

Henry Street School for International Studies

FINAL REPORT



New York City Department of Education External School Curriculum Audit | August 2011

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Introduction

About This Report

This final report is the result of an external school curriculum audit (ESCA) of Henry Street School for International Studies by Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research. This audit was conducted in response to the school being designated as in corrective action under the New York State Education Department differentiated accountability plan, pursuant to the accountability requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act. The utilized ESCA process was developed for and carried out under the auspices of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Office of School Development, within the Division of Portfolio Planning.

About Henry Street School for International Studies

Located in Manhattan, Henry Street School for International Studies (M292) serves students in Grades 6–12. The school population is comprised of 28 percent African American, 58 percent Hispanic, 3 percent Caucasian, and 10 percent Asian students. The average attendance rate for the 2009–10 school year was 86 percent. Seventy percent of the students are eligible for free lunch, and 2 percent are eligible for reduced-price lunch. Henry Street School for International Studies had a 2009–10 enrollment of 511 students in Grades 6–12.

The 2008–2009 New York State Accountability Report indicates that the school's students with disabilities subgroup did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in English language arts (ELA) or in mathematics for the elementary/middle level. The 2009–10 New York State Accountability Report indicates that all students, including African-American, Hispanic/Latino, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged student subgroups did not make AYP in ELA. Similarly, the school's limited-English-proficient subgroup failed to meet AYP in mathematics. This was the case at the elementary/middle levels. The school's prior School in Need of Improvement (SINI) status and subsequent failure to meet AYP benchmarks for two consecutive years across student subgroups has resulted in the identification of the school as in Corrective Action (Year 1) Comprehensive for English language arts and Corrective Action (Year 1) Focused for mathematics at the elementary/middle level. The report also indicates that the school is currently in good standing for ELA, mathematics, and graduation rate at the secondary level.

As stated in the NYCDOE High School Directory¹:

Henry Street School for International Studies is a unique small school sponsored by the Asia Society, where all the students are prepared for college and to find careers through the pursuit of fascinating knowledge about other world regions, including their histories, economies, cultures and languages. Teachers, who are experts in their field, forge supportive relationships with students and parents while providing challenging,

¹ <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/High/Directory/school/?sid=4868> accessed July 18, 2011.

engaging and internationally focused instruction. Teachers partner with community, arts and business organizations to help each student succeed. The school's vibrant multicultural learning environment extends beyond the classroom, through both real and virtual travel, and exchange opportunities with students around the world.

Audit Process at Henry Street School for International Studies

The ESCA approach utilized at the high school level examines six topic areas: student engagement, academic interventions and supports, support for incoming students, classroom instruction, professional development, and courses and extracurriculars. Data were collected at the school level through teacher surveys, administrator interviews, classroom observations, and an analysis of documents submitted by Henry Street School for International Studies, during March, 2011. From these data, Learning Point Associates prepared a series of reports for the school's use.

These reports were presented to the school during a co-interpretationSM meeting, held on May 24, 2011. During this meeting, six stakeholders from the Henry Street School for International Studies community read the reports. Through a facilitated and collaborative group process, they identified individual findings, then developed and prioritized key findings that emerged from information in the reports.

The remainder of this report presents the key findings that emerged from the co-interpretation process, and the actionable recommendations that Learning Point Associates developed in response. Please note that there is not necessarily a one-to-one connection between key findings and recommendations; rather, the key findings are considered as a group, and the recommended strategies are those that we believe are most likely to have the greatest positive impact on student performance at Henry Street School.

Key Findings

After considerable thought and discussion, co-interpretation participants determined a set of key findings. These key findings are detailed in this section.

Critical Key Findings

CRITICAL KEY FINDING 1:

There is a negative climate in classrooms as evidenced by fighting, cursing, few indicators of mutual warmth, and student behavior as a noted disruptor in classrooms.

Supported by evidence from the observation report, Critical Key Finding 1 is one of the two top key findings identified by co-interpretation participants at Henry Street School for International Studies. Observation data identified negative student behavior as the greatest disruptor to classroom instruction. In multiple classrooms observed, there were very few indicators of mutual warmth, infrequent displays of positive affect, inconsistent positive communications, and few signs of respect from students.

CRITICAL KEY FINDING 2:

Analysis and problem solving was the weakest dimension on average across classroom observations and a specific issue in math with no classrooms rated in the high range and 36 percent of all classrooms falling into the low range.

Supported by evidence from the observation reports, Critical Key Finding 2 is another top priority at Henry Street School. Classrooms observed were assigned the lowest average rating in analysis and problem solving. Students were given opportunities to apply higher-order thinking skills infrequently; instead, students performed rote activities that required minimal thinking, self-evaluation, and planning.

CRITICAL KEY FINDING 3:

Despite the presence of a system to address lateness and absenteeism, we find that it interferes with student engagement.

Data from the interview, the document review, and the observation report support the third critical key finding identified by co-interpretation participants. Henry Street School administrators understand that student engagement and attendance is intertwined. Accordingly, the school developed the Henry Street School for International Studies Achieving 92 Percent Attendance Recommended Strategic Plan, which identifies ways to improve attendance. Additionally, the school keeps parents informed about attendance issues so that the parents may help propose and implement solutions. Despite these courses of action, tardiness was still observed as a disruptor in more than half of the classrooms. Observations also indicated that, in most classrooms, students were engaged passively, or not all students exhibited active and sustained engagement throughout the observation period.

Positive Key Findings

Henry Street School for International Studies identified the following two findings as areas of strength in their school and wish to improve further in these areas. To further that improvement, recommendations were made around the following findings.

POSITIVE KEY FINDING 1:

Many opportunities for professional growth are given to teachers at Henry Street School for International Studies, including: professional period meetings to analyze student data; inquiry team meetings to analyze school data; and professional development to write curriculum, set goals, structure interim assessments and use Understanding by Design.

Supported by document review data, the top positive key finding demonstrates several occasions for professional development and teacher collaboration at Henry Street School for International Studies. The auditor suggests that these practices be continued and expanded upon for additional improvement. Additional readings on professional development are provided in the References section.

POSITIVE KEY FINDING 2:

College preparation consists of having opportunities to go on college trips and using an electronic program (Connect) to help with college choices.

Documents reviewed show that, in order to prepare students for college, Henry Street School for International Studies uses Connect, an electronic program to help students with college choices, in addition to giving students opportunities to go on college trips.

