation of two alternative instructional programs for elementary school students. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Union Institute and University Graduate School, Cincinnati, OH.

Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28*

leading school reform models. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>

Supovitz, J., & Klein, V. (2003). *Mapping a course for improved student learning: How innovative schools systematically use student performance data to guide improvement*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Supovitz, J., & May, H. (2003). *The relationship between teacher implementation of America's Choice and student learning in Plainfield, New Jersey*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Supovitz, J., & May, H. (2004). A study of the links between implementation and effectiveness of the America's Choice comprehensive school reform design. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 9(4), 389–419.

Supovitz, J., Poglinco, S. M., & Bach, A. (2004). *Implementation of the America's Choice literacy workshops*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

RAND Corporation. (2000). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up*. Santa Monica, CA: Author.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

May, H., Supovitz, J., & Lesnick, J. (2004). *The impact of America's Choice on writing performance in Georgia: First-year results*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

May, H., Supovitz, J., & Perda, D. (2004). *A longitudinal study of the impact of America's Choice on student performance in Rochester, New York, 1998–2003*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Supovitz, J., Poglinco, S. M., & Snyder, B. A. (2001). *Moving mountains: Successes and challenges of the America's Choice comprehensive school reform design*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Supovitz, J., Taylor, B., & May, H. (2002). *The impact of America's Choice on student performance in Duval County, Florida*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Appendix C: ATLAS Learning Communities— Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Four studies of ATLAS (Authentic Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for All Students) Learning Communities did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. One of the four studies was eligible for full review because it used a quasi-experimental design. However, the findings of this study were considered to be *inconclusive* because the study did not control for preexisting differences between the intervention and comparison groups.

The remaining three studies did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards for rigor of research design. One study was a review article comprised of several research studies. The article did not present original research. Two studies examined the implementation of ATLAS Learning Communities but did not examine student achievement.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Aladjem, D. K., & Borman, K. M. (2006, April).

Summary of findings from the National Longitudinal Evaluation of Comprehensive School Reform. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in elementary and middle schools.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Hatch, T. (1998). The differences in theory that matter in the practice of school improvement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 35, 3–31.

Herman, R., Aladjem, D., McMahon, P., Masem, E., Mulligan, I., O’Malley, A. S., et al. (1999). *An educators’ guide to schoolwide reform.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.

Ross, S. M., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., Stringfield, S., Wang, L. W., & Alberg, M. (2001). *Two- and three-year achievement results from the Memphis Restructuring Initiative.* Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Slavin, R. E. (2005). *Show me the evidence: Effective programs for elementary and secondary schools.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

Sterbinsky, A., & Ross, S. (2003). *Summary of CSRTQ reliability studies*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

St. John, E. P., Loescher, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards)*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Manset, G., St. John, E. P., Musoba, G. D., Gordon, D., Klingerman, K., Chung, C. G., et al. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform in Michigan. Implementation study for 1999-2000*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center.

New American Schools. (1997). *Working towards excellence: Results from schools implementing New American Schools designs*. Arlington, VA: Author.

Squires, D. A., & Kranyik, R. D. (1999). Connecting school-based management and instructional improvement: A case study of two ATLAS schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 4, 241–258.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

Frenkel, S., Friedlaender, D., Pearlman, J., & Adefuin, J. (2004). *Evaluation of the ATLAS Communities comprehensive school reform model*. Oakland, CA: Social Policy Research Associates.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Two- and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Appendix D: Breakthrough to Literacy—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

The 10 studies of Breakthrough to Literacy that were reviewed did not meet CSRQ Center standards. Of those, six studies were eligible for full review. All six studies used matched comparison research designs, but they did not meet CSRQ Center standards because they did not control for preexisting differences between students that received Breakthrough to Literacy and those that did not. In two of these studies, there were additional results that followed the Breakthrough to Literacy schools over time, but these also did not meet standards because of insufficient or questionable model implementation at those sites and, in some cases, lack of reliable testing instruments.

The four studies that were eligible for full review did not use rigorous research designs or were not evaluations of the impact of Breakthrough to Literacy on student achievement. One study examined pretest–posttest changes without a comparison group, another used a comparison group but did not have a pretest. A third study was a summary of studies that were not eligible for review, and the fourth tested the impact of a non-core component of Breakthrough to Literacy rather than the comprehensive model.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Lowe, K., Nelson, A. L., O'Donnell, K., & Walker, M. C. (2001). *Improving reading skills*. Unpublished master's thesis, Saint Xavier University.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

The McGraw-Hill Companies. (2000). *Breakthrough to Literacy, volume 2*. New York: Author.

The McGraw-Hill Companies. (2002). *Two urban school districts document student gains in reading achievement: Principals, teachers credit success to Breakthrough to Literacy program*. New York: Author. Retrieved October 27, 2004, from <http://www.mcgraw-hill.com/media/news/2002/05/20020531/html>

The McGraw-Hill Companies. (2003). *Breakthrough to Literacy, volume 1*. New York: Author.

Schacter, J. (1999). *Reading programs that work: A review of programs for pre-kindergarten to 4th grade*. Santa Monica, CA: Milken Family Foundation. Retrieved November 1, 2004, from <http://www.mff.org/pubs/ME279.pdf>

Not Eligible for Full Review

Delacruz, S. J. (2003). *Impact of a first year, first grade Balanced Literacy approach on reading and language achievement*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University, Chicago.

The McGraw-Hill Companies. (2002). *The new three Rs: Research, reading and results*. New York: Author.

Nolan, L. (2001). *An analysis of the long term impact of the first grade Breakthrough to Literacy program on the academic performance of students from the School City of East Chicago, Indiana, as indicated by the success on the third grade Indiana statewide testing for educational progress (ISTEP+)*. East Chicago, IN: School City of East Chicago.

Research Evaluation and Planning Services, Grand Rapids Public Schools. (1998). *Breakthrough to Literacy program evaluation 1997–98*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.

Did not meet standards (Inconclusive)

Grimes School. (1998). *Computer assisted reading for children at-risk*. Burlington, IA: Burlington School District.

Jones, K., & Weinhold, C. (2000). *An action research project*. Wisconsin Rapids, WI: Wisconsin Rapids School District.

Nolan, L. (1999). *An analysis of the Breakthrough to Literacy implementation, 1997–1999 school year*. East Chicago, IN: School City of East Chicago.

Nolan, L. (2000). *Analysis of the impact of the Breakthrough to Literacy program on first grade classrooms for the 1999–2000 school year*. East Chicago, IN: School City of East Chicago.

Shapley, K. S. (1997). *Special report of the 1996–97 Waterford Early Reading Program*. Dallas, TX: Dallas Public Schools.

Urabazzo, T. (1998). *Final report of the 1997–98 Breakthrough to Literacy computer instructional program*. Dallas, TX: Dallas Public Schools.

Appendix E: Coalition of Essential Schools— Elementary

The following is a description of 14 studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

One of the studies of Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards used a matched comparison group design to test the effects of CES on student achievement in reading, math, and writing after 4 years of model implementation. Although the research design was eligible for full review, this otherwise sufficiently rigorous study did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards because the fidelity of model implementation during this period was insufficient at the sites in the study. Therefore, the CSRQ Center could not evaluate the results of the study with any confidence.

The remaining 13 studies were not eligible for full review because they did not use rigorous research designs that tested the impact of CES on student achievement. Three studies examined pretest–posttest changes without a comparison group. One study used a posttest-only design. The remaining literature comprised descriptive, correlational, and survey-based studies of teachers and students.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Bailey, T., & Merritt, D. (1997). Industry skill standards and education reform. *American Journal of Education*, 105, 401–436.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform*

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

and student achievement: A meta-analysis (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Cohen, D. K. (1995). What is the system in systemic reform? *Educational Researcher*, 24(9), 11–17.

Corbett, D., & Wilson, B. (1995). Make a difference with, not for, students: A plea to researchers and reformers. *Educational Researcher*, 24(5), 12–17.

Datnow, A. (2000). Power and politics in the adoption of school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22(4), 357–374.

Hatch, T. (1998). The differences in theory that matter in the practice of school improvement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 35(1), 3–31.

- Kruse, S., Marks, H. M., & Louis, K. S. (1996). Teachers' professional community in restructuring schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33(4), 757–798.
- Lee, V. A., & Smith, J. B. (1995). Effects of high school restructuring and size on early gains in achievement and engagement. *Sociology of Education*, 68(4), 241–270.
- Legters, N., Balfanz, R., & McPartland, J. (2002). *Solutions for failing high schools: Converging visions and promising models*. Washington, DC: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education.
- Little, J. W. (1993). Teachers' professional development in a climate of educational reform. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15(2), 129–151.
- Lockman-Pruitt, C. O. (1996). *The success of school reform in suburban high schools: A comparative study of twelfth grade students in coalition of essential schools and twelfth grade students in non-coalition of essential schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Saint Louis University.
- Lockwood, A. T. (2004). *A synthesis of four reforms*. Naperville IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
- McChesney, J. (1998). *Whole-school reform* (ERIC Digest No. 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)
- McKersie, W. S. (1993). Philanthropy's paradox: Chicago school reform. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15, 109–128.
- Miles, K. H., & Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). *Rethinking the allocation of teaching resources: Some lessons from high-performing schools*. Philadelphia: Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.
- Muncey, D. A., & McQuillan, P. (1993). Education reform as revitalization movement. *American Journal of Education*, 101, 393–431.
- Muncey, D. A., & McQuillan, P. (1996). *Reform and resistance in schools and classrooms: An ethnographic view of the Coalition of Essential Schools*. New Haven, CT, Yale University Press.
- Newmann, F. M. (1993). Beyond common sense in educational restructuring: The issues of content and linkage. *Educational Researcher*, 22, 4–13.
- Ogawa, R. T. (2004). The institutional sources of educational reform: The case of school-based management. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(3), 519–548.
- Pogrow, S. (1998). What is an exemplary program, and why should anyone care? A reaction to Slavin & Klein. *Educational Researcher*, 27(7), 22–29.
- Raywid, M. A., & Henderson, H. (1994). "Small" revolution in New York City. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 63(1), 28–45.
- Riedel, J. A. (2002). *Academic engagement in two RE: Learning high schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Delaware.

Not Eligible for Full Review

- Benson, J. T. (2000). *The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program in Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction second year evaluation*. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
- Bowen, C., & Prestine, N. A. (1993). Benchmarks of change: Assessing essential school restructuring

- efforts. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15, 298–319.
- Cushman, K. (1991). Taking stock: How are essential schools doing? *Horace*, 8(1), 1–11. Retrieved October 10, 2005, from http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/70
- Fleming, S. (1996). *Leadership for teacher empowerment: The relationship between the communications*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New Orleans.
- Larson, C. H. (1998). *A study of the effectiveness of various school improvement initiatives by member schools of the Coalition of Essential Schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, St. Louis University.
- MacMullen, M. M. (1996). *Taking stock of a school reform effort: A research collection and analysis*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University.
- Mounts, D. A. C. (2004). A comparison of student achievement between Coalition of Essential School participants and non-participants. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (11A), 4093. (UMI No. 3154275)
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- Schreiber, T. C. (1998). *Teacher perceived associations between computer technology and restructuring reforms*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California.
- Stringfield, S. (1997). Research on effective instruction for at-risk students: Implications for the St. Louis Public Schools. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 66, 258–288.
- Tivnan, T., & Hemphill, L. (2005). Comparing four literacy reform models in high-poverty schools: Patterns of first-grade achievement. *Elementary School Journal*, 105(5), 419.
- Urban, V. D. (1997). *Teacher involvement in school reform*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida Atlantic University.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

- Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(2), 143–170.

Appendix F: Community for Learning—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Of the six studies of Community for Learning reviewed, none were eligible for full review. Two of the studies examined schools using Community for Learning at one point in time, without comparison groups. One study that was conducted over time and did have a comparison group did not meet the screening criteria for either a longitudinal or a quasi-experimental design because it did not have baseline measures. Three of the studies were primarily qualitative in nature and did not examine the model's impact on student achievement.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Not Eligible for Full Review

McCombs, B. L. (2003). *Lessons learned from successful Community for Learning (CFL) Program implementation: The importance of leadership*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Temple University.

McCombs, B. L., & Quiat, M. (2000). *Results of pilot study to evaluate the Community for Learning*

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

program. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Temple University.

Patricca, C. H. (2004). *The relationships among factors of school community and the academic performance of students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh.

Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>

Wang, M. C., & Manning, J. (2000). *Turning around low-performing schools: The case of the Washington, D.C. schools*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Temple University.

Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997).
*What do we know: Widely implemented school
improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for
Research in Human Development and Education,
Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.

Appendix G: Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

The one quantitative study of Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning available for review was a report written by the model’s developer. The report is a compilation of selected results from un-referenced studies that did not have enough methodological information to permit independent evaluation.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Swartz, S. L. (2003). *The foundation for comprehensive early literacy learning research report 1994–2003*. San Bernardino: California State University.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Appendix H: Core Knowledge—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

There were 19 studies of Core Knowledge that did not meet CSRQ Center standards. Two of those were eligible for full CSRQ Center review, but did not meet CSRQ Center standards for rigor of research design. One quasi-experimental, matched comparison study was considered *inconclusive* because it did not control for preexisting differences between students that attended Core Knowledge schools and those that did not. Another longitudinal, matched comparison study was considered inconclusive because the comparison school dropped out of the study, the implementation of the model at the Core Knowledge school was uncertain, and only descriptive analyses were available in the study.

The remaining 17 studies were ineligible for full review. Of those, 10 studies intended to test the impact of Core Knowledge, but the research designs were not eligible for full review for the following reasons: In four studies the reported results combined more than one comprehensive school reform model, making it impossible to attribute any of the results solely to Core Knowledge; in two studies the comparison group used another comprehensive school reform model under our review (and thus were not eligible for further review); in three studies, there were no baseline measures on which to establish equivalence between the groups; and finally, in one study there was no control group to compare Core Knowledge students. One study was not eligible for further review because a more recent version of the study was available. The remaining six studies were not evaluations of the impact of Core Knowledge and did not use original data, but rather were qualitative studies that used survey methods or were descriptive in nature.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

- American Federation of Teachers. (1998). *Building on the best, learning from What Works: Six promising schoolwide reform programs*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1997). Cumulative effects of early Core Knowledge and

decoding skills on later school achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 33(6), 934–945.

- Datnow, A. (2000). Power and politics in the adoption of school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22(4), 357–374.
- Davis, M. (2004). New longitudinal study shows Core Knowledge boosting scores, closing achievement gap. *The Newsletter of the Core Knowledge Foundation*, 17.
- Hall, J. A. (1999). *The impact of the Core Knowledge curriculum on the achievement of seventh and eighth grade students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens.
- Marshall, M. (1999). Three-year national study confirms effectiveness of Core Knowledge sequence. *Common Knowledge*, 12.
- Mathews, M., & Karr-Kidwell, P. J. (1999). *The new technology and educational reform: Guidelines for school administrators*. Texas Woman's University, Denton.
- Rossi, R. J., & Stringfield, S. C. (1995). *Education reform and students at risk, volume I: Findings and recommendations. Studies of education reform*. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research; and Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED397541)
- Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
- Walberg, H. J., & Meyer, J. (2004). *The effects of Core Knowledge school factors on state test achievement in North Carolina*. Charlottesville, VA: The Core Knowledge Foundation.
- N**ot Eligible for Full Review
- Berkeley, M. (2002). The importance and difficulty of disciplined adherence to the education reform model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 7(2), 221–239.
- Brading, A. R. (2006). Impact of Core Knowledge curriculum on reading achievement. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (12A), 4407. (UMI No. 3157469)
- Borman, G. (2000). *Four models of school improvement: Successes and challenges in reforming low-performing, high-poverty Title I Schools* (Report No. 48). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Carruthers, S. (1998). *The reasons parents of students with and without disabilities choose Colorado charter schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Northern Colorado.
- The Core Knowledge Foundation. (1998). *Results at Core Knowledge schools: Improving performance and narrowing the equity gap*. Charlottesville, VA: Author.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 370–379.
- Holdzkom, D. (2002). *Effects of comprehensive school reform in twelve schools: Implications of a three-year study*. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.
- MacIver, D. (2004). Systemic supports for comprehensive school reform: The institutionalization of Direct Instruction in an urban school system. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 9, 303–321.

- McHugh, B., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Core Knowledge curriculum: Three-year analysis of implementation and effects in five schools*. Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- Schubnell, G. (1996). Hawthorne Elementary School: The evaluator's perspective. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 1(1) 33–40.
- Smith, F. D. (2003). *The impact of Core Knowledge curriculum, a comprehensive school reform model, on achievement*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia.
- Sterbinsky, A., & Ross, S. M. (2004). *The effects of implementing comprehensive school reform models in 12 elementary schools: Year 3 study results*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S., & Reid, E. R. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform: A multi-site replicated experiment*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Walberg, H. J., & Meyer, J. (2004). *The effects of Core Knowledge on state test achievement in North Carolina*. Charlottesville, VA: The Core Knowledge Foundation.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.
- Wedman, J., & Waigandt, A. (2004). *Core Knowledge curriculum and school performance: A national study*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation.
- D**id Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)
- MacIver, M. A., Stringfield, S., & McHugh, B. (2000). *Core Knowledge curriculum: Five year analysis of implementation and effects in five Maryland schools*. Baltimore: Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University.
- Thomas, R., Woods, P., Hillman, S., & Ross, S. M. (2003). *The Detroit Public Schools Michigan Department of Education CSRD grant funded Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Models, 1998–1999. A joint collaborative preliminary evaluation*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- M**et Standards (Conclusive)
- Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(2), 143–170.
- Stringfield, S., Datnow, A., Borman, G., & Rachuba, L. T. (2000). *National evaluation of Core Knowledge Sequence implementation: Final report*. Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Taylor, G. L. (2000). *Core Knowledge: Its impact on the curricular and instructional practices of teachers and on student learning in an urban school district*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Nova Southeastern University.

Appendix I: Different Ways of Knowing—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Of the seven quantitative studies of Different Ways of Knowing that did not meet the CSRQ Center standards, only one was eligible for full review, and the others were not. The study that was eligible used a quasi-experimental, matched comparison research design, but was found to be inconclusive because there was no control for preexisting differences between students who received Different Ways of Knowing and those who did not. The remaining six studies were not eligible for full review for the following reasons: one study intended to test the impact of Different Ways of Knowing by using a comparison group but had no baseline measure. Two studies could not be fully reviewed because Different Ways of Knowing was analyzed with several other comprehensive school reform models, so results could not be isolated for Different Ways of Knowing. Finally, three studies were not impact evaluations of Different Ways of Knowing using original data, but rather used survey methods or were descriptive.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

American Institute for Research, & Herman, R. *Evidence of effectiveness: Different Ways of Knowing*. Santa Monica, CA: The Galef Institute.

Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. A. (2003). *Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A*

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

resource guide to research-based programs.
Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Catterall, J. S., Dreyfus, J. P., & DeJarnette, K. G. (1995). *How can "different ways of knowing" impact a learning community? Summary of the Rosemead School District 1994–95 evaluation report*. Santa Monica, CA: The Galef Institute.

Koki, S. (1999). *Promising programs for schoolwide reform*. Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.

Not Eligible for Full Review

- Holdzkom, D. (2002). *Effects of comprehensive school reform in twelve schools: Implications of a three-year study*. Charleston, WV: AEL.
- Muehlbauer, M. A. (2000). *The effects of an arts-infused, multiple intelligences program on mathematical achievement*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University.
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- Sterbinsky, A., & Ross, S. M. (2004). *The effects of implementing comprehensive school reform models in 12 elementary schools: Year 3 study results*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S., & Reid, E. R. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform: A multi-site replicated experiment*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

- Thomas, R., Woods, P., Hillman, S., & Ross, S. M. (2003). *The Detroit Public Schools Michigan Department of Education CSRD grant funded Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Models, 1998–1999. A joint collaborative preliminary evaluation*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

- Petrosko, J. M. (1997). *Different Ways of Knowing study A: Implementation of student-centered teaching and learning practices and student assessment results for research demonstration site (RDS) schools participating in Different Ways of Knowing*. Louisville, KY: The Galef Institute-Kentucky Collaborative for Teaching and Learning.

Appendix J: Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model)—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Fifty-four studies of Direct Instruction (DI) did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. Of those studies, 14 were eligible for full review because they used quasi-experimental or longitudinal research designs. Their findings, however, were considered to be *inconclusive*. Six studies did not control for preexisting differences between treatment and comparison groups. Three studies did not provide sufficient evidence that the model was implemented as intended. One longitudinal study did not have an adequate baseline measure. The posttest in four studies was given less than 1 (academic) year since DI had been implemented.

The remaining 40 studies were ineligible for full review for the following reasons. Eight studies were survey or descriptive studies that did not focus or report on the impact of DI on student achievement. Eight studies were review or summary pieces that reported on findings published elsewhere. One study was an earlier version of a published study that was included in this review. One study focused only on preschool students. Two studies investigated effects of DI programs whose duration was only 6- or 10-weeks long. Twenty-two studies set out to test impact on student achievement, but the methods were not sufficiently rigorous. In 13 of the 22 studies, the effects of DI could not be isolated, because DI was mixed with other treatments, the control group received a DI component, or the analyses did not report DI results separately from other treatments. Four of the 22 studies used comparison groups but had no pretest. Finally, five of the 22 studies used one group pretest–posttest designs without comparison groups.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Adams, G. L., & Engelmann, S. (Eds.). (1996). Direct Instruction: Research-based evidence supporting the effectiveness of Direct Instruction. In *Research on Direct Instruction: 25 years beyond DISTAR*. Seattle, WA: Educational Achievement Systems.

Adams, G. L., & Engelmann, S. (Eds.). (1996). *Research on Direct Instruction: 25 years beyond DISTAR*. Seattle, WA: Educational Achievement Systems.

American Federation of Teachers. (1998). *Building on the best, learning from what works: Seven promising*

- reading and English language arts programs.* Washington, DC: Author.
- American Federation of Teachers. (1998). *Building on the best, learning from What Works: Six promising schoolwide reform programs.* Washington, DC: Author.
- American Federation of Teachers. (1999). *Building on the best learning from What Works: Five promising remedial reading intervention programs.* Washington, DC: Author.
- Anderson, R. B., St. Pierre, R. G., Proper, E. C., & Stebbins, L. C. (1978). Pardon us, but what was the question again? A response to the critique of the Follow Through evaluation. *Harvard Educational Review, 48*, 161–170.
- Becker, W. C., & Engelmann, S. (1976). *Analysis of achievement data on six cohorts of low-income children from 20 school districts in the University of Oregon Direct Instruction Follow Through model.* Eugene: University of Oregon. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED145922)
- Bereiter, C. (1986). Does Direct Instruction cause delinquency? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 1*, 289–292.
- Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Brenda, T., & Miller, L. D. (1991). Pilot study of the effectiveness of direct instructional model as a supplement to a literature-based delivery model; traditional teaching to whole language: A focus on instructional routines. *Florida Educational Research Council Research Bulletin, 23*.
- Cole, K. N., Dale, P. S., Mills, P. E., & Jenkins, J. R. (1993). Interaction between early intervention curricula and student characteristics. *Exceptional Children, 60*, 17–28.
- Dowdell, T. (1996). *The effectiveness of Direct Instruction on the reading achievement of sixth graders.* (ERIC. No. ED 396268).
- Darch, C., & Kame'enui, E. J. (1987). Teaching LD students critical reading skills: A systematic replication. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 10*, 82–91.
- Gersten, R. (1985). Direct Instruction with special education students: A review of evaluation research. *The Journal of Special Education, 19*, 41–58.
- Gersten, R., & Carnine, D. (1986). Direct instruction in reading comprehension. *Educational Leadership, 43*(7), 70–78.
- Grossen, B. (2002). The BIG accommodation model: The Direct Instruction model for secondary schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 7*(2), 241–263.
- Grossen, B. (2004). Success of Direct Instruction model at a secondary level school with high-risk students. *Reading and Writing Quarterly, 20*, 161–178.
- Grossen, B. (2005). *The research base for Corrective Reading SRA.* DeSota, TX: SRA/McGraw-Hill.
- Hesse, K. D., Robinson, J. W., & Rankin, R. (1983). Retention and transfer from a morphemically based Direct Instruction spelling program in junior high. *Journal of Educational Research, 76*(5), 276–279.
- Hirsch, E. D. (2001, May 2). The latest dismal NAEP scores. *Education Week, 20*(33), 41, 60.

- Koki, S. (1999). *Promising programs for schoolwide reform*. Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- Ligas, M. R., & Vaughan, D. W. (1999). *Alliance of quality schools: 1998–99 evaluation report*. Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Broward County Public Schools.
- Mac Iver, M. A., & Kemper, E. (2002). Guest editors' introduction: Research on Direct Instruction in reading. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 7(2), 107–166.
- Marchand-Martella, N., Kinder, D., & Kubina, R. (2005). *Special education and Direct Instruction: An effective combination*. Columbus, OH: SRA/McGraw-Hill.
- The McGraw-Hill Companies, Council of Chief State School Officers, & Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (2003). *Results with Corrective Reading*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- The McGraw-Hill Companies, National Association of Elementary School Principals, & American Federation of Teachers. (2002). *Results with Reading Mastery*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
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- Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
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Not Eligible for Full Review

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- Anderson, D. M., & Keel, M. C. (2002). Using “reasoning and writing” to teach writing skills to students with learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 2, 49–55.
- Becker, W. C., & Carnine, D. W. (1980). Direct Instruction: An effective approach to educational intervention with the disadvantaged and low performers. In B. B. Lahey & A. E. Kazdin (Eds.), *Advances in clinical child psychology, volume 3* (pp. 429–437). New York: Plenum.
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- Crawford, D. B., & Snider, V. E. (2000). Effective mathematics instruction: The importance of curriculum. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 23(2), 122–142.
- Cross, R. W., Rebarber, T., & Wilson, S. F. (2002). Student gains in a privately managed network of charter schools using Direct Instruction. *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 2, 3–21.
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Rawl, R. K., & O'Tuel, F. S. (1982). A comparison of three prereading approaches for kindergarten students. *Reading Improvement*, 19, 205–211.

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Schumaker, J., & Lenz, K. (1999). *ERIC/OSEP mini-library, volume 3: Adapting language arts, social studies, and science materials for the inclusive classroom*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

Sterbinsky, A., & Ross, S. M. (2004). *The effects of implementing comprehensive school reform models in 12 elementary schools: Year 3 study results*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S., & Reid, E. R. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform: A multi-site replicated experiment*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Tobin, K. (2001). *The effect of Direct Instruction and prior phonemic awareness instruction on the development of reading skills in grade 1*. DeSota, TX: SRA/McGraw-Hill.

Vreeland, M., Vail, J., Bradley, L., Beutow, C., Cipriano, K., Green, C., et al. (1994). Accelerated cognitive growth: The Edison School Math Project. *Effective School Practices*, 13(2), 64–70.

Wellington, J. (1994). Evaluating a mathematics program for adoption: Connecting math concepts. *Effective School Practices*, 12(3), 70–75.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

Ashworth, D. R. (1999). Effects of Direct Instruction and basal reading instruction programs on the reading achievement of second graders. *Reading Improvement*, 35, 150–156.

Becker, W. C., & Gersten, R. (1982). A follow-up of Follow Through: The later effects of the Direct Instruction model on children in fifth and sixth grades. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19(1), 75–92.

Brent, G., Diobilda, N., & Gavin, F. (1986). Camden Direct Instruction project, 1984–1985. *Urban Education*, 21(2), 138–148.

Darch, C., Eaves, R. C., Crowe, D. A., Simmons, K., & Conniff, A. (2006). Teaching spelling to students with learning disabilities: A comparison of rule-based strategies versus traditional instruction. *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 6(1), 1–16.

Darch, C., Gersten, R., & Taylor, R. (1987, Fall). Evaluation of the Williamsburg County Direct Instruction program: Factors leading to success in rural elementary programs. *Research in Rural Education*, 4(3), 111–118.

Gersten, R., Brockway, A., & Henares, N. (1983, Summer). The Monterey DI program for students with limited English (ESL). *Direct Instruction News*, 8–9.

Joseph, B. L. (2004). *Teacher expectations of low-SES preschool and elementary children: Implications of a research-validated instructional intervention for curriculum policy and school reform*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, East Carolina University.

Kaiser, S., Palumbo, K., Bialozor, R. C., & McLaughlin, T. F. (1989). The effects of Direct Instruction

with rural remedial students: A brief report. *Reading Improvement*, 26, 88–93.

Klahr, D., & Nigam, M. (2006). The equivalence of learning paths in early science instruction: Effects of Direct Instruction and Discovery Learning. *Psychological Science*, 15(10), 661–667.

Meyer, L. A. (1984). Long-term academic effects of the Direct Instruction Project Follow Through. *Elementary School Journal*, 84, 380–394.

Ross, S. M., Fleischman, S. W., & Hornbeck, M. (2003). *Progress and options regarding the implementation of Direct Instruction and Success for All in Toledo Public Schools*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Sexton, C. W. (1989). Effectiveness of the DISTAR Reading I program in developing first graders' language skills. *Journal of Educational Research*, 82(5), 289–293.

Stein, C. L., & Goldman, J. (1980). Beginning reading instruction for children with minimal brain dysfunction. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 13, 52–55.

Traweck, D., & Berninger, V. (1997). Comparisons of beginning literacy: Alternative paths to the same learning outcome. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 20(2), 160–168.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Butler, P. A. (2003). Achievement outcomes in Baltimore City Schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 8(1), 33–60.

Gersten, R., Becker, W. C., Heiry, T. J., & White, W. A. T. (1984). Entry IQ and yearly academic growth of children in Direct Instruction programs: A

longitudinal study of low SES children. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 6(2), 109–121.

