Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools

12 High Leverage Strategies

Priority School Institute
Statewide System of Support
Michigan State University

July 9-10, 24-25, 2013

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12 High Leverage Strategies

Learner Outcomes

- **Emerge** with a substantially enhanced knowledge of what works for underachieving students living in poverty.
- **Understand** how high-poverty schools become high-performing.
- **Conduct a review of your transformation plan** in light of the information provided.
- **Be compelled to take informed action** to better meet the needs of underachieving students living in poverty.

Revisiting Four Areas of Transformation Plan

1. **Job-embedded PD** designed to ensure effective teaching and capacity to implement the school’s strategies
2. **Use of data** to select and implement a research-based instructional program
3. **Use of individual student data** to inform and differentiate instruction
4. **Strategies for continuous engagement of families and communities**

Ask Yourself…
How Are We Doing?

Validate
Challenge to Improve

Now Available
From ASCD
## Collaborate / Network!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Are You?</th>
<th>What Level?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>High School</td>
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<td>Specialists/ISD/RESA/SDE</td>
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## What are Bright Spots?
- Successful Efforts Worth Emulating
- Illuminate The Road Map For Action and
- Spark The Hope That Change Is Possible.

### Bright Spot Philosophy

Identify what’s working right now and how can we do more of it?

## Kids Are Smart!

How well do you know your students?

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**Heath & Heath, Switch, 2010**

**Who Are You?**

- Teachers
- Principals
- Central Office
- Specialists/ISD/RESA/SDE

**What Level?**

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
Michigan 100

Of Every 100 9th Grade Students in Michigan...

71 Graduate from High School in 4 Years

42 Enroll in College in the Fall

28 are Still Enrolled in the Sophomore Year

18 Graduate w/in 6 Years
Part I
Learning Together

• Learning From Others: Stories of Inspiration and Hope
• Assessing What You Know About Poverty: The Importance of Accurate Information
• Constructing a Framework for Action

Part II
Leading Together

• Build Leadership Capacity—What do we do? What do we stop doing?
• Focus on Learning—What do we do? What do we stop doing?
• Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment—What do we do? What do we stop doing?

STEP 1: READ FORWARD

STEP 2: JOT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS ON THESE QUESTIONS:

• What significance does Mike’s message have for you?
• What questions does it raise for you?

STEP 3: TABLE TALK

Connecting

How High-Poverty Schools...

Become High-Performing Schools

High-Poverty / High-Performing Schools

Nationally Recognized High-Poverty / High Performing Schools

• Dayton’s Bluff Elementary, St. Paul, MN
• Lapwai Elementary, Lapwai, ID
• Molalla High School, Molalla, OR
• Osmond A. Church PS/MS. 124 K-8 School, Queens, NY
• Port Chester Middle School, Port Chester, NY
• Tall Elementary, Boise, ID
• Tekoa High School, Tekoa, WA

Poverty vs. Achievement in Illinois Elementary Schools

Source: Education Trust analysis of data from National School-Level State Assessment Score Database

www.schooldata.org
Data are from 2002.

Lapwai Elementary
Lapwai, ID

2005 Dispelling the Myth Award Winner
Lapwai Elementary

- 312 Students K-6
- 79% Low-income
- 84% Native American
- Outperformed the state in 4th grade reading and math 2003 – 2006
- Native American students outperformed the state in 4th grade reading and math 2003 – 2006

Making Gains at Lapwai Grade 4

“If it can happen at Lapwai…it can happen anywhere.”

Brenna Terry
Lapwai School Board Member
2006

Taft Elementary School
Boise, ID

William H. Taft Elementary

- 330 Students
- Grades k-6
- 72% Low Income
- 18% ELL/Refugee
- 9% Hispanic
Making Refugee Students Welcome

Kathleen Budge and William Parrett

When 58 refugee students speaking little English were transferred to this urban elementary school, the principal set up a team-building summer camp.

Osmond A. Church School
PS / MS 124
Queens, New York

2007 Dispelling the Myth Award Winner

Port Chester Middle School
Port Chester, NY

2006 Dispelling the Myth Award Winner

Osmond A. Church School
PS / MS 124
English Language Arts Scores, 2012

Source: New York State Education Department, 2013

Osmond Church
District
State

1,227 students in grades K-8
97% Low-Income
44% Asian
33% African American
21% Hispanic

Source: GreatSchools.org, 2013
Port Chester Middle School

- 864 students in grades 6-8
- 73% Latino
- 7% African-American
- 64% Low-Income

Port Chester Middle School
Overall Test Scores Grades 6-8

New York Department of Education, 2010

Tekoa High School
Tekoa, WA

- 110 Students
- 51% Low-income
- 83% White
- 12% American Indian
- 5% Other

Tekoa High School
Reading and Writing Grade 10


And...At The District Level?
Caldwell School District
Caldwell, ID

- 6,500 Students Grades K-12
- 80% Low Income
- 56% Hispanic
- 43% White
- 1% African American / Asian

Caldwell School District
From Sanctions to Success

Moving from the most severe level of state and federal sanctions to making AYP in 8 of its 10 schools in four years.

Caldwell School District
Closing The Achievement Gap Between White & Hispanic Students

Reading
Source: Caldwell School District, 2010

Math
Source: Caldwell School District, 2010

“How many effective schools
would you have to see...
...to be persuaded of the educability of poor children? If your answer is more than one, then I submit that you have reasons of your own for preferring to believe that basic pupil performance derives from family background instead of school response to family background...

We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us.”

Ron Edmonds
1979

Today...in 2013...
“WE KNOW WHAT WORKS IN EDUCATION. THE RESEARCH IS PROLIFIC”

“Amazingly, then, the question today is not about what works, but about why we do not implement what we know works in all schools for all kids?”

- Talk substitutes for action
- Fear prevents risk-taking and innovation
- Measurement focuses on the wrong things

“IT IS NOT THE INERTIA OF INDIFFERENCE OR IGNORANCE, BUT KNOWING TOO MUCH AND DOING TO LITTLE?”
-PFEFFER & SUTTON, 1999

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:
Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance

Spheres of Influence
School Culture
Actions
Start With An Honest Review of the Issues and Data

"An overwhelming majority of chronically absent kids are impoverished, dealing with such daily stresses as caring for siblings, high rates of disease, violence in the community, and frequent familial moves to find employment."

-Marc Cutillo

"Poverty’s Prominent Role in Absenteeism"

Is Attendance Important?

Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance

Actions

Foster aHealthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate under-achievement?
- Have we ensured safety?
- Have we developed an accurate understanding of the influence of poverty on student learning?
- Have we fostered caring relationships and strengthened the bond between students and schools?
- Have we made an authentic effort to engage parents, families, and our community?

Fostering a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

Strategy 1

Establish a Physically and Emotionally Safe Environment

“Have We Ensured Safety?”

Have We Ensured Safety?

School Is Unsafe
- Blaming Students / Families
- Mis-use of Suspension & Expulsion

“We had to establish law and order...”

“These kids aren’t going to begin school in a place where you can smell the bathrooms when you come in the front door.”

Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment