Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performance Schools

10 Strategies/Policies That Make THE Difference

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Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performance Schools

10 Strategies That Make THE Difference

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.
• **Be compelled to take informed action** to better meet the needs of underachieving students living in poverty.

Now Available From ASCD

January 2012
How Are We Doing?

Validate
Challenge to Improve
Collaborate / Network!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Who Are You?</th>
<th>What Level?</th>
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Caine’s Arcade

Turn and Talk

TALK ABOUT CAINE
What About Our Students?

In *Vincent v. Voight*, 614 N.W.2d 388 (2000), the state supreme court held that Wisconsin students have the right to "an equal opportunity for a sound basic education [which] will equip students for their roles as citizens and enable them to succeed economically and personally”

-the state supreme court of Wisconsin, 2000

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

McRae, P., Boise State University, CPI&PS (2013)

86 Graduate from High School in 4 Years

McRae, P., Boise State University, CPI&PS (2013)

51 Enroll in College in the Fall

McRae, P., Boise State University, CPI&PS (2013)
Too Many Students Remain Off Track to Success: Of Every 100 9th Graders in Wisconsin...

- 100 9th Graders
- 86 Graduate High School in 4 Years
- 51 Enroll in College in the Fall
- 37 Still Enrolled Sophomore Year of College
- 26 Earn a College Degree

Who are our kids that are under-achieving?

Who are our kids that qualify for free and reduced meals?
... and how can we help these kids???

How High-Poverty Schools...

Become High-Performing Schools


Data are from 2002.
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?

High-Poverty / High-Performing Schools

Nationally Recognized High-Poverty / High Performing Schools

- Dayton’s Hull 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
- Taft Elementary, Boise, ID
- Tekoa High School, Tekoa, WA

Dayton’s Bluff Elementary, St. Paul, MN
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Port Chester Middle School, Port Chester, NY
Taft Elementary, Boise, ID
Tekoa High School, Tekoa, WA
Taft Elementary School
Boise, ID

2003  Blue Ribbon Award Recipient

William H. Taft Elementary

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

Idaho State Department of Education, 2010

William H. Taft Elementary
Reading Scores, 3rd Grade

Idaho State Department of Education, 2010
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.

Port Chester Middle School
Port Chester, NY

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

Port Chester Middle School

2006 Dispelling the Myth Award Winner
Port Chester Middle School

Overall Test Scores Grades 6-8

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
• 78% Low Income
• 56% Hispanic
• 43% White
• 1% African American / Asian
From Sanctions to Success

Caldwell School District

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

Idaho State Department of Education, 2010

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?”

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
What Do You Know and Believe About Poverty?

Dramatic Increase in Childhood Poverty

Rates of Increase in 4th Grade Subsidized Lunches
Since 2007, the proportion of fourth graders eligible for free or reduced-price lunches through the federal government’s school meals program has increased nationwide to 52%, from 46%.

Change in percent from 2007 - 2011
0% (1)
1-6% (14)
7-10% (31)
≥11% (4)

K-12 Free Or Reduced Meals In Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Aid to High Poverty Districts", 2012
How Is Poverty Defined?

- Generational
- Situational
- Immigrant
Confronting Common Myths

Fact or Fiction...
- People in poverty are unmotivated and have weak work ethics.
- Education, as a way out of poverty, is readily accessible to everyone.
- People living in poverty are uninvolved in their children’s education because they do not value education.
- People living in poverty tend to abuse drugs and alcohol more than people in other socioeconomic classes.

Five Suggestions You Can Begin Today!
Given what we know about poverty...
- Review your homework policies
- Analyze who is and who is not accessing higher-level curriculum and begin doing something about it.
- Keep stocks of supplies/basic necessities
- Continue to reach out to parents even when they are unresponsive
- Educate yourself and challenge your biases!

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
A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance
Spheres of Influence

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance

Learning Together RECAP!

- Learn From High Poverty, High Performing Schools
- Learn About Poverty
- Construct A Framework For Action

Professional Accountability for Learning

“Do you really believe 100 percent of the students can make it?”

Believe in success for everyone
Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools

10 Strategies/Policies That Make THE Difference

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance

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?
It Takes **Skill** and **Will**

Swift, dramatic improvement requires an encounter with the “brutal facts” – those awkward, unpleasant truths that organizations prefer not to address—or even talk about.


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## Build Leadership Capacity

- Low Expectations
- Inequitable Funding

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*Barriers to Building Leadership Capacity: Are We Perpetuating Under-Achievement? What Have We Eliminated?*
Build Leadership Capacity

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- **Are we managing material and human resources effectively?**
- Are we optimizing time...EXTENDING it for underachieving students and REORGANIZING it to better support professional learning?
- Do we have a data system that works for classroom and school leaders?

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Build Leadership Capacity

**Strategy #1**
Consider your Budget as a Moral Document

What’s Best For Our Kids?

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Start With An Honest Review of Data / Set Improvement Goals

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Don’t Be Afraid of Data Driven Innovation

- Idaho’s Only School For Freshmen
- 90 students
- Focused Attention On Students Who Are On A Path Toward Failure
- Class Sizes Limited to 15 Students Per Teacher

Caldwell Freshman Academy

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Study Data...

Focus Budgets on the Needs of Students...

Build Leadership Capacity

Strategy #2
Look for Bright Spots!
Bright Spots
Successful Efforts Worth Emulating That Illuminate The Road Map For Action and Spark The Hope That Change Is Possible.

Bright Spot Philosophy
What's working right now and how can we do more of it?

Turn and Talk
DESCRIBE A BRIGHT SPOT
Traditional Parent/Teacher Conferences

Do These Work?

Implement Student Led Conferences

- Getting clear on the philosophy and purpose
- Defining teacher, student, parent, administrator and support
- Selecting the most appropriate format
- Preparing students to lead
- Preparing parents and colleagues to participate
- Organizing the details
- Anticipating and handling unique situations
- Evaluating the conferences

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Identify Bright Spots

Build on them!
Build Leadership Capacity

Strategy #3
Communicate... and Celebrate Good News

Communicating In The 21st Century: What Is Your District Doing?

Implications for Board Members and Leaders
Insist on a Proactive Communication Plan
Build Leadership Capacity

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- Are we managing material and human resources effectively?
- Are we optimizing time-extending it for underachieving students and reorganizing it to better support professional learning?
- Do we have a data system that works for classroom and school leaders?

We will never catch up under-achieving students who live in poverty...

- Without additional quality instructional time for those students...
- And job-embedded time for the professional learning needs of their teachers.

Where’s the time for all of this?
Less Professional Development Days & Early Dismissal/Parent Conferences

Less Class Picnic, Class Trip, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hannukkah, Awards, Assembles, Athletics & Concerts

Less State and District Testing
Bottom Line:

Roughly 13-15 8-hr Days of Instruction Per Subject Per Year

Build Leadership Capacity

Strategy #4  Go Back...Find The Time

- Get creative...support professional learning that does not distract from instructional time
- Reduce scheduled / unscheduled interruptions
- Schedule testing wisely
- Extend learning...day / week / summer
- Minimize Pullouts
- Stop releasing students early
- Conduct parent / student led conferences outside school day

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Support Creative Approaches to Maximize Time
Building Leadership Capacity RECAP!

- Stop What Doesn’t Work
- Consider Your Budget A Moral Document
- Look For Bright Spots
- Insist On Proactive Communications
- Get Creative About Time

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance
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?
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Focus on Learning

- Tracking / Retention Pullouts
- Misassignment to Special Education
- Misassigned Teachers
- Teacher Isolation
- Ineffective Instruction

Cased-Based Learning: “Lily”

Promise Elementary (66% low-income)

Lily (tenured) loves kids. She has wanted to be a teacher all her life. Now in her fifth year as a second grade teacher she continues to struggle with low-performing students. The “high-end” kids do well and achieve expected gains. Students that enter her class behind in reading and math almost always exit at comparable levels. Lily’s organizational management skills improve modestly each year. Parents like her, as do her colleagues. She works hard; just doesn’t seem to progress.
Cased-Based Learning: “Keith”

West Side High School (46% Low-income)
Keith teaches Algebra; he has for 11 years at the 9th and 10th grade levels. Also, he teaches two sections of Algebra II. He knows math—has his approach down. He sets high standards, assigns daily homework, gives pop quizzes and end of chapter tests. He grades on a strict curve. Three out of four kids do well/pass. Twenty-five percent repeat. Keith explains this problem as the result of a lack of commitment. He says, “It’s just the way it is.” He coaches football.

Teachers Make The Difference!

...They think ... we can learn this **** !!
Focus on Learning

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- Do we have a common instructional framework to guide curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the learning climate?
- Do we provide job-embedded opportunity for professional learning?
- Do we have common assessments and embrace assessment literacy?
- Have we ensured that all students are proficient in reading?
- Do we provide targeted interventions?

Focus on Student, Professional, and System Learning

Strategy #5

Provide meaningful (based on data), job-embedded professional learning

The Common Core...

Are We Ready?

Do We Expect ALL Of Our Students To Succeed?
Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Insist on NEEDS Driven Professional Learning

Excitement Prior to Implementation is Fragile

Guess who has been at the recent workshop ...

Joanne Quinn 2012
Focus on Learning

• Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
• Do we have a common instructional framework to guide curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the learning climate?
• Do we provide job-embedded opportunity for professional learning?
• Do we have common assessments and embrace assessment literacy?
• Have we ensured that all students are proficient in reading?
• Do we provide targeted interventions?

Elementary Students At Risk

- Reading One Year Below Grade Level
- Have Been Retained
- Chance of graduating from high school near zero
- Low Socio-Economic Background
- Attends School With Many Other Poor Students

Increasing Achievement of At-Risk Students at Each Grade Level
US Dept. of Ed., 1989

Focus on Learning

Strategy #6
Teach Every Student to Read Proficiently..., K-12
All kids...
...want to learn how to read!