Keel, M. C., Frederick, L. D., Hughes, T. A., & Owens, S. H. (1999). Using paraprofessionals to deliver Direct Instruction reading programs. *Effective School Practices*, 18, 16–22.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Carlson, C. D., & Francis, D. J. (2002). Increasing the reading achievement of at-risk children through Direct Instruction: Evaluation of the Rodeo Institute for Teacher Excellence (RITE). *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 7, 141–166.

Crawford, D. B., & Snider, V. E. (2000). Effective mathematics instruction: The importance of curriculum. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 23(2), 122–142.

Diobilda, N., & Brent, G. (1986). Direct Instruction in an urban school system. *Reading Instruction Journal*, 29, 2–5.

Gersten, R., Darch, C., & Gleason, M. (1988). Effectiveness of a Direct Instruction academic kindergarten for low-income students. *The Elementary School Journal*, 89, 227–240.

Mac Iver, M. A., & Kemper, E. (2002). The impact of Direct Instruction on elementary students' reading achievement in an urban school district. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 7(2), 197–220.

Ross, S., Nunnery, J., Goldfeder, E., McDonald, A. J., Rachor, R., Hornbeck, M., et al. (2004). Using school reform models to improve reading achievement: A longitudinal study of Direct Instruction and Success For All in an urban

- district. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 9, 357–389.
- Ryder, R. J., Burton, J. L., & Silberg, A. (2006). Longitudinal study of Direct Instruction effects from first through third grades. *Journal of Educational Research*, 99(3), 179–191.
- Tarver, S. C., & Jung, J. S. (1995). A comparison of mathematics achievement and mathematics attitudes of first and second graders instructed with either a discovery-learning mathematics curriculum or a Direct Instruction curriculum. *Effective School Practices*, 14(2), 49–57.
- Tobin, K. (2004). The effects of beginning reading instruction in the Horizons Reading program on the reading skills of third and fourth graders. *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 4, 129–137.
- Umbach, B. T., Darch, C., & Halpin, G. (1987). *Teaching reading to low performing first graders: A comparison of two instructional approaches*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Mobile, AL.
- Yu, L., & Rachor, R. (2000). *The two-year evaluation of the three-year Direct Instruction program in an urban public school system*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED441831)

Appendix K: Expeditionary Learning—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Of the 25 studies that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards, three were eligible for full review but did not meet CSRQ standards for rigor of research design. Two were longitudinal studies of student achievement at Expeditionary Learning schools over time; one had no baseline measures and the other reported insufficient implementation of Expeditionary Learning during the research period, and thus did not meet standards. The third study used a more rigorous research design with a comparison school, but lacked complete pretest data and therefore could not control for preexisting differences between students that received Expeditionary Learning and those that did not.

The remaining 22 studies were not eligible for full review. Six of these studies could not be fully reviewed because they examined the effects of Expeditionary Learning along with multiple other comprehensive school reform models, and the results of Expeditionary Learning could not be disaggregated. Three studies used comparison group designs but did not equate the groups on the basis of pretest scores, and another three did not include comparison groups or pretests. Two studies examined pretest-posttest changes without a comparison group. The remaining eight studies were largely summaries of Expeditionary Learning research, were review papers that did not report new results, or were descriptive survey studies that did not test the impact of Expeditionary Learning on student achievement.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

- Academy for Educational Development. (1996). *Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound project, (final report)*. New York: Author.
- Bodilly, S. J. (1998). *Lessons from New American Schools’ scale-up phase*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.
- Breaking the mold: An “education week” occasional series* (Report. No. 59). (1995). Washington, DC: Editorial Projects in Education.

- Cadena, J. (2000). *Comparison of TAAS results: New American Schools (NAS) to non New American Schools*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. Retrieved October 11, 2005, from http://www.mrsh.org/mrsh_action/our_results_report_cadena.htm
- Killion, J. (1999). Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. In *What works in the middle: Results-based staff development* (pp. 158–161). Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
- Killion, J. (2002). *What works in the elementary grades: Results-based staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
- Koki, S. (1999). *Promising programs for schoolwide reform*. Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- McChesney, J. (1998). *Whole-school reform* (ERIC Digest No. 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)
- New American Schools. (1999). *Working toward excellence: Examining the effectiveness of New American Schools designs*. Arlington, VA: Author.
- Resources for teachers. (1997, January). *Curriculum Review*, 36, 3–5.
- Rugen, L., & Hartl, S. (1994, November). The lessons of learning expeditions. *Educational Leadership*, 52(3), 20–24.
- San Antonio Independent School District. (2000). *Comparison of student performance of New American Schools (NAS) and Non-New American Schools*. San Antonio, TX: San Antonio Independent School District School Board.
- Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
- Udall, D., & Rugen, L. (1997). From the inside out: The Expeditionary Learning process of teacher change. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 404–408.
- White, E. R. (1998, February 24). Outward Bound leaps from climbing walls into schools. *Christian Science Monitor*, 90(61), 13.

Not Eligible for Full Review

- Academy for Educational Development. (1996). *Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound: Summary report*. New York: Author.
- Ahearn, E. (1994). *Involvement of students with disabilities in the New American Schools development corporation projects*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.
- Benson, J. T. (2000). *The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program in Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction second year evaluation*. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
- Berends, M. (1999). *Assessing the progress of New American Schools: A status report* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Berends, M., Bodilly, S. J., & Kirby, S. N. (2002). *Facing the challenges of whole-school reform: New American Schools after a decade*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Berends, M., Chun, J., Schuyler, G., Stockly, S., & Briggs, R. J. (2002). *Challenges of conflicting school reforms: Effects of New American Schools in a high-poverty district* (1st ed.). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education.
- Bodilly, S. J., Keltner, B., Purnell, S., Reichardt, R., & Schuyler, G. (1998). *Lessons from New American*

- Schools' scale-up phase: Prospects for bringing designs to multiple schools.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education.
- Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis. (1997). *Evaluation of implementation of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound at Middle College High School, Springdale Elementary School, and Macon Elementary School.* Memphis, TN: Author.
- Farrell, G., & Leibowitz, M. (1998). *Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound in year five: What the research shows.* Cambridge, MA: Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in elementary and middle schools.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 370–379.
- Hacker, D. J. (1997). *Evaluation of the implementation of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound at Springdale Elementary School.* Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Martin, M. B. (2002). *Idaho charter school teachers' perceptions of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound inservice training.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Idaho State University.
- McQuillan, P., Kraft, R., O'Connor, A., Timmons, M., Marion, S., & Michalec, P. (1994). *An assessment of Outward Bound USA's urban/education initiative.* Boulder: School of Education, University of Colorado.
- New American Schools. (1997). *Working toward excellence: Results from school implementing New American Schools designs.* Arlington, VA: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED420896)
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models.* Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- RAND Corporation. (2000). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up* RAND. Santa Monica, CA: Author.
- Ross, S. (2001). *Creating critical mass for restructuring: What we can learn from Memphis.* Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.
- Ross, S., Sanders, W. L., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Teacher mobility and effectiveness in restructuring and non-restructuring schools in an inner-city district.* Cary, NC: SAS Institute.
- Ross, S., Tabachinick, S., & Sterbinsky, A. (2002). *Using comprehensive school reform models to raise student achievement: Factors associated with success in Memphis schools.* Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S. M., & McDonald, A. J. (2003). *School variables as determinants of the success of comprehensive school report: A quantitative and qualitative study of 69 inner-city schools.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Winds, M. A. (2004). Urban school reform: The impact of whole school reform on a specific population within a New Jersey Abbott school district. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (06A), 2052. (UMI No. 3136110)

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

Lewis, J. L., & Bartz, M. (1999). *New American Schools designs: An analysis of program results in district schools*. Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Public Schools.

Sterbinsky, A. (2002). *Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning evaluation report, 2002*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Ulichny, P. (2000). *Academic achievement in two Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound demonstration schools*. Providence, RI: Department of Education, Brown University.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (2000). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Appendix L: First Steps—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

The three studies of First Steps that were reviewed were not eligible for full review for the following reasons. Two studies compared student achievement for a number of comprehensive school reform models but included no comprehensive school reform-untreated comparison group and did not have baseline measures. The third study did not examine the impact of First Steps on student achievement.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Australian Council for Educational Research. (2004). *Impact of First Steps on schools and teachers*. Camberwell, Victoria, Australia: Author.

Bank Street College of Education. (2004). *Evaluations by Bank Street College of Education*. New York: Author.

Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. A. (2003). *Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A resource guide to research-based programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Deschamp, P. (1994). *A survey of the implementation of the literacy component of the First Steps Project in Western Australia*. Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

Deschamp, P. (2004). *Case studies of the implementation of the First Steps Project in twelve schools*.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

Deschamp, P. (2004). *The development and implementation of the First Steps Project in Western Australia*. Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

Deschamp, P. (2004). *Effects of First Steps teaching on student achievement*. Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

Deschamp, P. (2004). *The implementation of the literacy component of the First Steps Project in ELAN schools*. Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

Grose, C., McNamara, M., & Ik, C. (2000). *9, 10, 11 staircases, any one of which will get you where you need to be: Odyssey of a professional developer*.

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

The Highgate Project. (2004). *Supporting linguistic and cultural diversity through First Steps*. Churchlands, Western Australia: Education Department of Western Australia.

St. John, E. P., Loescher, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards)*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473721)

St. John, E. P., Manset, G., & Chung, C. (2000). *Research-based reading interventions: The impact of Indiana's Early Literacy grant program* (Policy research report). Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

St. John, E. P., Manset, G., Chung, C., & Worthington, K. (2001). *Assessing the rationales for educational reforms: A test of the professional development, comprehensive reform, and direct instruction hypotheses* (Policy research report). Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Manset, G., St. John, E. P., & Simmons, A. (2000). *Progress in early literacy: Summary evaluation of Indiana's Early Literacy Intervention grant program, 1997–2000*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

Appendix M: Integrated Thematic Instruction— Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Nine studies of Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI) were ineligible for full review. In three studies, ITI was one component of the treatment being tested. These studies did not isolate the effects of ITI. Three studies set out to test the impact of ITI but were not sufficiently rigorous: Two examined differences in ITI student achievement from pretest to posttest with no comparison group, and one observed only posttest performance of ITI students. One study used a nonexperimental design with a comparison group that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. Two studies were survey studies that did not focus on the impact of ITI on student achievement.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Berman, P., Minicucci, C., McLaughlin, B., Nelson, B., & Woodworth, K. (1995). *School reform and student diversity: Case studies of exemplary practices for LEP students*. Emeryville, CA: The Institute for Policy Analysis and Research; Washington, DC: The National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Council for Educational Change. (2003). *Shining a spotlight on school success: Sharing strategies that work—Profiles of 20 high performing elementary schools in Florida, based on the Florida School Report’s Best Practices Study*. Davie, Florida: Author.

Kirtman, L. (2002). Policy and practice: Restructuring teachers’ work. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 10(25).

Leek, J. R. (1995). *Changing school culture in the urban middle school: A case study of implementing Integrated Thematic Instruction*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas.

Miletta, A. (2004). Establishing a positive classroom climate: An experienced teacher in a new school setting. Chicago, IL: Spencer Foundation.

Shapley, K. S., Pieper, A. M., Way, P. J., & Bush, M. J. (2004). *Profiles of high-performing Texas open-enrollment charter schools*. Austin, TX: Texas Center for Educational Research.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Antes, R. L. (1997). *Central Elementary School Connecting Learning Assures Successful Students (CLASS): A formative evaluation*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana State University.

The Education Alliance. (2003). *Pinellas 2002–2003 FCAT data analysis report*. Providence, RI: Brown University.

Frederick, C. H. (2004). *A review of test scores for ten comprehensive school reform sites after two years implementing Integrated Thematic Instruction*. Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Frederick, C. H. *Scores are soaring at Texas CSR sites*. Unpublished manuscript, Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Grisham, D. L. (1995). *Integrating the curriculum: The case of an award-winning elementary school*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Lewis Carroll Elementary School. (1996). *Students Environmentally Aware of our Shores (SEAS) program*. Brevard County, FL: Florida Advisory Council on Environmental Education.

Lindberg, E., Miller, M. L., & Bressler, P. *Promising results for full inclusion incorporating three best research based educational approaches*. Unpublished manuscript, Tulsa, OK: Oral Roberts University.

Morgan, W. (1998). *The impact of C.L.A.S.S. (Connecting Learning Assures Successful Students) on teaching and learning in Indiana*. Lebanon, IN: C.L.A.S.S.

Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Frederick, C. (2004). *Professional development report for selected Tulsa public elementary schools participating in ITI training between June 2000 and January 2004*. Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Frederick, C. (2006). *Stone Creek Elementary School Integrated Thematic Instruction implementation report*. Federal Way, WA: Susan Kovalik & Associates.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Ruth, N. S. (1998). *A comparative study of integrated thematic instruction (ITI) and non-integrated thematic instruction: The differences and relationships in student gender and reading TAAS scores over a two-year implementation period*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A&M University.

Appendix N: Literacy Collaborative—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Twelve studies of Literacy Collaborative were not eligible for full review. Seven of those studies were not eligible for full review because, although they were tests of the impact of Literacy Collaborative on student achievement, they did not use sufficiently rigorous research designs. Three of the seven did not have pretests as baseline measures to establish equivalence between Literacy Collaborative and comparison groups. Three of the seven studies used a pretest–posttest design without a control group. One of the seven studies did not have a control group or a baseline. The remaining five studies were a mix of survey studies and summary papers, not primary research studies that focused on the impact of Literacy Collaborative on student achievement.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loeschner, S. A. (2003).

Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A resource guide to research-based programs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Booth, D. (1999). Language delights and word play: The foundation for literacy learning. In I. C. Fountas & G. S. Pinnell (Eds.), *Voices on word matters: Learning about phonics and spelling in the literacy classroom* (pp. 91–102). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Usselton, D. (2003). *Literacy Collaborative school climate study report.* Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Bartlam, J. (2003). *Intermediate Literacy Collaborative resource study report.* Cambridge, MA: Lesley University Literacy Collaborative.

Bartlam, J., & Boucher, L. (2004). *Changes in students’ literacy behavior as a result of implementing the Literacy Collaborative language and literacy framework in the classroom: Classroom teacher and literacy coordinator survey results.* Cambridge, MA: Lesley University Literacy Collaborative.

Bartlam, J., & Glover, T. (2004). *Literacy Collaborative parent/guardian survey results.* Cambridge, MA: Lesley University Literacy Collaborative.

Literacy Collaborative. (2003). *Student achievement in Literacy Collaborative schools: Reanalysis of 2002 research report data.* Columbus: Research

and Evaluation Center, Literacy Collaborative, Ohio State University.

Literacy Collaborative. (2004). *Literacy Collaborative Intermediate: National report 2004*. Cambridge, MA: Lesley University Literacy Collaborative.

Manset, G., St. John, E. P., Simmons, A., Michael, R., Bardzell, J. S., Hodges, D., Jacob, S., & Gordon, D. (1999). *Indiana's Early Literacy Intervention grant program impact study for 1997–98*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

Plucker, J. A., Simmons, A. B., Lim, W., Patterson, A. P., Wooden, O., Jones, M. H., & St. John, E. P. (2004). *Comprehensive school reform: Effect on teachers and teaching in three states*. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates.