Recommendations

Overview of Recommendations

During the Henry Street School for International Studies co-interpretation, school staff and faculty identified several critical key findings that pointed to issues for improvement at the school, and positive key findings that capture the school's successes that can be expanded upon. These key findings made several themes evident. Co-interpretation participants identified collaboration and college preparation as positive issues that Henry Street School for International Studies wishes to expand upon, and instructional issues such as behavior, higher-order thinking skills, and analysis and problem solving as key areas for improvement.

THE FOUR RECOMMENDATIONS

With these issues in mind, Learning Point Associates has developed the following four recommendations:

1. Develop and implement a system of schoolwide positive behavior expectations, interventions, and supports.
2. Implement instructional strategies that increase opportunities for higher-order thinking, analysis and problem solving, and deeper content understanding.
3. Find an effective way to support attendance and reduce tardiness.
4. Enhance students' preparation for college.

For each recommendation, additional information is provided in the narrative on specific actions that the school may consider during its action-planning process, as well as real-life implementation examples and research resources for further reading.

Please note that the order in which these recommendations are presented does not reflect a ranking or prioritization of the recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Positive Behavior Management System

Develop and implement a system of schoolwide positive behavior expectations, interventions, and supports.

Even though the school has a behavior plan, Critical Key Finding 1 and evidence from reports indicate that the behavior plan is not implemented consistently. As noted earlier, student behavior created major or minor disruptions in approximately half of the observed classrooms.

Although data collected as part of the ESCA and contextual evidence from the school indicate that a behavior plan exists, ESCA data also show that the strategies and practices required by the plan are not implemented consistently by classroom teachers. Efforts to improve student behavior in classrooms should be focused on ensuring that the existing behavior plan is relevant, includes content that meets standards outlined by current research and best practice, and outlines realistic expectations for teacher implementation. The following ideas, strategies, and practices share this focus.

A focused effort by the school to implement the school's behavior plan uniformly and reduce classroom disruption should include the following steps:

- A review of the current behavior plan to ensure that it meets the following standards:
 - Clearly established standards for safety, discipline, and respect
 - Concise social expectations and a continuum of supports, interventions, incentives/rewards, and consequences
 - Clear delineation of activities and programs that students are entitled to versus those that are privileges
- Needs-sensing activities to gauge teacher awareness of the content of the existing plan and rationale behind following or failing to follow the plan as part of classroom management
- Professional learning opportunities, based on the data provided by the needs-sensing activities to build staff capacity to implement the existing plan
- Clearly articulated and enforced administrative expectations regarding staff responsibilities for adhering to the established behavior plan and related policies

LINK TO RESEARCH

One of the greatest obstacles within urban schools is the large number of students whose behavior interferes with their achievement or the achievement of others. Often these students behave in a manner that disrupts the educational climate of the classroom and the school. Yet, research studies consistently show that schools that establish a positive social culture also achieve the best academic gains. Thus, one key element for changing this pattern is the consistent implementation of an existing schoolwide behavior program that has been developed with the input and support of parents and the school community. The emphasis is on consistency—both throughout the building and across classrooms. The entire school staff is expected to adopt strategies that will be implemented uniformly. As a result, approaches require professional development and long-term commitment by the school leadership for this innovation to take hold.

QUICK LINKS: Online Sources for More Information

School-Wide PBIS Implementation in High Schools: Current Practice and Future Directions (Publication)

http://www.pbis.org/school/high_school_pbis.aspx

Tiered Interventions in High Schools: Using Primary Lessons Learned to Guide Ongoing Discussion (Publication)

http://www.pbis.org/school/high_school_pbis.aspx

Alcott Middle School Behavior Expectations and Related Teaching Materials (Video)

http://www.pbis.org/swpbs_videos/alcott_mid.aspx

Discovering School-Wide PBS: Moving Towards a Positive Future from Florida's Positive Behavior Support Project (Video)

http://www.pbis.org/swpbs_videos/pbs_video-discovering_swpbs.aspx

Effective schoolwide behavior programs have clearly established standards for safety, discipline, and respect. Students need a secure, orderly environment that promotes their personal well being and supports learning. Rules also should be fair and stress students' responsibility to the school community, their parents, and themselves. All students in the school need to be aware of the rules, the reasons for the rules, and the consequences for breaking the rules. Effective discipline programs are based on praise and encouragement for positive behavior and clear, consistent consequences for misbehavior (Chicago Public Schools, 1998).

Effective schools build and maintain a positive social culture. Successful students are safe (don't hurt themselves or others), respectful (follow adult requests and get along with their peers), and responsible (arrive to class on time and complete assignments). These foundational skills are essential for a safe and orderly school environment. In addition, members of a positive social culture use higher order skills, such as (1) impulse control, (2) anger management, (3) conflict resolution, (4) empathy, and (5) drug and alcohol use resistance and prevention (California Services for Technical Assistance and Training, 2011).

Positive behavior interventions, used correctly by teachers, administrators, and parents, encourage or strengthen desirable behavior and reduce inappropriate behavior. Positive interventions have a greater likelihood of enabling students to change their behavior in a way that does not interrupt learning. Effective interventions encourage praise and recognition of positive behavior and demand clear and consistent responses to misbehavior. Children and youth tend to respond to positive techniques. In some cases, however, more restrictive interventions may be necessary to control and change extremely inappropriate and aggressive behavior (Chicago Public Schools, 1998).

School-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) is based on the research-based application of lessons learned from more than 7,000 schools currently implementing successful changes in their school environment. SWPBS evolved from valid research in the field of special education. SWPBS is not a curriculum, intervention, or practice but a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidenced-based behavioral practices for improving important academic outcomes for all students (Office of Special Education Programs, Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2011).

Researchers have only recently begun to study the effects of schoolwide behavioral management systems and what it takes to implement these systems effectively. While it is too early to offer recipes for success, the work of key researchers and their school-based colleagues are providing some encouraging developments. There are different variations of schoolwide systems of behavioral support, but most have certain features in common. The school-based models featured in the Quick Links on the previous page have been selected to show how different features of a schoolwide behavioral management system can apply across urban, suburban, and rural locations. Apart from sharing these common features, the featured schools recognize that change is incremental and have approached implementation of their schoolwide systems slowly and over an extended time period.