Reading is when you know what sounds the letters make and then you say them fast. They come out words, and then you are reading.
_R. J., age 5_

You can read when you look at car and then you look at can and know you drive one and open the other one and there is only one eensy line different.
_Shelby, age 6_
It’s when you read and nobody tells you the words. But you shouldn’t do it in the bathroom. My daddy does and my mom yells at him.

*Paulette, age 5*

Words go in your eyes and come out your mouth...but it’s not like puking or anything. You say the words and that means you’re reading.

*Loren, age 4*

We MUST... Focus On Reading... For Every Student

We will never teach all our students to read if we do not teach our students who have the greatest difficulties to read. Another way to say this is: Getting to 100% requires going through the bottom 20%.”

Effective Reading Programs for Middle and High Schools: A Best-Evidence Synthesis

Best Evidence Encyclopedia
www.bestevidence.org
www.bestevidence.org/words/mha_read_sep_16_2008_sum.pdf

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Expect EVERY Elementary and Secondary Student to Attain Reading Proficiency

Focus on Learning

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- Do we have a common instructional framework to guide curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the learning climate?
- Do we provide job-embedded opportunity for professional learning?
- Do we have common assessments and embrace assessment literacy?
- Have we ensured that all students are proficient in reading?
- Do we provide targeted interventions?
Focus on Learning

Strategy #7
Target Interventions
• Pre K / Full Day Kindergarten
• Tutoring
• Extended Day / Summer Programs
• Homework Clubs
• Home Visits
• Alternative Schools & Programs
• College / Career Readiness

Focus on Learning

Provide High Quality Summer School
• Every summer for underachievers
• Regular communication between parent / school
• Targeted needs based instruction
• Curriculum / aligned to school year needs
• Provide for daily nutritional needs
• Weekly field trips / recreational activities
• Minimum of 3 weeks– more is better
• Plan for transition / remaining weeks of summer

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Provide Additional Quality Learning Time for Under-Achieving Students

Source: Borman 2007; Barr & Parrett, 2007
Focus on Learning

Strategy #8
Connect Technology To Instruction

“No, you weren’t downloaded. You were born.”

PROTESTING AGAINST NEW TECHNOLOGY – THE EARLY DAYS
It’s Our Student’s Digital World!

- More than one billion people using Facebook actively each month
- Over 4 billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube
- 750 tweets per second
- 5 million images are uploaded to Instagram every day

http://www.edmodo.com/
Engage All Kids

One Caution: The Digital Divide

- Access to devices
- Access to high speed internet
- Familiarity with tech skills

Now what?
Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Connect Technology To Instruction
Focus on Learning RECAP!

- Stop What Doesn’t Work
- Provide Job Embedded Professional Learning
- Teach Every Student To Read
- Target Interventions
- Connect Technology To Instruction

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?
Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

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

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- 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?
Foster a Healthy, Safe, & Supportive Learning Environment

Strategy #9
Do EVERYTHING Possible to Level the Playing Field

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

Actively Work To Eliminate Inequalities

Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?
- 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?
What at-risk children want at school more than anything else...

...a caring relationship with an adult.

Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment

Strategy #10
Foster Caring Relationships & Engage Students with Their Communities

The Gentleman’s Club...creating meaningful connections between “school learning” and community.

Build Relationships with Families

- Engage Parents as Authentic Partners
- Hold Frequent Meetings with Food/Childcare
- Offer Parent Education
- Support Learning at Home
- Conduct Home Visits / Caring Outreach
- Initiate Student Led Conferences
- Initiate Student Advisories
- Join the National Network of Partnership Schools
  www.csos.jhu.edu
Connect with Children, Families and Communities

Implications for Board Members and Leaders

*Insist on Positive and Caring Adult / Student Relationships*

*Connect Every Family and Their Community With the School*
Foster a Healthy, Safe, and Supportive Learning Environment RECAP!

- Stop What Doesn’t Work
- Is Our School Safe?
- Provide Caring Relationships
- Engage Students With Community

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

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION: Leading High Poverty Schools to High Performance
Compelling Conclusions
Six Key Points to Take Away

- Consider your budget as a moral document
- Create a culture of high expectations for every student... provide the needed support
- Make decisions based on data...select and prioritize strategies based on needs
- Eliminate practices that perpetuate underachievement...start today
- Take action...implement, monitor and evaluate "needs-based" strategies
- Foster positive relationships / COLLABORATE!

Collaborate

Look what happens when we go at it alone...
Any school can overcome the debilitating effects of poverty...

...demographics do not equal destiny!

We must combat hopelessness... and instill in every child the self-confidence that they can achieve and succeed in school.
What do we choose to do?

...our students are waiting

For the PDF version of “Turning High Poverty Schools Into High-Performance Schools” handout, please visit [http://csi.boisestate.edu/](http://csi.boisestate.edu/) and click on the “Presentations” link.