St. John, E. P., Manset, G., & Chung, C. (2000). *Research-based reading interventions: The impact of Indiana's Early Literacy grant program* (Policy research report). Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

St. John, E. P., Manset, G., Chung, C., Simmons, A. B., Musoba, G. D., Manoil, K., et al. (2004). *Research-based reading reforms: The impact of state-funded interventions on education*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

St. John, E. P., Manset, G., Chung, C., & Worthington, K. (2001). *Assessing the rationales for educational reforms: A test of the professional development, comprehensive reform, and direct instruction hypotheses* (Policy research report). Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

Tivnan, T., & Hemphill, L. (2005). Comparing four literacy reform models in high-poverty schools: Patterns of first-grade achievement. *Elementary School Journal*, 105(5), 419.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Literacy Collaborative. (2001). *Literacy Collaborative 2001 research report*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Literacy Collaborative. (2003). *Increasing student achievement in Ohio*. Columbus: Research and Evaluation Center, Literacy Collaborative, Ohio State University.

Scharer, P. L., Desai, L., Williams, E. J., & Pinnell, G. S. (2003). *Literacy Collaborative: A multiyear analysis*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Williams, E. J. (1998). *The Early Literacy Learning Initiative (ELLI) research report, January 1998*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Williams, E. J. (1999). *Literacy Collaborative 1999 research report*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Williams, E. J., Scharer, P. L., & Pinnell, G. S. (2000). *Literacy Collaborative 2000 research report*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Clayburn, A. D. (2005). The effect of the primary Literacy Collaborative on the reading achievement of kindergarten, first grade, and second grade students. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66 (02A), 533. (UMI No. 3164981)

Manset, G., St. John, E. P., & Simmons, A. (2000). *Progress in early literacy: Summary evaluation of Indiana's Early Literacy Intervention grant program, 1997–2000*. Bloomington: Indiana Education Policy Center, Indiana University.

Appendix O: Modern Red SchoolHouse—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Of the 21 studies of Modern Red SchoolHouse (MRSH) that did not meet standards, one study was eligible for full review. This study failed to meet CSRQ Center standards because the two MRSH schools dropped the model during the course of the study, 1–2 years before the posttest was administered. The study examined differences between MRSH and comparison schools on reading, mathematics, and writing tests, but because the students in the study had not used MRSH as intended, the CSRQ Center was unable to ascertain whether the results reported by the schools were due to effects of this model.

There were 20 studies of MRSH that were not eligible for full review because they did not use rigorous research designs or did not isolate the impact of MRSH on student achievement. Seven studies evaluated multiple comprehensive school reform models as a group and it was not possible to disaggregate results for MRSH. Two studies had no comparison group, and two studies that used the school district as the comparison were ineligible because the treatment group was not excluded from the comparison group. Three studies were reviews of multiple models that did not report new empirical results for MRSH. Finally, six studies used surveys or case study methods reported primarily qualitative data related more to implementation of MRSH than its impact.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Bardzell, J. S., St. John, E. P., & Loescher, S. A. (2003). *Improving reading and literacy in grades 1–5: A resource guide to research-based programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Cadena, J. (2000). *Comparison of TAAS results: New American Schools (NAS) to non New American Schools*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. Retrieved October 11, 2005, from http://www.mrsh.org/mrsh_action/our_results_report_cadena.htm

Datnow, A. (2000). Power and politics in the adoption of school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22(4), 357–374.

Johnson, W. (2000). *Comparison of student achievement of Modern Red SchoolHouse schools and “other”*

district schools. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. Retrieved October 17, 2005, from http://www.mrsh.org/mrsh_action/our_results_report_johnson.htm

Kilgore, S. (2001). *Evidence of success: The Modern Red Schoolhouse design*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute.

Mathews, M., & Karr-Kidwell, P. J. (1999). *The new technology and educational reform: Guidelines for school administrators*. Denton: Texas Woman's University.

McChesney, J. (1998). *Whole-school reform* (ERIC Digest No. 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)

Murley, R. C. (2003). *Standardized test scores and teacher perception of one whole school reform model, Modern Red Schoolhouse: Evaluation of a rural middle school*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Memphis.

New American Schools. (1999). *Working toward excellence: Examining the effectiveness of New American Schools designs*. Arlington, VA: Author.

San Antonio Independent School District. (2000). *Comparison of student performance of New American Schools (NAS) and non-New American Schools*. San Antonio, TX: San Antonio Independent School District School Board.

SERVE. (1999). *Status report on the SERVE implementation study in comprehensive school reform demonstration schools*. Greensboro, NC: Author. Retrieved October 2002 from <http://www.serve.org/csrd/research/status.pdf>

St. John, E. P., Loesch, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study*

guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards).

Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473721)

Not Eligible for Full Review

Adams, G. L., & Engelman, S. (1996). Project Follow Through (in-depth and beyond). In *Research on Direct Instruction: 25 years beyond DISTAR* (pp. 67-98). Seattle: Educational Achievement System.

Ahearn, E. (1994). *Involvement of students with disabilities in the new American schools development corporation projects*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.

Berends, M. (1999). *Assessing the progress of New American Schools: A status report*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Berends, M., Chun, J., Schuyler, G., Stockly, S., & Briggs, R. J. (2002). *Challenges of conflicting school reforms: Effects of New American Schools in a high-poverty district* (1st ed.). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education.

Berends, M., Bodilly, S. J., & Kirby, S. N. (2002). *Facing the challenges of whole-school reform: New American Schools after a decade*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Bodilly, S. J., Keltner, B., Purnell, S., Reichardt, R., & Schuyler, G. (1998). *Lessons from New American Schools' scale-up phase: Prospects for bringing designs to multiple schools*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education.

Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in

- elementary and middle schools. Johns Hopkins University.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan* 78(5), 370–379.
- Kilgore, S., & Jones, J. (2002). Leadership in comprehensive school reform initiatives: The case of the Modern Red Schoolhouse. In J. Murphy & A. Datnow (Eds.), *Leadership for school reform: Lessons from comprehensive school reform designs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. (2000). *Modern Red Schoolhouse presents... A customized process for comprehensive school reform*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. (2001). *Modern Red Schoolhouse: The 2001 teacher survey summary of results*. Nashville, TN: Author.
- New American Schools. (1997). *Working toward excellence: Results from school implementing new American schools designs*. Arlington VA: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED420896)
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- Peevely, G., & Henson, R. K. (2002). *Modern Red Schoolhouse summary report of student achievement data*. Paper presented at American Education Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Pendleton, W. (1999). *Analysis of achievement in Modern Red Schoolhouse elementary schools: Working paper No. 11*. Atlanta, GA: Emory University.
- RAND Corporation. (2000). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up*. Santa Monica, CA: Author.
- Ross, S. (2001). *Creating critical mass for restructuring: What we can learn from Memphis*. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.
- Ross, S., Tabachinick, S., & Sterbinsky, A. (2002). *Using comprehensive school reform models to raise student achievement: Factors associated with success in Memphis schools*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Alberg, M., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (2001). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.
- Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S. M., & McDonald, A. J. (2003). *School variables as determinants of the success of comprehensive school reform: A quantitative and qualitative study of 69 inner-city schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

- Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(2), 143–170.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Jackson Public Schools, RAND Corporation, & San Antonio Independent School District. (2001). *Comprehensive school reform: Research results for Modern Red Schoolhouse*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse.

Sterbin, A. (2001). *Rozelle Elementary School: A longitudinal analysis, 1995–2000*. Memphis, TN: Mid-South Center for School Evaluation and Reform, University of Memphis.

Appendix P: National Writing Project—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Seven studies of the National Writing Project (NWP) did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. One of the seven was eligible for full review because it used a rigorous research design to test the impact of NWP using large numbers of NWP and comparison students. However, this study’s results were considered to be *inconclusive* because the study did not establish equivalence in prior achievement between NWP students (in one district) and comparison students (in two other districts).

The other six NWP studies were not eligible for full review because they did not use sufficiently rigorous research designs. Two studies included baseline and follow-up measures of student achievement but did not use comparison groups. One study combined analyses for elementary and middle school students. Therefore, the CSRQ Center could not disaggregate effects of NWP on elementary school students from those on middle school students. Three studies did not evaluate the impact of NWP: One contained background information, one was qualitative in nature, and one was a survey study of client satisfaction.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Arvidson, A., & Blanco, P. (2004). Reading across Rhode Island: One book, one state, many successful readers. *English Journal*, 93(5), 47–53.

Barlow, D. (2003, October). Inside the National Writing Project: Connecting network learning and class-

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

room teaching [Book review]. *Education Digest*, 69(2), 76–78.

Campbell, K. (1999, August 24). Grab a pen, it’s time to write. *Christian Science Monitor*, 91, 18.

Carroll, C. A. (2004, January 14). People in the news. *Education Week*, 23, 5.

Fitzgerald, K. (2004). Writing! *Educational Leadership*, 62(20), 96.

Goldberg, M. (1984). An update on the National Writing Project. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 65(5), 356–357.

Goldberg, M. (1998). The national writing project—It’s about the intellectual integrity of teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 79(5), 394–396.

Goldberg, M. F. (1989, November). Portrait of James Gray. *Educational Leadership*, 47(3), 65–68.

- Grassley, C. (2002, January 28). *Word on: The National Writing Project*. Retrieved October 12, 2005, from <http://grassley.senate.gov/won/2002/won02-01-18.htm>
- Hess, M. A. (2004, March). Writers bloc. *NEA Today*, 22(6), 32–33.
- Hoff, D. J. (1997, February 26). Federal file. *Education Week*, 16(22), 16–20.
- Hofkins, D. (1996, January 5). Course aims to boost teaching of writing. *Times Educational Supplement*, 414(9), 4.
- Holland, H. (1996, May). Way past word processing. *Electronic Learning*, 15, 22–24.
- Inverness Research Associates. (2001). *Ten evaluation findings that illuminate the key contributions of the National Writing Project*. Inverness, CA: Author.
- Kelly, J. (1999). Free to teach, free to learn: A model of collaborative professional development that empowers teachers to reach diverse student populations. *Journal of Negro Education*, 68(3), 426–432.
- Kelly, J. (2004). Inside the National Writing Project: Connecting network learning and classroom teaching [Book review]. *Journal of Negro Education*, 73(1), 99–100.
- LaSage, D., Akerson, V., Collins, A., Baker, M., Ambrosio, J., & Cheeseman, T. (2004). Curriculum. *Teachers College Record*, 106(5), 884–200.
- Lieberman, A., & Wood, D. (2002). The National Writing Project. *Educational Leadership*, 59(6), 40–44.
- Lieberman, A., & Wood, D. (2002). Untangling the threads: Networks, community and teacher learning in the National Writing Project. *Teachers and Teaching*, 8(3/4), 295–302.
- Long, R. (1993). Administration's proposals to dominate congressional scene. *Reading Today*, 11(1), 6–7.
- McCorkle, N. S. (2004). A voice for writing. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 70(3), 5–9.
- Raban, B. (1990). Using the “craft” knowledge of the teacher as a basis for curriculum. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 20(1), 57–72.
- Robbins, S. (2003). Distributed authorship: A feminist case-study framework for studying intellectual property. *College English*, 66(2), 155–171.
- Rodriguez, F., Mantle-Bromley, C., Bailey, M., & Paccione, A. (2003). Professional development for teacher leaders. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 36(3), 225–230.
- Scarborough, H. A. (1996, September). Sustaining a life of teaching. *English Journal*, 85, 68–69.
- Siegel, D. (2004). Meet ASCD's outstanding young educator for 2003. *Educational Leadership*, 61(7), 85.
- Smith, M. (1996). The National Writing Project after 22 years. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77(10), 688–692.
- Smith, M. (2000). A marriage that worked. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 81(8), 622–625.
- Sommerfeld, M. (1995, May 3). Philanthropy. *Education Week*, 14, 12.
- Suhor, C. (1984, March). National Writing Project booming, seeks continued growth. *Educational Leadership*, 41(6), 90–91.
- Swain, S. (1996, April). A state of wonder. *Vocational Educational Journal*, 71, 51–52.

Totten, S. (2004). Inside the National Writing Project: Connecting network learning and classroom teaching [Book review]. *Educational Studies*, 35(2), 190–195.

Totten, S. (2004, June). Because writing matters: Improving student writing in our schools [Book review]. *Educational Studies*, 35, 281–285.

Wood, D., & Lieberman, A. (2004). Teachers as authors: The National Writing Project's approach to professional development. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 3(3), 255–273.

Wray, D. (1993). What do children think about writing? *Educational Studies*, 45(1), 67–77.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Academy for Educational Development. (2001). *National Writing Project evaluation: Year one results*. New York: Author.

Academy for Educational Development. (2002). *National Writing Project final evaluation report*. New York: Author.

Blau, S. D., Cabe, R. H., & Whitney, A. (2006). *Evaluating IIMPac: Teacher and student outcomes through a professional development program in the teaching of writing*. Santa Barbara: South Coast Writing Project, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Inverness Research Associates. (2001). *The National Writing Project: Client satisfaction and program impact*. Inverness, CA: Author.

St. John, M. (1999). *The National Writing Project model: A five-year retrospective on findings for the annual site survey*. Inverness, CA: Inverness Research Associates.

Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

Swain, S. (2005). *Analysis of the effect of a multi-year partnership: Fourth-grade level*. Starkville: Mississippi Writing/Thinking Institute, Mississippi State University.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Buckelew, M., Capelli, R., Dorfman, D., Fishman, A., & Hoch, D. (2005). *Analysis of the effect of the first year of a professional development program*. West Chester: Pennsylvania Writing and Literature Project, West Chester University.

Cossey, N. (2004). A comparison of writing score of students taught by National Board Certified teachers who have and have not participated in the National Writing Project. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 65 (06A), 2502. (UMI No. 3136220)

McKinney, M., Lasley, S., & Nussbaum, E. M. (2006). *Through the lens of the Family Writing Project: The Southern Nevada Writing Project's impact on student writing and teacher practices*. Las Vegas: Southern Nevada Writing Project, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Roberts, C. E. (2002). The influence of teachers' professional development at the Tampa Bay Area Writing Project on student writing performance. *Dissertation Abstracts International* 63 (05A), 1792.

Singer, N. R., & Scollay, D. (2006). *Increasing student achievement in writing through teacher inquiry: An evaluation of professional development impact*. St. Louis: Gateway Writing Project, University of Missouri, St. Louis

Appendix Q: Onward to Excellence II—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Of the seven studies of Onward to Excellence II (OTE II) that did not meet CSRQ Center standards, none were eligible for full review for a variety of reasons. Four of the studies did intend to test the impact of OTE II on student achievement, but were not eligible for full review for the following reasons: one study had neither a comparison group nor a posttest, but instead statistically modeled future achievement scores based on achievement prior to OTE II implementation; one study used neither a control group nor baseline measure; a third study used a comparison group implementing another comprehensive school reform model in our review, and thus could not be fully reviewed; and a fourth study could not be fully reviewed because the results combined elementary, middle and high school levels with no way of discerning the effects on specific grade levels relevant for this elementary school report. Three studies were not impact evaluations of OTE II using original data, but rather were qualitative studies that used survey methods or were descriptive in nature.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Blum, R., & Butler, J. (1985). Managing improvement by profiling. *Educational Leadership*, 42(6), 54–59.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

James, D. W., Jurich, S., & Estes, S. (2001). Raising minority academic achievement: *A compendium of education programs and practices*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.