Common Features of School-Wide Behavioral Management Systems

- Total staff commitment to managing behavior, whatever approach is taken
- Clearly defined and communicated expectations and rules
- Consequences and clearly stated procedures for correcting rule-breaking behaviors
- An instructional component for teaching students self-control and/or social skill strategies

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2011) has established the following schoolwide positive behavioral supports guiding principles:

1. Develop a continuum of scientifically based behavior and academic interventions and supports.

If not already established, a well-articulated schoolwide behavior policy/student code inclusive of positive expectations, and minor and major infractions must first be in place. Clarity about expectations for staff's handling of in-class behaviors is important. Authentic faculty feedback and participation are important throughout the policy and system development processes.

2. Use data to make decisions and solve problems.

Data on both minor and major behavior incidents should be collected, tracked, analyzed, and utilized in decision making by the team and faculty on at least a monthly basis. Data should be presented in a user friendly format.

3. Arrange the environment to prevent the development and occurrence of problem behavior.

Post three to five positively stated overarching schoolwide social expectations in visible locations around the school, particularly in problem areas.

4. Teach and encourage prosocial skills and behaviors.

Students should be introduced to and taught the schoolwide expectations, rules for specific settings, rewards and consequence system, and related interventions and supports. Staff should be trained on how to present expectations to students. Ongoing communication and collaboration with families and the community are very important.

5. Implement evidenced-based behavioral practices with fidelity and accountability.

Interventions should be multitiered, include evidence-based programs or strategies, and increase in levels of intensity. The Primary Level, targeting all students, is the overall behavior management plan for the school. The Secondary Level is for a targeted student group or individual students who did not respond to the first level. The Tertiary Level is

highly individualized for the few students who did not respond to the first two levels.

6. Screen universally and monitor student performance and progress continuously.

The behavior management plan should include scheduled data collection and analysis to evaluate schoolwide positive behavioral supports outcomes and plan future adjustments.

7. Determine school capacity.

Other important implementation considerations focus on school capacity—gauging, reviewing, and developing the school’s individual and collective capacities to implement a comprehensive program. Capacity may be assessed by posing the following initial questions:

- What are the schoolwide social expectations and routines?
- Who at the schoolwide level has the ability to both firmly hold students accountable and support them as they attempt to adjust to the program?
- What are the procedural expectations of teachers for managing in-class behaviors?
- What manageable recourse do teachers have to address a pattern of disruptive behavior and/or extremely disruptive and disrespectful instances of behavior in the moment (i.e., immediate referrals to a dean/counselor/administration in-school time-out room and criteria for reentry)?
- What is a specific, realistic, and manageable continuum of interventions and supports?
- What is a specific, realistic, and manageable continuum of consequences for patterns of disruptive in-class behavior?
- How will the selected interventions and supports be monitored and adjusted intermittently as needed? What data will be used? Who is responsible for collecting and analyzing data?
- What are the mechanisms for notifying and collaborating with students’ parents or guardians in the process? How early and how often? Who is responsible for notifying and collaborating with parents?
- What are the thresholds for more severe consequences and losses of privilege for students who exhibit persistent patterns of disruptive behavior and/or extremely disruptive or disrespectful behaviors?
- What outside resources are available to support students and families struggling with issues that are affecting students’ behavior but are well outside of the school’s capacity to address?
- What privileges and incentives (i.e., extracurriculars, athletics, field trips, social activities) are currently in place that can serve as points of leverage? Do more need to be identified or developed?
- How are students who actively exhibit established desirable social behaviors formally recognized?

The aforementioned questions can fuel the school’s needs sensing and aid in identifying gaps in awareness and understanding that might be addressed through professional development.

Positive Behavior Support in the Classroom

- Arrange classroom to minimize crowding and distraction.
- Establish explicit classroom routines and directions that are linked to schoolwide routines and directions.
- Post three to five positively stated expectations and teach and reinforce them.
- Provide frequent acknowledgment of appropriate behaviors.
- Give students multiple opportunities to respond and participate during instruction.
- Actively supervise the class during instruction.
- Ignore or provide quick, direct, explicit reprimands or redirections in response to inappropriate behavior.
- Implement multiple strategies (e.g., points, praise) to acknowledge appropriate behavior linked to schoolwide strategies.
- Give specific feedback in response to social and academic errors and correct responses.

(Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, & Sugai, 2006)

A Case Study on the Schoolwide Application of Positive Behavior Support in an Urban High School

A rare three-year participatory case study of schoolwide positive behavioral supports implementation in an urban high school yielded the following findings.

- **The school required three years to implement the plan.** The school required three academic years to approach full implementation across five domains of the plan—defining expectations, acknowledging expectations, setting up a system for responding to behavior, making data-based decisions, and managing the plan. Two other domains—teaching behavioral expectations, and gaining district support—were more difficult to achieve.
- **Behavioral outcomes were positive.** After three years, the school saw significant reductions in the total number of referrals per student per year, incidents of serious disobedience of authority, the number of daily referrals, and school uniform violations. As a result, less administrative time was spent on discipline, and instructional time in the classroom increased. In addition, the action researchers identified several challenges to implementation that they considered unique to high schools:
 - It was important for this adolescent population that rewards/acknowledgments be meaningful and cool, but not babyish.
 - There was a need to overcome staff resistance to teaching behaviors directly rather than reinforcing them. This points to the need for a system in which teaching these behaviors occurs on a regular basis and is integrated into the curriculum. Understanding the training, priorities, and needs of high school teachers also is critical.
 - Owing to the complexity and sheer size of many high schools, initial implementation may take longer and require more energy and effort during the initial data-gathering efforts and development of partnerships than at other levels. Moreover, a perfect stepwise assumption should not be made regarding the succession of interventions.
 - Because of the sheer numbers of staff and students within a large high school, developing and agreeing on a consistent policy for a range of issues requires sustained effort.
 - Another challenge was the modification of the discipline referral form to assess and track behaviors in a meaningful way. Modifications included making it easier for teachers to provide data about the location and time of referrals and asking teachers to hypothesize about the students' possible motivation for their behavior (e.g., gaining attention).

(Bohanon et al., 2006)

Recommendation 2: Instructional Rigor

Implement instructional strategies that increase opportunities for higher-order thinking, analysis and problem solving, and deeper content understanding.

LINK TO RESEARCH

Instruction that pushes students to engage in higher-level thinking leads to deeper learning for students (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Newmann, Bryk, & Nagaoka, 2001; Pashler et al., 2007). Too often, particularly in schools where students are struggling, instruction focuses on lower-level thinking skills, basic content, and test preparation. Teachers of struggling student groups or tracks usually offer students “less exciting instruction, less emphasis on meaning and conceptualization, and more rote drill and practice activities” than do teachers of high-performing or heterogeneous groups and classes (Cotton, 1989, p. 8). Yet this focus on basic skills does not necessarily improve student achievement.

Several research studies were completed from 1990 to 2003 “which demonstrated that students who experienced higher levels of authentic instruction and assessment showed higher achievement than students who experienced lower levels of authentic instruction and assessment” (Newmann, King, & Carmichael, 2007, p. vii). These results included higher achievement on standardized tests (Newmann et al., 2001). It also is important to note that these results “were consistent for Grades 3–12, across different subject areas (mathematics, social studies, language arts, science), and for different students regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status” (Newmann et al., 2007, p. vii).

Teachers need to provide structured opportunities and time for students to take on higher-level cognitive work (Tomlinson, 2003). In discussing the *gradual release of responsibility model*, Fisher and Frey (2008) state that “the cognitive load should shift slowly and purposefully from teacher-as-model, to joint responsibility, to independent practice and application by the learner” (p. 2). This process allows students to become what Graves and Fitzgerald (2003) call “competent, independent learners” (p. 98).

There are several steps to ensure that students are being asked to complete this type of intellectually challenging work, which increases test scores and improves performance on authentic assessment measures as well. Newmann et al. (2001) define *authentically challenging intellectual work* as the “construction of knowledge, through the use of disciplined inquiry, to produce discourse, products, or performances that have value beyond school” (p. 14). Daggett (2005) agrees, stating that all students should be pushed “to achieve academic excellence, which ultimately boils down to applying rigorous knowledge to unpredictable, real-world situations, such as those that drive our rapidly changing world” (p. 5). Disciplined inquiry, which occurs in the classroom, requires that students “(1) use a prior knowledge base; (2) strive for in-depth understanding rather than superficial awareness; and (3) express their ideas and findings with elaborated communication” (Newmann et al., 2001, p. 15).

QUICK LINKS: Online Sources for More Information

Doing What Works: Providing
Research-Based Education
Practices Online (Website)

<http://dww.ed.gov/>

Organizing Instruction and
Study to Improve Learning
(Publication)

[http://ies.ed.gov/
ncee/wwc/pdf/
practiceguides/20072004.
pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/20072004.pdf)

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

1. Cultivate schoolwide high expectations for students.

- Align instruction with the New York State P–12 Common Core Learning Standards. According to the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE, 2011b), schools in New York City are set to have fully adopted the P–12 Common Core Learning Standards for students to take aligned assessments during the 2014–15 school year. These standards are internationally benchmarked and rigorous; they clearly explain what students at each grade level are expected to know and be able to do. Some schools were involved in pilot programs in 2010–11.
- Develop a shared understanding of instructional rigor through collaborative curriculum planning, design, and/or redesign. When developing or revising curriculum maps, identify opportunities for formative assessment tasks that encourage higher-level thinking for each unit of study.
- Through teacher collaboration, develop common student assignments that ask students to perform rigorous and authentic tasks.
- Through teacher collaboration, develop common student assessments that include rigorous and authentic summative assessment tasks.
- Monitor implementation of expectations through classroom observations, lesson plan review, and student achievement results on common formative assessments.

2. Provide professional development for teachers on instructional strategies that push students to engage in higher-order thinking.

- Provide ongoing professional development for teachers that describes the importance of pushing students to do higher-level thinking and provides strategies for how to do so. This training may be provided through ongoing professional development sessions and/or support of an instructional coach.
- Create clear expectations regarding how teachers should implement this professional development in the classroom (e.g., one strategy utilized each day as reflected in lesson plans, authentic assessments at the end of each unit).
- Identify how this professional development can be incorporated into scheduled teacher collaboration sessions.
- Monitor implementation of professional development through classroom observations, lesson plan review, and student achievement results on common formative assessments.

3. Develop examples of authentic intellectual work.

The following example can be used to help school leaders and teachers understand what authentic intellectual work might look like.

Examples of High-Scoring and Low-Scoring Measures of Authentic Intellectual Work

The research report, *Improving Chicago's Schools: Authentic Intellectual Work and Standardized Tests: Conflict or Coexistence?* by Newmann, Bryk, and Nagaoka (2001) provides examples of two sixth-grade writing assignments: one that scored high and one that scored low on measures of authentic intellectual work. The authors conclude each example with a commentary of why the assignment received the score that it did.

High-Scoring Writing Assignment

Write a paper persuading someone to do something. Pick any topic that you feel strongly about, convince the reader to agree with your belief, and convince the reader to take a specific action on this belief.

Commentary

In this high-scoring assignment, demands for construction of knowledge are evident because students have to select information and organize it into convincing arguments. By asking students to convince others to believe and act in a certain way, the task entails strong demands that the students support their views with reasons or other evidence, which calls for elaborated written communication. Finally, the intellectual challenge is connected to students' lives because they are to write on something they consider to be personally important.

Low-Scoring Writing Assignment

Identify the parts of speech of each underlined word below. All eight parts of speech—nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections—are included in this exercise.

1. My room is arranged for comfort and efficiency.
2. As you enter, you will find a wooden table on the left.
3. I write and type.
4. There is a book shelf near the table.
5. On this book shelf, I keep both my pencils and paper supplies.
6. I spend many hours in this room.
7. I often read or write there during the evening...

Commentary

This assignment requires no construction of knowledge or elaborated communication, and does not pose a question or problem clearly connected to students' lives. Instead it asks students to recall one-word responses, based on memorization or definitions of parts of speech.

Reprinted from page 24 of *Improving Chicago's Schools: Authentic Intellectual Work and Standardized Tests: Conflict or Coexistence?* by Fred M. Newmann, Anthony S. Bryk, and Jenny K. Nagaoka, available online at <http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/p0a02.pdf>. Copyright © 2001 Consortium on Chicago School Research. Reprinted with permission.

Further examples of authentic intellectual instruction, teachers' assignments, and student work can be found in the following source:

Newmann, F. M., King, M. B., & Carmichael, D. L. (2007). *Authentic instruction and assessment: Common standards for rigor and relevance in teaching academic subjects*. Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Education. Retrieved July 18, 2011, from <http://centerforaiw.com/sites/centerforaiw.com/files/Authentic-Instruction-Assessment-BlueBook.pdf>

Perrysburg High School

Perrysburg High School in Perrysburg, Ohio serves students in Grades 9–12. Perrysburg is a suburb of Toledo, Ohio.