Kushman, J. W., & Yap, K. (1997). *Mississippi Onward to Excellence impact study*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Blum, R. E., Yap, K. O., & Butler, J. A. (1991). *Onward to Excellence impact study*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Chaix, M. D. (2002). *Professional learning community: The power to drive and sustain educational*

reform—An examination of professional learning communities in the school reform Onward to Excellence. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of La Verne.

Crenshaw, H. A. (2004). *An exploratory study of the relationship between fourth grade achievement scores and an Onward to Excellence program.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Mississippi State University.

DeBlieux, E. M. (1997). *The relationship between student achievement in schools with Onward to Excellence (OTE) programs and selected variables.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern Mississippi.

Garrett, A. M. (1995). *Perceptions of leadership during the implementation phase of a school improvement process.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Kansas State University, Manhattan.

Mississippi Department of Education. (1998). A database analysis of Mississippi Onward to Excellence Schools. In *Reading in Mississippi: Research and evaluation studies.* Jackson, MS: Author.

Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models.* Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Kushman, J., & Yap, K. (1999). What makes the difference in school improvement? An impact study of Onward to Excellence in Mississippi schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 4(3), 277–298.

Appendix R: Pearson Achievement Solutions— Elementary (formerly Co-nect)

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

Of the 23 studies of Pearson Achievement Solutions (PAS) (formerly Co-nect) that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards, three used research designs that were eligible for full review, but the studies were considered *inconclusive* for the following reasons. Two studies did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards because they did not include all of the information needed for full review. One study used a matched comparison research design with large sample sizes but did not use baseline measures to control for initial or preexisting differences between the groups.

The other 20 studies that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards were not eligible for full review for the following reasons. Three used a nonequivalent group design with no baseline measures of preexisting differences. Five studies did not examine student achievement in exploring effects of PAS, but focused instead on implementation of the PAS model or teacher effectiveness and mobility. Two studies did not use a comparison group. One study combined results of elementary and secondary school grade levels. Five studies combined the effects of several comprehensive school reform models into one set of analyses. Finally, four studies were descriptive reviews of several comprehensive school reform models, including PAS.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Breaking the mold: An “education week” occasional series (Report No. 59). (1995). Washington, DC: Editorial Projects in Education.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

Borman, G. D., Hewes, G. M., Overman, L. T., & Brown, S. (2002). *Comprehensive school reform and student achievement: A meta-analysis* (Report No. 59). Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University.

Cadena, J. (2000). *Comparison of TAAS results: New American Schools (NAS) to non-New American Schools*. Nashville, TN: Modern Red Schoolhouse Institute. Retrieved October 11, 2005, from http://www.mrsh.org/mrsh_action/our_results_report_cadena.htm

McChesney, J. (1998). *Whole-school reform* (ERIC Digest No. 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)

- New American Schools. (1999). *Working toward excellence: Examining the effectiveness of New American Schools designs*. Arlington, VA: Author.
- Olson, L. (1995, August). School pictures. *Teacher Magazine*, 6(9), 18.
- San Antonio Independent School District. (2000). *Comparison of student performance of New American Schools (NAS) and non-New American Schools*. San Antonio, TX: San Antonio Independent School District School Board.
- N**ot Eligible for Full Review
- Ahearn, E. (1994). *Involvement of students with disabilities in the New American Schools development corporation projects*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.
- Berends, M. (1999). *Assessing the progress of New American Schools: A status report*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Berends, M., Chun, J., Schuyler, G., Stockly, S., & Briggs, R. J. (2002). *Challenges of conflicting school reforms: Effects of New American Schools in a high-poverty district* (1st ed.). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Education.
- Berends, M., Bodilly, S. J., & Kirby, S. N. (2002). *Facing the challenges of whole-school reform: New American Schools after a decade*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.
- Blake-Garrett, A. (2005). Whole school reform implementation of Comer and PAS (formerly Co-Nect) models and student performance in one Abbott District (New Jersey). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66 (11A), 3869. (UMI No. 3190176)
- Bodilly, S. J., Keltner, B., Purnell, S., Reichardt, R., & Schuyler, G. (1998). *Lessons from New American Schools' scale-up phase: Prospects for bringing designs to multiple schools*. Santa Monica CA: RAND Education.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in elementary and middle schools*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 370–379.
- Koh, M. (2002). *A study of the relationship between school reform models and special education in Title I elementary schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Memphis.
- Mason, B. (2005). Achievement effects of five comprehensive school reform designs implemented in Los Angeles Unified School District. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66 (07A), 2454. (UMI No. 3183167)
- New American Schools. (1997). *Working toward excellence: Results from schools implementing New American Schools designs*. Arlington, VA: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED420896)
- Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum. Retrieved October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>
- RAND Corporation. (2000). *Implementation and performance in New American Schools: Three years into scale-up*. Santa Monica, CA: Author.

- Ross, S. (2001). *Creating critical mass for restructuring: What we can learn from Memphis*. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory.
- Ross, S., & Lowther, D. (2003). Impacts of the Co-nect school reform design on classroom instruction, school climate and student achievements in inner-city schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 8(2), 215–246.
- Ross, S., Sanders, W. L., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Teacher mobility and effectiveness in restructuring and non-restructuring schools in an inner-city district*. Cary, NC: SAS Institute.
- Ross, S., Tabachinick, S., & Sterbinsky, A. (2002). *Using comprehensive school reform models to raise student achievement: Factors associated with success in Memphis schools*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Alberg, M., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (2000). *Fourth-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Sterbinsky, A., Ross, S. M., & McDonald, A. J. (2003). *School variables as determinants of the success of comprehensive school report: A quantitative and qualitative study of 69 inner-city schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Winds, M. A. (2004). Urban school reform: The impact of whole school reform on a specific population within a New Jersey Abbott school district. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (06A), 2052. (UMI No. 3136110)
- D**id Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)
- Babb, D. G. (2001). *A longitudinal impact study of the Co-nect design*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Memphis.
- Lewis, J. L., & Bartz, M. (1999). *New American Schools Designs: An analysis of program results in district schools—Cincinnati Public Schools*. Cincinnati, OH: Research and Evaluation Office, Cincinnati Public Schools.
- Smith, R. B. (2003). *An evaluation of Co-nect's comprehensive school reform in Houston, Texas*. Cambridge, MA: Social Structural Research, Inc.
- M**et Standards (Conclusive)
- Ross, S. M., Wang, L. W., Sanders, W. L., Wright, S. P., & Stringfield, S. (1999). *Two- and three-year achievement results on the Tennessee value-added assessment system for restructuring schools in Memphis*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Smith, R. B. (2003). *Effects of Co-nect's comprehensive school reform in Harford County, Maryland*. Cambridge, MA: Social Structural Research, Inc.

Appendix S: School Development Program— Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Of the 29 studies of School Development Program (SDP) that did not meet CSRQ Center standards, three were eligible for full review but were considered *inconclusive*. This was because these studies contained critical threats to validity including lack of baseline measures (for two longitudinal studies) or were missing critical information about timing and quality of SDP implementation. The remaining 26 studies were not eligible for full review for a variety of reasons. Fourteen studies were not focused on evaluating the impact of SDP, but rather were descriptive reviews of SDP, were studies of SDP implementation, or did not include student achievement outcomes. The remaining studies did examine impact, but in four of them, the effects of SDP could not be isolated from other interventions implemented at the same time. Two studies did not use comparisons or did not use appropriate comparison groups. Three studies used a one group, pretest-posttest design. Three studies compared SDP schools or students to comparison groups but did not use pretests as baseline measures.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

American Federation of Teachers. (1998). *Building on the best, learning from What Works: Six promising schoolwide reform programs*. Washington, DC: Author.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

- Anson, A. (1995). Risk and protection during the middle school transition: The role of school climate in early adolescent development. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 56 (3-B), 1716.
- Anson, A. R., Cook, T. D., Habib, F., Grady, M., Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. P. (1991). The Comer School Development Program: A theoretical analysis. *Journal of Urban Education*, 26(1), 56–82.
- Appleborne, P. (1998, July 1). Pleading a case for the child. *The New York Times*, p. 1.
- Becker, B. J., & Hedges, L. V. (2004). A review of the literature on the effectiveness of Comer's School Development Program. East Lansing: Michigan State University; Chicago: University of Chicago.

- Brandt, R. (1986). On improving achievement of minority children: A conversation with James Comer. *Educational Leadership*, 43(5), 13–17.
- Brodkin, A. (1992). Parents and schools: Working together. *Instructor* (1992), 101(5), 6–7.
- Chiles, N. (1993, January 2). Making schools work. *Essence*, 24(8), 86–90.
- Comer, J. (1985). Empowering Black children's educational environments. In H. McAdoo & J. McAdoo (Eds.), *Black children: Social, educational, and parental environments* (pp. 123–136). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Comer, J. (1989). The school development program: A psychosocial model of school intervention. In G. Berry & J. Asamen (Eds.), *Black students: Psychosocial issues and academic achievement* (pp. 264–285). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Comer, J. (1992). Organize schools around child development. *Social Policy*, 22(3), 28–30.
- Comer, J. (1994). *A brief history and summary of the School Development Program, 1993–94*. New Haven CT: Yale University Child Study Center.
- Comer, J. (2001, May). Models of student development. *Current*, 432, 10–16.
- Comer, J. (2003). Transforming the lives of children. In M. Elias & H. Arnold (Eds.), *EQ + IQ = best leadership practices for caring and successful schools* (pp. 11–22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Comer, J. (2004, January 24). Making schools of education bridges to better learning. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 49(2), B20–B21.
- Comer, J., & Haynes, N. M. (1999). The dynamics of school change: Response to the article, "Comer's School Development Program in Prince George's County, Maryland: A theory-based evaluation," by Thomas D. Cook, et al. *American Educational Research Journal*, 36(3), 599–607.
- Comer, J., Haynes, N. M., Joyner, E. T., & Ben-Avie, M. (1996). Rallying the whole village: *The Comer process for reforming education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Comer, J., & Maholmes, V. (1999). Creating schools of child development and education in the USA: Teacher preparation for urban schools. *Education for Teaching*, 25(1), 3–15.
- Comer, J. P. (1994, October 5). Parents will need to own the task. *Education Week*, 14(5), 32–33.
- Comer, J. P., Haynes, N. M., & Hamilton-Lee, M. (1989). School power: A model for improving Black student achievement. In W. Smith & E. Chunn (Eds.), *Black education: A quest for equity and excellence* (pp. 187–200). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Comer, J. P., & Woodruff, D. W. (1998). Mental health in schools. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 7(3), 499–513.
- Cook, D., & Van Cleaf, D. (2000). Multicultural perceptions of 1st-year elementary teachers' urban, suburban, and rural student teaching placements. *Urban Education*, 35(2), 165–175.
- Datnow, A. (2000). Power and politics in the adoption of school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22(4), 357–374.
- District 13 gets grant to launch Comer program. (1995, February 4). *New York Amsterdam News*, p. 1.
- Emmons, C. L. (1993). School development in an inner city: An analysis of factors selected from Comer's program using latent variable structural equations modeling. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 54 (4-A), 1287.

- Emmons, C. L., Efimba, M., & Hagopian, G. (1998). A school transformed: The case of Norman S. Weir. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 3(1), 39–52.
- Hall, S., & Henderson-Sellers, A. (1991). Uniting schools and families. *Education Digest*, 56(8), 47–50.
- Hatch, T. (1998). The differences in theory that matter in the practice of school improvement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 35(1), 3–31.
- Haynes, N. M. (1991). *Summary of School Development Program documentation and research*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center.
- Haynes, N. M. (1994). The School Development Program: A holistic educational approach. In N. M. Haynes (Ed.), *Excerpts from School Development Program research monograph*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center.
- Haynes, N. M. (1996). Creating safe and caring school communities through successful school reform: Comer school development program schools. *Journal of Negro Education*, 65(3), 308–321.
- Haynes, N. M. (1998). Guest editor's introduction: Overview of the Comer School Development Program. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 3(1), 3–10.
- Haynes, N. M. (1998). Lessons learned. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 3(1), 87–99.
- Haynes, N. M. (2003). Educating for social, emotional, and academic achievement. In M. Elias & H. Arnold (Eds.), *EQ + IQ = Best leadership practices for caring and successful schools* (pp. 109–123). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Haynes, N. M., & Ben-Avie, M. (1996). Parents are full partners in education. In A. Booth & J. Dunn (Eds.), *Family-school links: How do they affect educational outcomes?* (pp. 45–55). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. (2004). The Yale School Development Program: Process, outcomes, and policy implications. *Urban Education*, 28(2), 166–200.
- Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. (2005). Parent involvement in schools: An ecological approach. *The Elementary School Journal*, 91, 271–277.
- Haynes, N. M., Comer, J., & Hamilton-Lee, M. (1988). The effects of parental involvement on student performance. *Educational and Psychological Research*, 8(4), 291–299.
- Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. P. (1996). Integrating schools, families, and communities through successful school reform: The School Development Program. *School Psychology Review*, 25(4), 501–507.
- Haynes, N. M., Emmons, C. L., Gebreyesus, S., & Ben-Avie, M. (2004). The school development program evaluation process. In J. P. Comer, N. M. Haynes, E. T. Joyner, & M. Ben-Avie (Eds.), *Rallying the whole village: The Comer process for reforming education* (pp. 123–145). New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Haynes, N. M., Emmons, C. L., & Woodruff, D. W. (1998). School Development Program effects: Linking implementation to outcomes. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 3(1), 71–86.
- Henderson, C., Comer, J., Lagemann, E., Paige, R., Barber, B., Doyle, D. P., et al. (2004, April). Brown 50 years later: Reflections on the ongoing struggle (Special report). *American School Board Journal*, 191(4), 56–65.
- June, A. W. (2003, November/December). Fundamental success. *The Crisis*. Retrieved October 12, 2006,

from http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4081/is_200311/ai_n9303698

- Koki, S. (1999). *Promising programs for schoolwide reform*. Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- Leave No Child Behind: Preparing Today's Youth for Tomorrow's World. (2004, September 8). *Education Week*, 24(2), 44–45.
- Levine, D. (1994). Instructional approaches and interventions that can improve the academic performance of African American students. *Journal of Negro Education*, 63(1), 46–63.
- Lofland, G. (1995). Where children come first. *Educational Leadership*, 52(5), 16–19.
- McChesney, J. (1998). Whole-school reform (ERIC Digest No. 124). Eugene, OR: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED427388)
- Noblit, G. W., Malloy, W. W., & Malloy, C. E. (2000). *The kids got smarter: Case studies of successful Comer Schools*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Noblit, G. W., Malloy, C. E., & Malloy, W. W. (2000). *District context and Comer schools: How school districts manage school reform*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina.
- Northwest Regional Education Lab. (1998). *School development program (K–12): Catalog of school reform models* (1st ed., pp. 99–102). Portland, OR: Author.
- Price, H. B. (1990, January 1). The bottom line for school reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72(3), 242–245.
- Rossi, R. J., & Stringfield, S. C. (1995). *Education reform and students at risk, volume I: Findings and recommendations*. Studies of education reform. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research; and Baltimore: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, Johns Hopkins University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED397541)
- Ruff, K. (2003). How three North Carolina elementary principals influenced the culture of their school using the Comer School Development Program: Creating shared vision toward school improvement. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 64 (6A).
- Schmoker, M., & Wilson, R. (1993). Transforming schools through total quality education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 74(5), 389–395.
- Sommerfeld, M. (1994, July 13). Grant to implement Comer model in Detroit schools. *Education Week*, 13(39), 3.
- Squires, D., & Kraynik, R. D. (1996). The Comer program: Changing school culture. *Educational Leadership*, 53(4), 29–33.
- St. John, E. P., Loesch, S., Jacob, S., Cekic, O., Kupersmith, L., & Musoba, G. D. (2000). *Comprehensive school reform models: A study guide for comparing CSR models (and how well they meet Minnesota's learning standards)*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED473721)
- Traub, J. (1999). *Better by design? A consumer's guide to schoolwide reform*. Washington, DC: Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.
- Trickett, E. (1997). Developing an ecological mind-set on school-community collaboration. In J. Swartz & W. Martin (Eds.), *Applied ecological psychology for schools within communities: Assessment and intervention* (pp. 139–163). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Viadero, D. (2004, April 21). Reform programs backed by research find fewer takers. *Education Week*, 23(32), 1–2.
- Weiss, S. (1998, January). The limits of school reform. *NEA Today*, 16(5), 45–46.
- N**ot Eligible for Full Review
- Barnett, W. S. (1996). Economics of school reform: Three promising models. In H. Ladd (Ed.), *Holding schools accountable*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Benson, J. T. (2000). *The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program in Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction second year evaluation*. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.
- Blake-Garrett, A. (2005). Whole school reform implementation of Comer and Co-nect models and student performance in one Abbott District (New Jersey). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 66 (11A), 3869. (UMI No. 3190176)
- Clark, P. A. (2001). *Analysis of the Success for All and School Development Programs and their effects on reading comprehension*. Unpublished master's thesis, Kean University.
- Comer, J. (1985). *Psychosocial and academic effects of an intervention program among minority school children*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED286949)
- Desimone, L., Finn-Stevenson, M., & Henrich, C. (2004). Whole school reform in a low-income African American community: The effects of the CoZi Model on teachers, parents, and students. *Urban Education*, 35(3), 269–324.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1997). *Effective and replicable programs for students placed at risk in elementary and middle schools*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.
- Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(5), 370–379.
- Haynes, N. M. (1995). School development effect: Two follow-up studies. In N. M. Haynes (Ed.), *School Development Program research monograph* (pp. 117–145). New Haven, CT: Yale University.
- Haynes, N. M. (2005). *School development effects: Two-follow-up studies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center.
- Haynes, N. M., & Comer, J. (1990). The effects of a school development program on self-concept. *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*, 63(4), 275–283.
- Maholmes, V., Haynes, N. M., Bility, K., Emmons, C., & Comer, J. (2005). Teachers' attributions for student performance: The effects of race, experience, and school context. In N. M. Haynes (Ed.), *School Development Program research monograph* (pp. 117–145). New Haven, CT: Yale University.
- McCollum, H. (2004). *Lessons for school-based reform*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.
- Millsap, M. A., Chase, A., Brigham, N., & Gamse, B. (1997). *Evaluation of spreading the Comer School Development Program and philosophy: Final implementation report*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.
- Millsap, M. A., Gamse, B., Beckford, I., Johnston, K., Chase, A., & Hailey, L. (1994). *Evaluation of spreading the Comer School Development Program and philosophy: Interim implementation report*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.

- Moseley, T. A. (1998). *An evaluative study of the school improvement process in Prince George's County public schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, American University.
- Neufeld, B., & La Bue, M. A. (1994). *The implementation of the School Development Program in Hartford. Final evaluation report*. Cambridge, MA: Education Matters, Inc.
- Payne, C. (1991). The Comer intervention model and school reform in Chicago. *Urban Education*, 26(1), 8–25.
- Slaughter-Defoe, D. T., & Carlson, K. G. (1996). Young African American and Latino children in high-poverty urban schools: How they perceive school climate. *Journal of Negro Education*, 65(1), 60–71.
- Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. A., Winfield, L., Brigham, N., Yoder, N., & Noss, M. (1992). *Urban and suburban/rural special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: Second year report*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University; and Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.
- Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. A., Winfield, L., Puma, M., Gamse, B., & Randall, B. (1994). *Urban and suburban/rural special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: First year report*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University; and Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.
- Thomas, R., Woods, P., Hillman, S., & Ross, S. M. (2003). *The Detroit Public Schools Michigan Department of Education CSRD grant funded Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) Models, 1998–1999. A joint collaborative preliminary evaluation*. Memphis, TN: Center for Research in Educational Policy, University of Memphis.
- Turnbull, B. J., Fiester, L., & Wodatch, J. (1997). *A process, not a program: An early look at the Comer process in community school district 13*. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.
- Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *What do we know: Widely implemented school improvement programs*. Philadelphia: Center for Research in Human Development and Education, Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.
- Winds, M. A. (2004). Urban school reform: The impact of whole school reform on a specific population within a New Jersey Abbott school district. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 65 (06A), 2052. (UMI No. 3136110)
- Woodruff, D. W. (1998). *Do you believe in me? Effects of the Comer School Development Program on teacher visions for student success*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Howard University.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

- Comer, J., Haynes, N. M., Hamilton-Lee, M., Boger, J. M., & Rollock, D. (1986). *Academic and affective gains from the school development program: A model for school improvement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Haynes, N. M., & Emmons, C. L. (1997). *Comer School Development Program effects: A ten year review, 1986–1996*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Child Study Center.
- Joyner, E. T. (1990). *The Comer model: School improvement for students at risk*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Bridgeport, CT.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

- Haynes, N. M., Comer, J. P., & Hamilton-Lee, M. (2004). *The School Development Program: A model for*

school improvement. *Journal of Negro Education*, 57(1), 11–21.

Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. A., & Herman, R. (1997). *Urban and suburban/rural special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: Findings and policy implications of a longitudinal study. Final report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Met Standards (Conclusive)

Bifulco, R. (2001). *Do whole-school reform models boost student performance: Evidence from New York City*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University.

Datnow, A., Borman, G., Stringfield, S., Overman, L., & Castellano, M. (2003). Comprehensive school reform in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts: Implementation and outcomes from a four-year study. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25, 143–170.

Millsap, M. A., Chase, A., Brigham, N., & Beckford, I. (2000). *Evaluation of Detroit's Comer schools and family initiative, final report*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc.

Appendix T: School Renaissance—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

The eight studies that did not meet standards were ineligible for full review for several reasons. Three studies compared Renaissance students to comparison groups, but because the comparison groups were also given components of the School Renaissance model (e.g., Accelerated Reader), these studies were ineligible for full review. Three studies gave a pretest and a posttest only, with no comparison group. One study was a one group, posttest only design. One study was not eligible for full review because the Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance groups and comparison groups were comprised of different classes in the same schools; therefore School Renaissance could not be studied as a whole school reform model.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Cawelti, G. (2000). Portrait of a benchmark school. *Educational Leadership*, 57, 42–44.

Renaissance Learning takes on field of testing heavy-weights. (2004). *Electronic Education Report*, 11(13), 3–4.

Schacter, J. (1999). *Reading programs that work: A review of programs for pre-kindergarten to 4th grade*. Santa Monica, CA: Milken Family Foundation. Retrieved November 1, 2004, from <http://www.mff.org/pubs/ME279.pdf>

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

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Met Standards (Suggestive)

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Met Standards (Conclusive)

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Appendix U: Success for All—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet the Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center’s standards.

There were a total of 85 studies of Success for All (SFA) that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. A total of 22 studies were eligible for full review but were considered to be *inconclusive* upon closer inspection, meaning the CSRQ Center did not have confidence in the findings. Fourteen of the 22 were considered to be inconclusive because of insufficient implementation of the model (according to model guidelines) or because of insufficient information to ascertain model implementation. Five of the 22 studies examined the effects of SFA on student achievement with comparison groups that did not meet the CSRQ Center’s standards. Two of the 22 studies did not establish an appropriate baseline outcome, and one study was determined to be inconclusive because SFA and comparison groups were not shown to be equivalent at the start of the study.

An additional 63 studies were not eligible for full review for the following reasons: Twenty-one studies combined the examination of the effects of several comprehensive school reform models, including SFA, in one group of analyses. Thirteen studies used a comparison group design that examined only posttest outcomes with no pretest. Eleven studies examined the effects of SFA on student achievement with comparison groups that were inappropriate for rigorous comparisons (e.g., state or district averages). Two studies examined change from pretest to posttest in SFA students without comparison groups. Two studies had neither pretests nor comparison groups. Two studies reviewed earlier versions of published studies. Finally, 12 studies were descriptive reviews of several comprehensive school reform models, including SFA, that did not present isolated effects of SFA on student achievement.

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study’s research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

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Met Standards (Suggestive)

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Appendix V: Ventures Initiative and Focus System—Elementary

The following is a description of studies that did not meet Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center standards.

Two studies of the Ventures Initiative and Focus System did not meet CSRQ Center standards. One study was not eligible for full review because it did not use a rigorous research design. The second study was eligible for full review because it used a quasi-experimental research design with a comparison group, but it did not meet CSRQ Center standards because it did not control for preexisting differences between students that received Ventures Initiative and Focus System and those that did not.

The following is a list of all studies reviewed by the CSRQ Center.

Not Relevant for Initial Review

Bailis, L. N. (1995). *Evaluation of walks of life: First annual report*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.

Bailis, L. N. (1995). *Evaluation of walks of life: Second annual report*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.

Bailis, L. N. (1997). *Evaluation of walks of life: Third annual report*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.

Bailis, L. N. (1998). *Evaluation of walks of life: Final report*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.

The McKenzie Group. (1990). *Expanding horizons: A vision for our high schools*. Washington, DC: Author.

The McKenzie Group. (1992). *Expanding horizons: Success in high school and beyond: A follow-up*

Not Relevant for Initial Review: Study was not quantitative or on a comprehensive school reform model or on elementary school students.

Not Eligible for Full Review: Study's research design was not sufficiently rigorous or did not include student achievement outcomes.

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive): Study had critical threats to causal validity.

Met Standards (Suggestive): Study had no critical threats to validity but used a less rigorous (e.g., longitudinal, cohort) research design.

Met Standards (Conclusive): Study had no critical threats to validity and used a rigorous (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) research design.

survey analysis of Ventures In Education program graduates. Washington, DC: Author.

The McKenzie Group. (1994). *Expanding horizons: Success in high school and beyond*. Washington, DC: Author.

Ventures in Education. (1994, December). *Ventures in science: Insuring opportunity now (VISION)*. New York: Author.

Not Eligible for Full Review

Pearson, S. S. (2002). *Finding common ground: Service-learning and education reform—A survey of 28 leading school reform models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Association. Retrieved

October 29, 2004, from <http://www.aypf.org/publications/findingcommonground.pdf>

Did Not Meet Standards (Inconclusive)

The Westchester Institute for Human Services Research. (2003, May). *Ventures Education Systems Corporation, 2000–2001: Evaluation of schools in Camden and Plainfield, New Jersey*. White Plains, NY: Author.

Met Standards (Suggestive)

Opperman, P. (2003). *Comprehensive school reform program: Ventures Education Systems Corporation at CES 70: Three year evaluation, 2000–2003*. New York: Author.

Appendix W: Letters From Model Providers

The Comprehensive School Reform Quality (CSRQ) Center presented all model providers with background information about this report. The CSRQ Center also gave model providers four opportunities to comment on the accuracy of the CSRQ Center's review of their respective comprehensive school reform model: twice prior to the release of the November 2005 edition and twice prior to the release of this November 2006 edition. In most instances, this contact was a followup to ongoing communication with the model providers throughout the development of this report.

The CSRQ Center invited providers to share questions and concerns about the reviews and provide documentation for any information they needed to be corrected. Many providers engaged in telephone and e-mail communication with the CSRQ Center to provide valuable insight and information on improving the report. The CSRQ Center considered all concerns and suggested edits for the final narrative.

The CSRQ Center also encouraged providers to submit a two-page letter about the review of their model that could be published along with the report. The letters received from the model providers give consumers additional information that they can consider in making decisions about adopting a model. The CSRQ Center has included six letters in this report: five letters that appeared in the 2005 edition and one letter that is new for this updated edition. The following model providers submitted letters of comment:

- Breakthrough to Literacy
- Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning
- Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model)
- Integrated Thematic Instruction
- Literacy Collaborative
- Pearson Achievement Solutions (formerly Co-nect)

All letters have been reproduced as submitted to the CSRQ Center.

Letter From Breakthrough to Literacy—Elementary

(Reproduced As Submitted)

October 26, 2005

To the CSRQ Center and interested parties,

We recently received and reviewed the CSRQ Center narrative for *Breakthrough to Literacy*. We thank you for the opportunity to respond.

We fully understood, at the time of the submission of materials for review that there were no studies of *Breakthrough to Literacy* that reached the “gold standard” set forth in the QRT. However, the confluence of results of state and district test scores from districts across the country led us, and many users, to stop asking the question, “Does *Breakthrough to Literacy* work?” Rather, the question that became our focus was, “How can we establish and maintain the conditions for a successful implementation of *Breakthrough to Literacy* in any given district?” Over \$2 billion of federal research dollars has pointed to this as the critical question for all stakeholders including model developers, publishers and distributors. We are pleased that the committee found evidence that *Breakthrough to Literacy* provided support, professional development, and technical assistance that enabled successful implementation. These characteristics have differentiated *Breakthrough to Literacy* from many other early reading initiatives.

The consistent record of positive results and the identification of the conditions that supported these results led to the growth of *Breakthrough to Literacy* in schools across the country. We are pleased that there will soon be evidence from third party randomized studies designed to meet the Committee’s standards. We believe these studies will show a positive impact of *Breakthrough to Literacy*.

One externally funded, third party controlled random assignment study has just been completed and a report will soon be forthcoming (expected date: December 2005). Another longitudinal study is now in its second year. The current emphasis on strong efficacy studies is a welcome departure from the focus on unsupported beliefs and feelings that have driven curriculum adoptions in the past. Hopefully, it will also motivate the education academy to seriously focus on this crucial, underdeveloped area of research.