Perrysburg is the sole high school in the Perrysburg Exempted Village District in Wood County. Nate Ash teaches physics to eleventh and twelfth graders. Ash has taught professional development programs at the Northwest Ohio Center of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education, and at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. He acts as a mentor to new science teachers.

Ash teaches physics using an inquiry approach. Students do lab activities and solve problems together to understand key concepts in physics. In each lesson he poses higher-order questions to help his students build explanations: How do you know that? What would happen if we changed this variable? How is this similar or different? Ash uses whiteboards in a number of ways: for group problem solving, representing a phenomenon with pictures, and student presentations.

Each new unit/topic is introduced with a hands-on activity. Ash presents a physical situation to students, has them manipulate the variables, and then narrows down their list of variables to design an experiment. Every experiment is introduced with an open-ended question (What would happen if...? What happens when...?). Students work in small groups to describe what happens with graphs, pictures, mathematical equations, and written expression. When they are finished, students present their work to the class in whiteboard sessions.

Ash explains how the whiteboard sessions give important insights into student thinking: “We can really see if the students understand on every different level how that problem works or how that situation works. And if there is a disjoint between any of those representations, that gives us someplace to go, that gives us something to talk about, something to work through.”

Students appreciate being in charge of their own learning, having the opportunity to challenge their peers, and develop critical thinking skills as they explain their ideas in front of a group. As Ash says, “Students really like this approach because, instead of just giving them the answer, it gives them a chance to explain to each other what’s going on. And I like it because all the times that I have done physics problems on the board and gone through the answers, I got pretty good at doing physics problems but my students never got any better at all.”

Ash has found that with this approach his students are no longer trying to find equations that fit the problems, but working to develop a deep understanding of the underlying concepts.

Description excerpted from the Doing What Works website at http://dww.ed.gov/media/CL/OIS/TopicLevel/case_perrysburg_52708rev.pdf

Recommendation 3: Addressing Truancy and Tardiness

Find an effective way to support attendance and reduce tardiness.

LINK TO RESEARCH

Truancy has been identified as one of the 10 major problems in U.S. schools (Rohrman, 1993). In New York City's public school system, 99,635 students, approximately 10 percent of the entire population, were absent on any given day during the 2009–10 academic year.

The consequences of truancy are serious and numerous. Truancy, whether for a full school day or isolated to individual class periods during the day, is often one of the first and best indicators of academic failure, suspension, and expulsion (Trujillo, 2006). Students with the highest truancy rates have the lowest academic achievement rates, and because truants are the youth most likely to drop out of school, they have high dropout rates, as well (Dynarski & Gleason, 1999). Furthermore, truant youths often are absent from school for such a long time that it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to catch up. "This leads to further disengagement from school, from teachers and ultimately can lead to serious antisocial behavior like juvenile delinquency" (Gonzales, Richards, & Harmacek, 2002). Truancy has been linked to serious delinquent activity in youth and to significant negative behavior and characteristics in adults, such as substance abuse, gang activity, and involvement in criminal activities (Bell, Rosen, & Dynlacht, 1994; Dryfoos, 1990; Garry, 1996; Huizinga, Loeber, & Thornberry, 1995; Rohrman, 1993). These studies provide convincing evidence that educators and researchers need to take the issue of student absenteeism and the need to improve attendance seriously (Trujillo, 2006). After all, research indicates that students with better attendance score higher on achievement tests (Lamdin, 1996; Myers, 2000) and that schools with better rates of student attendance tend to have higher passing rates on standardized achievement tests (Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, & Ehrenberg, 1991).

Improving student attendance at school requires a holistic approach that addresses school and classroom factors, as well as factors outside of school. Several school characteristics and classroom practices are predictive of student attendance rates. Student perceptions of the classroom as chaotic, or the teacher as uncaring or boring were associated with student absenteeism and truancy (Duckworth & de Jung, 1989; Roderick et al., 1997). By contrast, attendance was better, even in high-poverty schools, if there were quality teachers, courses, and extracurricular offerings (Eskenazi, Eddins, & Beam, 2003). Schools and teachers, however, cannot solve attendance problems alone.

Educators have a responsibility to help families and communities become involved in reducing student absenteeism. Studies show that when schools develop school, family, and community partnership programs, they have higher levels of parent involvement (Desimone, Finn-Stevenson, & Henrich, 2000; Epstein, 2001; Sheldon, 2003b; Sheldon & Van Voorhis, 2004), higher percentages of students pass standardized achievement tests (Sheldon, 2003a). In addition, schools take fewer disciplinary actions with students (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002). There is, then, good reason to believe that the development of partnership programs can decrease absenteeism.

QUICK LINKS: Online Sources for More Information

Reports and Publications
From the National Center
for School Engagement
(Reports)

<http://www.schoolengagement.org/index.cfm/Reports>

Truancy Publications From
the Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention
(Publications)

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/search/SearchResults.asp?ti=11&si=32&kw=&p=topic&strItem=&strSingleItem=Publications&PreviousPage=searchResults>

What Research Says About
Family-School-Community
Partnerships (Research
Review)

<http://www.schoolengagement.org/TruancyPreventionRegistry/Admin/Resources/Resources/WhatResearchSaysAboutFamily-School-CommunityPartnerships.pdf>

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Implementing initiatives to address truancy and tardiness is a daunting task, and the strategies presented in this recommendation, while shown effective through research and practice, are large in scale and aimed at long-term change to the school culture. In considering the strategies and practices to address this issue, it is important to understand that real change does not happen immediately and requires sustained focus. In light of this, Henry Street School for International Studies staff should seek a tiered approach to any of the research-based practices, implementation considerations, and examples from the field.

This tiered approach should start with simple, smaller scale activities that can generate quick wins for the school. The purpose behind this initial pursuit of quick wins is multifaceted. First, quick wins are still wins, regardless of their size. In addition, quick wins, partnered with the best efforts of the school to publicize the positive changes, can build community buy-in and enthusiasm toward greater efforts and changes down the line. Furthermore, large-scale, long-term change requires significant, sustained momentum; starting that process with quick wins initiates that momentum. The school should continue to identify opportunities for quick wins to maintain and/or inject momentum throughout the course of bigger changes that require more time and sustained attention.