Unfortunately, decision makers will, for the time being, still be left with little “evidence of efficacy” for the crucial decisions they have to make each day. We believe that the What Works Clearing House, the Department of Education, and other policy makers should focus attention on the factors that likely account for 80% of the variation in efficacy, i.e. the instantiation and maintenance of the conditions associated with a strong implementation of any serious initiative. Educators are too often looking for the “it” or the “what” when it is clear that it is the *process* of classroom change that is crucial to results. In order to be successful, this process must be characterized by certain events and relationships that have been well documented in the most substantive education research available. These processes,

which are related to how change is made, deserve the attention and investment of all stakeholders. (See Project Follow-Through (1977) and the Rand Report, “Looking Back on a Decade of Whole School Reform” (2002))

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to engage in this important dialogue. We will continue to ask and answer crucial questions as to “how,” while making certain that the “what” continues to be well tested and validated.

Sincerely,

Jerry Zimmerman and Carolyn Brown, Co-Founders
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Letter From Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning—Elementary

(Reproduced As Submitted)

The Foundation for Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning is a professional development group that was organized to help schools with their school change efforts. We have been doing this work successfully for more than ten years. The Foundation does not offer a Comprehensive School Reform model but rather works with school administrators and teachers to provide professional development that supports the various needs that they have identified. Services of the Foundation are typically only one element of a larger design for school reform developed and controlled locally. The staff training that we provide includes topics such as classroom organization and management, various teaching methods, supporting English language and special needs learners, peer coaching, meeting state standards, family literacy, and working with teachers in schools that have adopted a variety of basal reading programs. We have supported the efforts of more than 1400 schools in rural, suburban, and urban districts that have received various sources of funding, including Reading First.

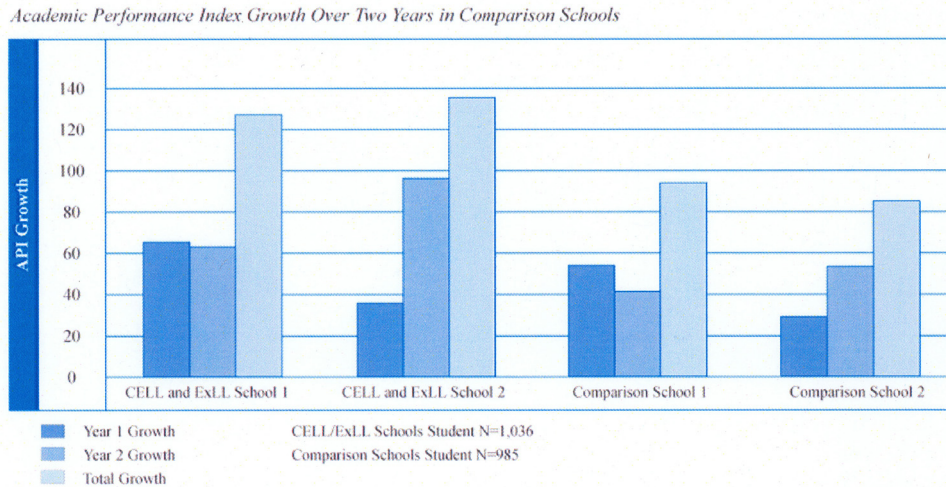
The philosophy of the Foundation is that school change efforts should be about teachers working together to improve their professional practice. Our work places the highest possible confidence in the ability of teachers to make their own decisions and then identify the services that they need to support those decisions. We do not feel that a comprehensive model that prescribes all aspects of how to accomplish change is a good fit for most schools.

The review of our work has been provided by the Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center at the American Institutes of Research. They reviewed us as though we were a Comprehensive School Reform package, which we are not. They have concluded that the overall effect of our work on student achievement, using their criteria, is zero. The key to this review is, using their criteria. The Foundation is not a research group, rather we use the current research in the field to identify best practices and structure our professional development accordingly. Schools that we work with us have a simple research question: what are the achievement scores of our students before we began our efforts, and what are they after? Though we understand the merit of experimental research design, most of the schools that we work with are not interested in using their students as subjects. A frequent comment from our colleagues is, “how can we plan and implement our best efforts, and then exclude a whole group of students just to see what happens?”

Even with the positive outcomes for the schools working with the Foundation, the CSRQ Center takes the position that though achievement increases are demonstrated, we are unable to prove that they are related to our work because of an inadequate research design. The Foundation helps all participating schools track their progress on various state and local accountability measures. The following table is an example of this effort and additional samples can be reviewed on our website, www.cell-exll.com.

Comparison schools were selected and matched to CELL/ExLL schools for school size, class size, percent of English language learners, number of children who receive free lunches, adopted instructional materials, and beginning test scores. The schools were located in close proximity in the same large, urban school district. California uses an Academic Performance Index (API) to measure annual yearly progress (AYP). It is a numeric index that ranges

from a low of 200 to a high of 1000. The indicators used in determining API include results of the Stanford 9 (all content areas) and the California Standards Test (in English-Language Arts, Mathematics, and Social Science). The results on state accountability measures show a significant increase for CELL/ExLL schools relative to the comparison schools.



It is our opinion that the review process is specifically designed to restrict the choices of schools to those programs that have the official approval of various federal agencies. Their lack of trust in the professional abilities of teachers is clear and their disposition to prescribe educational practices is obvious. It is also interesting to note, that the American Institutes of Research have among their many clients, CSR model providers.

It is our strong belief that schools should be free to identify their own needs and design their own solutions. All of the research shows that outside consultants, used judiciously, are important to successful school change efforts. We are prepared to continue to work with like-minded schools that believe, as we do, that change is local and cannot be prescribed entirely by state or federal agencies. That a private, Washington, D.C., consulting firm should develop their own evaluation criteria, use it on programs without their consent or cooperation, and then attempt to influence reform efforts and restrict access to funding by schools throughout the country, is, we believe, an unnecessary and unwarranted intrusion on local control of education.

Stanley L. Swartz, Ph.D.
 Professor of Special Education
 California State University
 and Director, The Foundation for Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning

Adria F. Klein, Ph.D.
 Professor Emerita of Reading Education
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Letter From Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model)—Elementary
(Reproduced As Submitted)



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR DIRECT INSTRUCTION

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November 1, 2005

Steve Fleischman, Managing Director
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Dr. Fleischman:

The AIR evaluation does not suggest either that Direct Instruction (DI) routinely produces large positive effects or how large they are. The evaluation has five problems:

1. Project Follow Through (FT) results were not included although FT (1968-84, evaluated in 1976) was superior in design to any other large-scale educational study ever conducted. FT provided for 18 full-school implementation models to work in schools that committed to implementing the model selected. It had assurances that the participating schools implemented the program. (Participating districts received \$750 per student. A United State Office of Education (USOE) liaison was assigned to each participating community to monitor the implementation.) FT had extensive comparison groups. The evaluation of third graders was conducted seven years after Follow Through began, so each model had adequate opportunity to develop its procedures. Furthermore, FT involved over 100,000 primary-grade children. FT evaluated students in a full range of subjects—reading, math, language, and spelling. It also evaluated children's self-image.

DI outperformed all other models in all areas measured—reading, math, language, spelling and children's self-image. The average effect size difference between DI and the other models was 1.8. Of the 77 categories that compared models, 50 were statistically significant in favor of DI. No significantly significant differences favored any other model. This study provided an accurate assessment of DI's potential.

For the original report on the results of Project Follow Through, see: Stebbins, L.B., St. Pierre, R.G., Proper, E.C., Anderson, R.B., and Cerva, T.R. (1977). *A Planned Variation Model. Vol. IV-A Effects of Follow Through Models*. U.S. Office of Education. For a discussion and analysis of additional studies on Project Follow Through, see: Adams, G., and Engelmann, S. (1996). *Research on Direct Instruction: 25 years Beyond DISTAR*. Seattle, WA: Educational Achievement Systems.

2. The AIR report is supposed to evaluate full school implementations of models implemented with fidelity; however the implementation of DI examined in the Ross et al. study, which was rated as "conclusive" in the report, did not represent DI implemented with fidelity by any standard. Ross et al. even indicate that the implementation was wanting in nine areas, including professional development, using

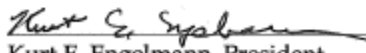
facilitators that know DI, and using appropriate schedules. The program was evaluated by three knowledgeable DI trainers, whose assessment was that “it was a disaster.” This assessment was confirmed by “model facilitators, teachers, and even district leadership” (p 26). The fact that this study was accepted implies that AIR’s evaluation standards do not adequately consider degree of implementation, which is a primary variable for any fair evaluation.

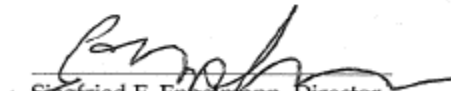
3. According to the AIR report, another study had “no critical threats to validity”; however, it actually had a serious flaw. Mac Iver and Kemper reported very small effects of the DI implementation over a comparison treatment. Both comparison and experimental children started around the 20th percentile and achieved around the 50th percentile by grade 3. However, there was a substantial difference in the percentage of retained students between comparison and experimental schools—4.4 percent for DI compared to 20.5 for the comparisons. This factor of four alters the performance of the lowest students and therefore could account for an enormous difference in mean performance.

4. One study with “limited results” evaluated performance of 2nd graders placed in DI for one year. This was certainly not a study that addressed DI as a full-school model so the results are moot. Another study compared children who began Direct Instruction in Kindergarten to those who began DI in grade 1. The children who started in Kindergarten had an effect size of 0.67 in third grade reading and math. The children who started in 1st grade did not score significantly higher than comparisons in math. The full-school DI model always begins in Kindergarten, so from the standpoint of DI full-school implementations, the only relevant group began in K.

5. DI received no rating for “effects for diverse student populations.” However, all the important studies on DI involve a high density of at-risk students. In the vast majority of studies reviewed for this report, demography of the students involved was clearly articulated, e.g., percent minority and percent eligible for free and reduced lunch. An overwhelming number of subjects were at risk minority children.

If the purpose of the AIR analysis is to provide school districts and schools with useful information about what works well, the report comes up short. The report does not reflect the size or consistency of gains achieved when DI is fully implemented. The National Institute for Direct Instruction would be elated to participate in any comparison in which programs could be properly implemented to show the degree to which DI can accelerate the performance of all students.


Kurt E. Engelmann, President
National Institute for Direct Instruction


Siegfried E. Engelmann, Director
National Institute for Direct Instruction

Letter From Integrated Thematic Instruction—Elementary

(Reproduced As Submitted)

Susan Kovalik & Associates continues to seek evidence that implementation of ITI results in positive effects on student achievement, additional outcomes, and involvement of family and community. Using newly available disaggregated data, research is focusing on positive results for diverse student populations. Recent changes in state testing requirements to include multiple grades and additional subjects facilitate demonstrating positive achievement effects in various subject areas. As a part of the grant development process, SK&A is requiring schools to provide data on student achievement as well as additional student outcomes such as attendance and discipline referrals and on parent and community involvement.

Two studies of CSR grant schools that are currently underway demonstrate positive growth in test scores. The first examines implementation of ITI in three Florida elementary schools. Statewide, from 2002 to 2005, the percentage of all 3rd grade students scoring at achievement level three and above rose 7 points in mathematics and 9 points in reading. At school “A,” third grade scores rose 24 points in mathematics and matched the State growth with 9 points in reading. At school “B,” third grade scores rose 22 points in mathematics and 11 points in reading. At school “C,” scores in mathematics rose 17 points in mathematics and 10 points in reading.

The second study examines changes in school climate surveys, teacher questionnaires, and school observation instruments administered during implementation of the grant in a Georgia school. Test results from 2001 to 2005 for fourth graders at the grant school indicate an increase in percentages of students successful in meeting or exceeding state performance standards. In mathematics the score rose 24 points and in reading the increase was 17 points.

Integrated Thematic Instruction, the model, has been successfully replicated in rural, urban, and suburban schools for the past 23 years. The school improvement process provided by comprehensive school reform grant funding has allowed SK&A to work intensively with schools over a three-year span and to monitor and study the impact of that process more closely. Given that CSR grant schools, by definition, often have challenging environments, and that full implementation takes three to five years, most CSR grant schools make progress in changing their school culture and partial progress in implementing instructional strategies and curriculum. By the end of the third year, for the most part, schools have achieved stage 2 out of five stages of implementation. The process of building internal sustainability continues to be critical to successful model implementation.

Letter From Literacy Collaborative—Elementary

(Reproduced As Submitted)

Forthcoming Literacy Collaborative Evaluation Studies

In early 2005, Literacy Collaborative revised its program evaluation model at the national and school levels to more appropriately meet the needs of its diverse stakeholders. At the national level, the Literacy Collaborative revised program evaluation design aims to improve the quality and quantity of evaluation studies of the Literacy Collaborative model. In terms of *quality*, we aim to produce more rigorous studies, i.e., studies that are conducted by outside evaluators and that include specified matching strategies, strong comparisons, strategic approaches to analysis, rigorous statistical methods, and effect sizes. In terms of *quantity*, we aim to develop a “portfolio” of these rigorous evaluation studies that will allow us to meet the current evidence standards for educational.

All of these studies involve a longitudinal component intended to evaluate the effect of Literacy Collaborative over time; an essential design given the length of time it takes to implement fully the model in schools. Therefore, it may be a year or more until we have results from these studies. In the meantime, we are working diligently to create a national relational database that will allow us to conduct studies of schools in our network more easily. The relational database will be fully functional in the coming year and studies conducted by internal Literacy Collaborative researchers will be forthcoming.

Although the studies that we describe below cannot yet be included in our portfolio of evaluations, we felt that it was important to include a description of each of the current studies that are being conducted on Literacy Collaborative’s effectiveness to demonstrate the direction in which we are going in terms of evaluation of the Literacy Collaborative model.

As of October 2005, we have three evaluation studies underway. The first two studies are being conducted by outside evaluators, while the third is a collaborative evaluation between educational statisticians at the University of Chicago and Literacy Collaborative faculty at The Ohio State University and Lesley University. We describe these studies below.

1) Intermediate Literacy Collaborative Evaluation Study, Pitt County, South Carolina. Pitt County School District and Drs. William Sanders and June Rivers from the SAS Institute are currently conducting a matched comparison study focusing on student achievement at the intermediate level (grades 3 to 5). For this study, SAS is computing and analyzing value-added achievement scores (VAAS) for the longitudinal cohort of fifth-grade students who have attended Pitt County schools in one of 8 Literacy Collaborative (LC) schools or 10 non-LC (“comparison”) schools. The Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP), directed by Dr. Steven M. Ross, will collect and analyze data to supplement the SAS study. CREP will offer the following services to increase the quality, rigor, and usefulness of the LC evaluation study: (a) consulting with Pitt County and SAS regarding research design and analysis; (b) supplementing the SAS achievement study with data concerning LC implementation

fidelity, school climate, and principal and teacher perceptions of their school's literacy program; and (c) supporting Pitt County and LC in disseminating results to target audiences as appropriate.

The design for the supplementary study will consist of the following three components. First, LC program implementation ratings will be obtained from LC literacy coordinators using a rubric developed for the study and the resultant data will be provided to SAS to incorporate as a "classroom" variable in analyzing LC vs. comparison group achievement. Second, school climate results for each LC and comparison school will be examined qualitatively and quantitatively as a "modulating" variable for interpreting achievement results. Third, a Teacher Literacy Program Questionnaire will be similarly used for interpreting achievement outcomes, and also as a descriptive measure of teacher attitudes, satisfaction, and experiences associated with their schools' literacy programs.

2) The Noyce Foundation Study, Alvin Independent School District, Alvin, Texas. The Noyce Foundation's Center for Professional Development in Research and Policy selected Literacy Collaborative as one of eight professional development models to include in a major study of teacher professional development, *Improving Teacher Learning and Enhancing Student Outcomes*. The Literacy Collaborative site selected for this study is the Alvin Independent School District in Alvin, Texas, which implements Literacy Collaborative at both the primary and intermediate levels. "With data collection slated to begin in fall 2005, the study will document teacher participation in professional development, the application in their classrooms of new knowledge and skills gained, and its impact on student learning. Along the way, the study will examine the contextual factors that both facilitate and impede teacher participation in professional development, with special attention to the combination of factors that contribute to sustained engagement and full implementation and use of new knowledge and skills. The study will also yield an estimate of the costs of high-quality professional development. Case study reports on the lab sites will highlight their successes and provide concrete examples of how high-quality professional development can be organized to ensure maximum benefits for teachers and their students."¹

3) Can Literacy Professional Development be Improved with Web-based Collaborative Learning Tools: A Randomized Field Trial. The purpose of this four-year research project funded by the U.S. Department of Education is to examine the effectiveness of Literacy Collaborative on the quality of teaching and learning in kindergarten through grade 3. Dr. Anthony S. Bryk of Stanford University is the Principal Investigator of this research project. The study will also examine whether teaching can be improved through the use of web-based professional development resources to enhance teachers' learning about and use of the Literacy Collaborative instructional materials and methods. Data on literacy coordinators, teachers and students will be collected to examine the impact on students' literacy learning, literacy coordinators, on the professional development of teachers whom these literacy coordinators support in their schools.

Eighteen schools in eight states, nine schools using the web-based tool and nine schools not using the tool, are participating in this randomized field trial. Value-added analysis of student outcomes will allow researchers to determine the value added to student learning in each classroom within each school over a three-year period. Differential effects by race/ethnicity or income status will also be explored.

¹Cited from *The Center for Professional Development Research and Policy Brochure*, The Noyce Foundation, Palo Alto, CA: April 2005.

Letter From Pearson Achievement Solutions—Elementary (formerly Co-nect)

(Reproduced As Submitted)



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I am pleased to share with you some exciting developments that have transpired since the November 2005 publication of the *CSRQ Center Report on Elementary School Comprehensive School Reform Models*. Not only is Co-nect now a part of the Pearson family, but it is an integral piece of **Pearson Achievement Solutions**, a newly formed organization dedicated to delivering customized solutions for school improvement.

School districts today face enormous pressure to use their resources more efficiently than ever and achieve demanding levels of student performance. Pearson understands these pressures and has formed Pearson Achievement Solutions to help districts address them. The Pearson Achievement Solutions mission is to create solutions that demonstratively “improve teaching” and thereby positively impact student performance as measured by district learning objectives for their students.

Pearson Achievement Solutions is a leading provider in school change management, data-driven decision making (data collection, analysis, and goal setting), and professional development to support and reach school goals. At Pearson Achievement Solutions, we know that attaining high academic achievement in schools is driven by improved teaching in the classroom. Drawing on more than a quarter of a century of quality research and professional development experience, we provide an unparalleled collection of K-20 teacher educational programs that are aligned with research, assessment and instructional programs. We deliver customized solutions for school improvement to schools and school districts including district professional development, distance and site-based graduate courses, and master’s degree programs.

It is our mission to understand and improve classroom teaching and learning through our software, research and teacher learning programs. Central to that mission of student achievement and school change are the resources for program implementation and change management, and the frameworks for evaluation to understand a school’s readiness for change and to measure growth and progress.

Pearson Achievement Solutions offers a new strategy for implementing coherent professional development by fusing a unique research-based learning model with innovative technology. This combination creates a solid foundation of teacher practices fully capable of supporting successful student learning while driving towards district attainment of federal and state mandates.

We are proud to continue the Co-nect legacy by providing remarkable programs that promote student achievement and school improvement. Our school change programs remain grounded in the content, technologies, and data analysis tools that Co-nect developed.

However, in light of funding shifts and other legislative and economic changes, we have re-focused the Co-nect implementation model to better meet the ever-changing needs of districts and schools. Our district and school improvement programs, called “**Expanding School Progress**,” focus on transforming the culture of teaching in schools via measured steps and working within existing district and school frameworks to address their overall needs. Over time, schools will see measurable increases in frequency of “best practice” instructional strategies in classrooms.

Around the country, schools are employing key elements in their successful school change efforts. As was central to the Co-nect mission, we continue to work with School Leadership Teams to identify key instructional gaps, align instructional resources, and apply research-based strategies to drive results. Our proven diagnostic tools, data-driven planning, and research-based professional development are all clearly directed at improving the quality of instruction and student learning.

It is with great pleasure that we introduce you to Pearson Achievement Solutions and the *Expanding School Progress* programs. We look forward to working with you as part of this new and innovative organization, finding new ways to improve the level of instruction, and therefore student achievement, throughout districts and schools across the country.



John Super
Executive Vice President & General Manager
Pearson Achievement Solutions

Appendix X: Study Findings Summary Tables

Table X–1. Quantitative Study Findings Used to Rate Evidence of Overall Positive Effects on Student Achievement

| Comprehensive School Reform Model | Number of Studies | | | | | Number of Findings | Percentage of Positive Findings |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Initially Relevant | Eligible for Full Review | Meeting Standards | Conclusive | Suggestive | | |
| Accelerated Schools PLUS—Elementary | 39 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 33.3 |
| America's Choice School Design—Elementary | 18 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 16 | 47.9 |
| ATLAS Learning Communities—Elementary | 13 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 20.0 |
| Breakthrough to Literacy—Elementary | 10 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning—Elementary | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Community for Learning—Elementary | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Coalition of Essential Schools—Elementary | 13 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Core Knowledge—Elementary | 22 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 12 | 50.0 |
| Different Ways of Knowing—Elementary | 8 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 100.0 |
| Direct Instruction—Elementary (Full Immersion Model) | 68 | 28 | 14 | 11 | 3 | 25 | 50.3 |
| Expeditionary Learning—Elementary | 26 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0.0 |
| First Steps—Elementary | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Integrated Thematic Instruction—Elementary | 12 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 22 | 72.7 |
| Literacy Collaborative—Elementary | 19 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 34 | 52.9 |
| Modern Red SchoolHouse—Elementary | 23 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 100.0 |
| National Writing Project—Elementary | 12 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 44.0 |
| Onward to Excellence II—Elementary | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0.0 |
| Pearson Achievement Solutions—Elementary (formerly Co-nect) | 25 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 22.2 |
| School Development Program—Elementary | 34 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 12 | 50.0 |
| School Renaissance—Elementary | 11 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 100.0 |
| Success for All—Elementary | 121 | 58 | 36 | 34 | 2 | 96 | 51.3 |
| Ventures Initiative and Focus System—Elementary | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 100.0 |
| TOTAL | 495 | 158 | 95 | 72 | 23 | 268 | |

Note. Some studies examined more than one comprehensive school reform model. Such studies were reviewed and counted once per model discussed. In these cases, a single study is counted more than once, and therefore, the total of the columns in this table exceeds the total number of studies reviewed.

Key:

Initially Relevant: Of the more than 800 studies screened, the number of studies per model found to be relevant to this review.

Eligible for Full Review: The number of studies per model that used research designs that were sufficiently rigorous and included student achievement outcomes.

Meeting Standards: The number of studies per model considered *suggestive* or *conclusive* according to CSRQ QRT causal validity rubrics.

Conclusive: The number of studies per model that used a rigorous research design (e.g., experimental, quasi-experimental) with no critical threats to validity.

Suggestive: The number of studies per model that used a less rigorous research design (e.g., longitudinal) with no critical threats to validity.

Number of Findings: The total number of individual measured outcomes found in the studies that met standards.

Percentage of Positive Findings: The percentage of total findings in the studies that met standards that were statistically significant and indicated that a model had a positive impact. The N/A designation provided in this column indicates models in which zero studies met CSRQ Center standards.

Table X-2. Summary of Basic Information by Model

| Comprehensive School Reform Model | Grade Levels Served | Number of Schools | Year Introduced in Schools | Costs (Year 1) | Evidence of Positive Overall Effects | Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations | Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas | Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation | Evidence of Professional Development/ Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| Accelerated Schools PLUS—Elementary | K-12 | 143 | 1986 | \$61,500 | | | Reading and math: | | | | | |
| America's Choice School Design—Elementary | K-12 | 364 | 1998 | \$75,000–\$110,000 | | | Reading, math, and writing: | | | | | |
| ATLAS Learning Communities—Elementary | K-12 | 100 | 1993 | \$60,000–\$80,000 | | | Math: | | | | | |
| Breakthrough to Literacy—Elementary | Pre-K-3 | 1,924 | 1992 | \$15,500–\$17,500/classroom | | | | | | | | |
| Coalition of Essential Schools—Elementary | K-12 | 600 | 1984 | Varies | | | | | | | | |
| Community for Learning—Elementary | K-12 | 150 | 1990 | \$35,100 | | | | | | | | |
| Comprehensive Early Literacy Learning—Elementary | K-12 | 812 | 1994 | \$50,000 | | | | | | | | |
| Core Knowledge—Elementary | K-8 | 534 | 1990 | Varies | | | Reading: Math, science, and social studies: | | | | | |

Table X–2. Summary of Basic Information by Model (continued)

| Comprehensive School Reform Model | Grade Levels Served | Number of Schools | Year Introduced in Schools | Costs (Year 1) | Evidence of Positive Overall Effects | Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations | Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas | Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation | Evidence of Professional Development/ Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation |
|--|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| Different Ways of Knowing—Elementary | K–12 | 500 | 1989 | \$70,000 | | | Reading, math, science, and social studies: | | | | | |
| Direct Instruction (Full Immersion Model)—Elementary | K–8 | 56 | 1968 | \$74,500 | | | Reading: Math: Writing: | | | | | |
| Expeditionary Learning—Elementary | K–12 | 150 | 1993 | \$55,000–\$65,000 | | | | | | | | |
| First Steps—Elementary | K–8 | 335 | 1989 | N/A | | | | | | | | |
| Integrated Thematic Instruction—Elementary | K–12 | 27 | 1984 | \$76,500 | | | Reading: Math, science, and language arts: | | | | | |
| Literacy Collaborative—Elementary | K–9 | 430 | 1993 | \$16,775–\$24,850 | | | Reading: | | | | | |
| Modern Red SchoolHouse—Elementary | K–12 | 300 | 1996 | \$50,000–\$100,000 | | | Reading and math: | | | | | |
| National Writing Project—Elementary | K–12 | 190 university project sites | 1974 | N/A | | | Writing: Reading: | Writing attitudes: | | | | |

Table X–2. Summary of Basic Information by Model (continued)

| Comprehensive School Reform Model | Grade Levels Served | Number of Schools | Year Introduced in Schools | Costs (Year 1) | Evidence of Positive Overall Effects | Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations | Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas | Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes | Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement | Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design | Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation | Evidence of Professional Development/ Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| Onward to Excellence II—Elementary | K–12 | 1,000+ | 1981 | \$18,000 | | | | | | | | |
| Pearson Achievement Solutions—Elementary (formerly Co-nect) | K–12 | 1,144 | 1993 | \$70,000/100 teachers | | | Reading and math: | | | | | |
| School Development Program—Elementary | K–12 | 131 | 1968 | Varies | | | Reading and math: | | | | | |
| School Renaissance—Elementary | Pre-K–12 | 189 | 1986 | \$56,884 | | | Reading: Math: | | | | | |
| Success for All—Elementary | K–8 | 1,400+ | 1987 | \$88,580 | | Overall, low-achieving students, Spanish-speaking students, and minority students: Special education students: | Reading: Math science, and social studies: | Overall, attendance and retention rates, and time spent in special education classes: Teacher satisfaction and student suspension rate: School climate: | | | | |
| Ventures Initiative and Focus System—Elementary | K–12 | 32 | 1981 | Varies | | | Reading and math: | | | | | |

Note. Readers are encouraged to use this table in conjunction with the entire report, which explains in detail how the approaches were reviewed and rated. The report also provides detailed information about each model's ratings and offers in-depth descriptions of each model's services.

Table X–2. Summary of Basic Information by Model (continued)

Key:

Grade Levels Served: Although this report focuses on a review of models implemented at the elementary school level, the grade levels served represents the full range of grades that the model serves.

Number of Schools: This reflects the number of schools using the model as reported by the model provider. This number includes all schools regardless of the length of time implemented or the level of implementation.

Year Introduced in Schools: This date refers to the year in which schools first implemented the model. This is included so that readers can judge whether the ratings are influenced by the relative newness of the model.

Costs (Year 1): The costs are estimates provided by the model provider. The full report provides additional details on costs for each model.

Evidence of Positive Overall Effects: This rating focuses on a model's overall effects on student achievement. The rating is a function of the number of studies that were rated as *suggestive* and *conclusive*, the percentage of findings in the suggestive and conclusive studies that demonstrated a positive impact, and the average effect size of those findings. The final rating reflects the amount of rigorous research and the strength of the effects reported in that research. The full report provides complete information about the methodology used to produce all ratings in this report.

Evidence of Positive Effects for Diverse Student Populations: This rating refers to positive effects for the achievement of students from diverse backgrounds, such as low socioeconomic status, minority, special needs, or English language learners.

Evidence of Positive Effects in Subject Areas: This rating refers to positive effects on achievement in specific subject areas, such as reading, math, writing, science, or social studies.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Additional Outcomes: This rating refers to positive effects on additional outcomes, such as student discipline, student attendance, school climate, retention/promotion rates, or teacher satisfaction.

Evidence of Positive Effects on Parent, Family, and Community Involvement: This rating refers to positive effects for improvement in family and community involvement, such as involvement in school governance, participation in family nights, or homework support.

Evidence of Link Between Research and the Model's Design: This rating refers to evidence that the model developer can provide explicit links between research and the core components of the model. Core components are considered essential to successful implementation.

Evidence of Readiness for Successful Implementation: This rating refers to evidence that the model provider ensures initial commitment from schools, tracks and supports full implementation, and helps schools allocate resources for successful implementation.

Evidence of Professional Development/Technical Assistance for Successful Implementation: This rating refers to evidence that the model provider offers comprehensive training opportunities and supporting materials, ensures that professional development effectively supports full model implementation, and develops the school's internal capacity to provide professional development.

● = Very Strong ● = Moderately Strong ● = Moderate ● = Limited / = Zero ⊖ = Negative (NR) = No Rating