1. **Involve parents/guardians and family members.**

Involving parents or guardians and family members in truancy prevention and intervention is critical. There is a large body of research demonstrating the positive outcomes associated with increased parent or guardian involvement in school activities, including improved academic achievement and reduced likelihood of dropout. Involving parents or guardians in truancy prevention programs is more than simply inviting their attendance at a school meeting. True participation means that parents or guardians are sought after for their advice, experience, and expertise in the community; as clients of our public system of care; and because of their importance in their children's lives. This means engaging parents/guardians as a natural course of events, not just when things are not going well (National Center for School Engagement, 2005).

According to the National Center for School Engagement, to be meaningfully engaged, parents must have access to information and be empowered to act on it. Parents must be able to work with school staff to promote student achievement, close the achievement gap, and reduce the dropout rate. Therefore, parents also must be involved in the decision making at their school.

Meaningful parent involvement should meet all of the following National Standards for Parent or Family Involvement Programs (developed by the National PTA through the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, based on the six types of parent involvement identified by Joyce Epstein from the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University):

- **Communicating.** Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.
- **Parenting.** Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

- **Student learning.** Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- **Volunteering.** Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance is sought.
- **School decision making and advocacy.** Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
- **Collaboration with the community.** Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning. (Epstein, 2001)

Potential Quick Win: Implement a system in which teachers call parents/guardians of students who have missed more than two days in a given week, and make these logs available electronically to all school staff. Include monitoring of these logs with existing attendance data review, and allow teachers to use some of their dedicated planning, supervision, and/or professional learning time to place these calls.

2. Collaborate with the community.

It is important to identify and use community resources and services to strengthen schools, families, and student learning and development. Although the student school-community link is the least supported and publicized component of the school-family-community partnership model (Jordon, Orozco, & Averett, 2001), research indicates that the quality of those connections influences student learning (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Effective partnerships are based on understanding the cultural, socioeconomic, health, social, and recreational needs and interests of each school's families. Efforts to that end include family literacy programs, health services, English as a second language programs, and vocational training (Espinosa, 1995). In addition, according to the National Center for School Engagement (2007) there is a need for schools to form partnerships with local businesses and law enforcement in order to limit the areas where students can congregate while they are away from school during the day and to have truant youth returned to school.

Potential Quick Win: Request that local businesses and/or community spaces post signs promoting school attendance.

3. Take a comprehensive approach.

Effective programs focus on prevention and intervention simultaneously. As described by the National Center for School Engagement (2007), many factors contribute to truant behavior: Youth fail to attend school due to personal, academic, school climate, and family-related issues. A truancy program may be called upon to help a family obtain counseling, to advocate for a family to receive entitlement benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, to negotiate a new school schedule, to figure out transportation solutions, and to provide other more traditional social work activities such as mental health evaluation and counseling services. An effective truancy plan will address these issues; school staff will be prepared to respond to the first unexcused absence of an elementary student and not give up on the 100th absence of the habitually truant adolescent.

Potential Quick Wins: Integrate data reviewed by the school's attendance team with data reviewed within the houses and departments, and triangulate this data with other academic data. Allow flexible scheduling and attendance arrangements for students taking a portion of their coursework in online, asynchronous environments or at partner schools and colleges.

4. Use incentives and sanctions.

Meaningful sanctions for truant behavior and meaningful incentives for school attendance are key components of promising and model truancy programs. Sanctions, traditionally used to respond to truancy, frequently mirror the punitive steps taken against other undesirable behaviors: detention, suspension, petition to juvenile court, and denial of privileges. Incentives tend to be recognition-based, but may include special experiences or even monetary rewards. The critical task is to design sanctions and incentives that are meaningful to youth and their families. Addressing truancy and tardiness as problem behaviors as part of a schoolwide system of positive behavior support ties directly to this practice. For more information, see <http://www.pbis.org/>

Potential Quick Win: In addition to incentives already provided to high-attendance students, provide tangible incentives to students who reach tiers of improvement in tardiness and attendance.

5. Improve afterschool programming.

Studies have shown that participation in afterschool programming can yield significant benefits for youth, families, and society. In many studies, the greatest benefits were realized among low-income students. These studies found that youth who were enrolled in effective afterschool programs that included academic support, mentoring, recreation, and cultural/social enrichment often fared better than their peers in a variety of areas. Improved behavior resulting from participation in afterschool programs includes better school attendance (Kane, 2004; Little & Harris, 2003).

Potential Quick Wins: Ensure that afterschool opportunities available to students on the early attendance shift also are available before school to students on the later attendance shift. Integrate student voices in developing and setting agendas for extended-day activities.

Combating Tardiness and Truancy

The National Center for School Engagement (2007) compiled the following examples of strategies to combat tardiness and truancy.

Track and mentor students. A daily attendance accountability log is a tool to help redirect truant students with a proactive approach to time management and attendance accountability. Through the use of an attendance log and mentoring, students are shown structure, responsibility, and accountability and begin to understand the importance of attendance and academic achievement. Source: Truancy Reduction Achieved in Our Communities Project, San Antonio, TX

Collaborate in attendance planning. In Virginia, students and their families come together with the school, court, and community to discuss and implement appropriate levels of intervention, including an attendance contract, monitoring, and treatment. Source: Alexandria School District, Alexandria, VA

Reengage truant students. Project Reconnect is a court-ordered, 30-day tracking program that reengages students in school. Students use a tracking form that must be completed every hour by every teacher. The form records attendance, homework, and behavior. Students also are required to complete community service hours based on their specific needs. Source: Warner Robbins Schools, Warner Robbins, GA

Offer incentives. As a reward, a lunch time soccer game is organized by school staff for students with good attendance. Source: Summit School District, Frisco, CO

Promote family-school-community events. A school in California participated in International Walk to School Day in October, during which 200 students and families walked to school together. The school was able to partner with the Nutrition Network, which supplied water and fresh vegetables to the participants. Source: Schmitt School, Westminster, CA

Expand family and community involvement. In addition to attending the standard parent night, parents and students are required to complete hours toward building community partnerships (e.g., volunteering at the local museum, city clean-up day). These types of strong, supportive partnerships lead to the development of leadership, community involvement, attendance accountability, and responsibility. Source: Truancy Reduction Achieved in Our Communities Project, San Antonio, TX

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Additional resources for engaging students in a manner that can improve attendance can be found in Recommendation 3: Student Engagement.

Recommendation 4: College Preparation

Enhance students' preparation for college.

LINK TO RESEARCH

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the share of tenth graders who stated that they hoped to earn a bachelor's degree or higher doubled, from 40 percent in 1980 to 80 percent in 2002 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Similarly, American College Testing's 2010 Report on the Conditions of College and Career Readiness shows that a total of 89 percent of all ACT-tested high school graduates aspire to continue their education after high school graduation, with 7 percent of students aspiring to complete a two-year postsecondary degree, 38 percent aiming to earn a bachelor's degree, and 44 percent intending to obtain a graduate or professional degree.

These high aspirations reflect an awareness of economic realities. During the course of a lifetime, people who do not have a college degree earn about half as much as those who do, and the value of a college degree is only expected to increase. The United States Department of Labor estimated that 87 percent of the new jobs in high-wage, high-growth occupations expected by 2014 will be filled by workers who have at least some postsecondary education. Currently, there is a significant difference in income between those who have a college degree and those who do not. Household income as well as per capita income in the United States rise significantly as educational attainment increases. The average earnings range from \$21,023 for high school dropouts, to \$31,283 for high school graduates, to \$58,613 for college graduates, to \$125,019 for workers with professional degrees (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

Despite these ambitious goals, not many students who graduate from high school are adequately prepared for college. In New York State, for instance, only 37 percent of students who entered high school in 2006 left four years later adequately prepared for college, with even smaller percentages of minority graduates and those in the largest cities meeting that standard (New York State Education Department [NYSED], 2011). In New York City, schools that received the highest grades in the NYSED's school assessment system are graduating students who are not ready for college. Of the 70 high schools that earned an A on the most recent city progress report and have at least one third of graduates attending a college of the City University of New York, 46 posted remediation rates above 50 percent, according to reports sent to the city's high schools. Over all, the remediation rate—the percentage of students who fail a City University of New York entrance exam and require remediation classes—rose to 49 percent in 2010, up from 45 percent in 2007. The combined remediation rate for the 50 high schools serving the highest achieving students, based on middle school test scores, was 21 percent. For the 50 schools serving the lowest achieving students, the City University remediation rate was 77 percent (Phillips & Gebeloff, 2011).

Many students do not succeed in college because they have not gained the content knowledge, study skills, and willingness to work hard in high school that are required for college. Students who have not acquired college-level reading, writing, and math skills are generally required to take remedial or developmental classes once they get to college. And students who take these developmental courses are less likely to earn a degree (Adelman, 2006).

QUICK LINKS: Online Sources for More Information

*Educational Policy
Improvement Center's
Publications on College
Readiness (Publications)*

https://www.epiconline.org/publications/college_readiness

*College and Career Ready:
Helping All Students
Succeed Beyond High
School*

<https://www.epiconline.org/files/pdf/CCRbook.pdf>

A helpful step in addressing this challenge is to think in terms of postsecondary readiness, not college admission. All students need to reach high levels of achievement and have opportunities to apply knowledge and skills they are learning and mastering in relevant real-world settings. The challenge is to design high schools in ways that ensure their instructional programs are doing one thing exceedingly well: focusing on a core set of knowledge and skills and then ensuring that all students have the opportunity to master the core at a level sufficient to enable them to continue learning beyond high school (Conley, 2010).

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Remembering that this was a positive finding for Henry Street School for International Studies, school leadership may wish to build on the college visitation program as well as their use of the Connect program to enhance their college readiness program. The following suggestions can be used to inform expansion of the existing program.

1. Focus on the four dimensions of college and career readiness.

College and career readiness can be defined as the level of preparation students need in order to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in a credit-bearing course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree or transfer to a baccalaureate program, or in a high-quality certificate program that enables students to enter a career pathway with potential future advancement.

A comprehensive college preparation program must address four distinct dimensions of college readiness: cognitive strategies, content knowledge, self-management skills, and knowledge about postsecondary education. This model serves as the basis for determining how prepared students are for college and careers.

The Four-Dimension Model

Key Cognitive Strategies. The development of a range of metacognitive capabilities has been identified consistently and emphatically by those who teach entry-level college courses as being as important as or more important than any specific content knowledge taught in high school. Key cognitive strategies are used in activities such as formulating problems, conducting research, interpreting conflicting evidence, communicating conclusions and findings, and completing all work with precision and accuracy.

Key Content Knowledge. Inextricably bound with key cognitive strategies is key content knowledge. Greater consensus is emerging regarding the content knowledge associated with college and career success. These big ideas of each content area are important building blocks that can serve as frameworks for the development of individual high school courses and an integrated, sequential program of study during four years of high school.

Key Self-Management Skills. Similarly important are the attitudes and behavioral attributes that students must demonstrate to succeed in postsecondary education. Among these are the ability to study, manage time, be aware of one's performance, demonstrate persistence with difficult tasks, and set and achieve academic and

personal goals. These behaviors require mastery of specific skills combined with a mind set and attitude toward learning. The common element across all of these is a high degree of self-management, self-awareness, and intentionality on the part of the student. These attitudes and dispositions need to be developed slowly and systematically over time if they are to become habitual for students by the time they reach a postsecondary program where they will be expected to take much responsibility for their own learning.

Key Knowledge about Postsecondary Education. An increasing number of studies have highlighted the importance of students' possessing knowledge of how the postsecondary system operates and the difference between high school and college. These studies have identified the adjustment challenges students face when attending a postsecondary program because, for most students, going to college is like entering a new culture. This profound transition, disorienting for even the best-prepared students, is particularly difficult for students from communities that have little prior experience with postsecondary education. All students, particularly those without prior knowledge of the college culture, lack critical information in a number of areas and are not able to read important cues. Examples range from procedural tasks, such as how to choose among colleges and how to apply to college and for financial aid, to more sophisticated insights into how college is different from high school, how to interact with professors and peers in college, and a host of other types of knowledge critical to student success in applying to and matriculating at college.

2. Help students determine their college and career readiness.

Following are tools, methods, and indicators that will help students understand how ready they are for postsecondary studies:

- **Course Titles and Grade Point Averages.** These are the most common tools to define readiness in terms of high school course-taking patterns, including the titles, perceived challenge level, and the total units required for graduation combined with the grades students receive in those courses.
- **Tests.** A more direct approach is to test a set of the knowledge that students are presumed to need to know in order to succeed in college entry-level courses. Admissions tests are the vehicle of choice for this type of testing.
- **Performance in College Courses.** Students who must enroll in remedial courses or fail entry-level courses find graduating from college much more difficult. One of the first orders of business in improving college readiness is to reduce the number of high school graduates who end up in remedial courses in college, particularly in community college. Remediation suggests that the school's program is not adequately geared toward preparing students for college admission or success.
- **General Education Requirements for a Baccalaureate Degree.** The United States' undergraduate system includes and emphasizes general education requirements that all students must meet in order to graduate, regardless of their major. This means that incoming students who wish to pursue a degree will be expected to be capable of performing in a number of subject areas, not just their area of interest or strength. Being prepared to succeed in general education courses is key to success for college students.

How Schools Prepare Students for College

The American Diploma Project (2004) used multiple criteria to identify schools that were doing an outstanding job of preparing students for college. These schools came from a variety of community types (urban, suburban, and rural), and served large numbers of students from groups that have historically been underrepresented in college. Here are some brief examples of how those schools put the four principles into practice.

Principle 1: Create and Maintain a College-Going Culture

High schools with a college-going culture project a schoolwide belief that all students can succeed in postsecondary education. The question for students is not whether to attend college, but how to prepare for college and make the transition successful. Faculty advisors met with a designated group of students monthly to discuss grades and course selection, and develop strategies to overcome learning obstacles. In 12th grade, college counselors worked intensively with students, providing support related to college application, choice, and financial aid. Schools arranged multiple college visits to demystify college, especially for potential first-generation college attendees. Senior seminars, required for all 12th graders, provided information, financial aid applications, encouragement, and support.

Principle 2: Align the Core Academic Program with College Readiness Standards

These schools used a set of college readiness standards to align course expectations, assignments, goals, and activities vertically across Grades 9–12. Smaller schools, newly constituted schools, and charter schools had more success than large comprehensive high schools in achieving full alignment, but even the large schools demonstrated areas in which alignment had been achieved. Another observed strategy was to require all students at a given grade level in a given subject to complete a common performance task. For example, all students taking a sophomore English course might be required to complete the same writing task, which would be scored using common criteria.

Principle 3: Teach Key Self-Management Skills

These schools provided numerous strategies and programs to help students improve their study skills, including: collecting, organizing, and retaining factual information; note taking; managing time more effectively and efficiently; working in teams; and reflecting on the quality of their work. Students in one high school assembled work samples regularly, completed self-assessments using a common scoring guide, and led a conference with their advisor and parents at which they presented and assessed their work and set goals. Many schools provided day planners or other time-management tools. Some schools monitored students' use of these planning tools.

Principle 4: Prepare Students for the Complexity of Applying to College

Many of the schools in this study had large concentrations of students who would be first-generation college attendees. Educators provided college information to these students repeatedly and systematically throughout high school. Some schools required all students to take one or more college readiness tests, such as the American College Testing Program's EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT series, or the College Board's PSAT and SAT. Student advisors helped students interpret the results and use them to become better prepared for college. Many of these schools had extensive student and parent programs to explain financial aid. Some offered help completing financial aid forms. Most of the schools made college real to their students through visitation programs, dual enrollment courses, and opportunities for the students to take college courses. In all cases, the high schools supported students who were engaged in these activities.

Ensuring Successful Transition to College

The following examines specific measures that have been put into place to further ensure a successful transition to college based on a conference convened by the MDRC with The Council of the Great City Schools and The National High School Alliance.

Making sure that high schools teach courses that prepare students for college. Colleges expect applicants to have taken certain classes that cover certain content areas. Omaha, working with the College Board, has pursued a strategy known as vertical teaming to define a course of study for elementary, middle, and high school students. The goals are to ensure that students will leave middle school with the skills needed to do high school work and that they will graduate from high school having taken the classes and learned the content that colleges expect.

Exposing high school students to college-level courses. Students are better prepared for college if they understand the level of work expected of them. Advanced Placement (AP) classes are designed to offer challenging, college-level content to students while they are still in high school. In Buffalo, New York, and St. Louis, Missouri, all high schools offer AP classes. The Memphis (Tennessee) City Schools have taken advantage of technology, adding e-learning options to the curriculum in order to increase student access to AP classes. Dual enrollment classes are another way of infusing college-level courses into students' high school experience and, thereby, of easing the transition to college. For the past 10 years, seniors in Charleston, South Carolina, have been able to take college credit classes on their high school campus with adjunct professors from the College of Charleston and Trident Technical College. In Toledo, Ohio, students can spend their entire senior year in college.

Starting college planning in ninth grade (if not earlier). Some ninth graders in a number of districts develop individualized high school graduation and postgraduation plans to take field trips that expose them to college and university settings. Students in the Saint Paul (Minnesota) Public Schools start planning even earlier: The district operates an advisory program in which eighth grade students create a six-year plan that takes them through high school and beyond.

Making college planning a family affair. It is useful to enlist parents or guardians in the college planning process, especially if they have not attended college or are unfamiliar with what is required. In Richmond, Virginia, for example, teachers now meet individually with parents and students to formulate long-term action plans. These plans are informed by the results of a test that helps ascertain whether the student is on a successful trajectory toward college or career readiness.

Strengthening the role of guidance counselors. Teachers and guidance counselors may be the only college-educated adults to whom many students have regular access. Des Moines, Iowa, has instituted a plan in which all advisors are responsible for no more than 20 students with whom they meet individually for six years to plan for postsecondary education or job training.

Showing students the money. It is important to make students aware of available scholarships and other financial aid options. Helping students and their families understand and complete the famously lengthy and detailed Free Application for Federal Student Aid form is another way schools and counselors can help ensure that students with limited resources can go to college.

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Suggestions for Further Reading

INSTRUCTIONAL RIGOR

Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S. et al. (2008). *Turning around chronically low-performing schools: A practice guide*. (NCEE #2008-4020). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences.. Retrieved July 18, 2011, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION

School leaders may find the following resources useful when implementing an embedded, sustained professional development process.

Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (2004). *Instructional coaching: Professional development strategies that improve instruction*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. Retrieved July 18, 2011, from <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/InstructionalCoaching.pdf>

Dana, N. F., & Yendol-Hoppey, D. (2008). *The reflective educator's guide to professional development: Coaching inquiry-oriented learning communities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Eaker, R., DuFour, R., & Burnette, R. (2002). *Getting started: Reculturing schools to become professional learning communities*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Hassell, E. (1999). *Professional development: Learning from the best. A toolkit for schools and districts based on the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development*. Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Education Laboratory. Retrieved June 18, 2011, from <http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/pd/lftb.pdf>

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