**Focus on Learning**

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

**Teachers Make The Difference!**

...They think ... we can learn this **** !!

**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.

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.

Her “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. Lily works hard; just doesn’t seem to progress.

Do we have a common instructional framework to guide curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the learning climate?
“Indeed, other professions—medicine, accounting, and architecture among many others—have well-established definitions of expertise and procedures... such procedures are the public’s guarantee that the members of a profession hold themselves and their colleagues to the highest standards.”

--Charlotte Danielson

Our definition of good teaching is “all over the map.”

--Robert Pianta

Good teaching is going on when students are...

...Thinking creatively, questioning common notions and connecting ideas to prior learning or new problems

...Revising, polishing or perfecting work

...Using technology to solve problems

...Reflecting on themselves, their beliefs, and their feelings

Good teaching is going on when students are...

...Working on problems they care about, help them make sense of their world, and their place in it

...Focusing on big ideas rather than the pursuit of isolated facts

...Planning what they will learn

...Wrestling with ideals such as fairness, equity, and justice

...Learning from real-life experiences

Common Core and Poverty

Instructional Shifts:
- Thinking skills/reasoning
- Deeper conceptual understanding in math
- Writing
- Real-world applications
- Knowledge building through increased non-fiction/informational text

30+ Years of Research
- HOTS
- AVID
- NSF Math Programs
- National Writing Project
- Place-based Education: Expeditionary Learning
- SIOP

Focus on Learning

Strategy 6

Teach Every Student to Read K-12

Have we ensured that all students are proficient in reading?

Elementary Students At Risk
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%.”

*Torgeson, Joseph K. A Principal's Guide to Intensive Reading Interventions for Struggling Readers in Reading First Schools. A Reading First Quality Brief (2005)*
Focus on Learning

Strategy 7
Provide Targeted Interventions
- Pre K / Full Day Kindergarten
- Tutoring
- Extended Day / Summer Programs
- Homework Clubs
- Home Visits
- Alternative Schools & Programs
- College / Career Readiness

Do we provide targeted interventions?

Focus on Learning

Strategy 8
Implement Student-led Conferences

Do we have common assessments and embrace assessment literacy?

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

Traditional Parent/Teacher Conferences

Do These Work?

Focus on Learning

Strategy 9
Provide Meaningful, Needs-Driven, Job-embedded Professional Learning

Do we provide job-embedded opportunity for professional learning?

A Word About Technology
Focus on Learning
Our Student’s World is Digital

More than one billion people using Facebook actively each month

72 hours of video uploaded per minute

Over 4 billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube

5 million images are uploaded to Instagram every day

750 tweets per second

Focus on Learning
7 Minutes of Terror

Focus on Learning
Connect Technology To Instruction
One Caution: The Digital Divide

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

RECAP and REFLECT

#5 Understand Quality Teaching & Learning
#6 Teach Every Student To Read
#7 Provide Targeted Interventions
#8 Implement Student-Led Conferences
#9 Needs-Driven Professional Learning

A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION:

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.


Build Leadership Capacity

- Low Expectations
- Inequitable Funding
- Failure To Retain Effective Leaders & Teachers
 defended the idea of comprehensive school leadership training, arguing that it is essential to overcome challenges faced by schools.

An example of a recommended strategy is to build leadership capacity. This includes considering the budget as a moral document, which is crucial for effective material and human resource management. Further, it is suggested that we should never stop adding instructional time for under-achieving students who live in poverty, ensuring that these students have access to quality education. Additionally, time should be dedicated to professional development for teachers to enhance their teaching skills.

The Full Year Calendar and Less Summer Vacation

The presentation also includes visual aids to illustrate the concept of the full year calendar and the reduction in summer vacation time as strategies to improve educational outcomes.
Less Weekends, Holidays, & Summer Vacation

Less Professional Development Days & Early Dismissal/Parent Conferences

Less Class Picnic, Class Trip, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hannukkah, Awards, Assemblies, 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 11
Go Back... Find the Time

Are we optimizing time...EXTENDING it for underachieving students and REORGANIZING it to better support professional learning?
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 Pollouts
• Stop releasing students early
• Conduct parent / student led conferences outside school day

Uncommon Sense

“We Can’t do it in 5 days”
Saturday Leadership Academies

• Reprioritize budget
• Voluntary participation
• Various topics to serve the needs of students families
• Operated largely by volunteers/partnered with local high schools and universities

Osmond Church & Taft Elementary School

Build Leadership Capacity

Strategy 12
Use data to find the bright spots and change your school or district’s story

Do we have a data system that works for classroom and school leaders?

Build Leadership Capacity

Communicating the bright spots changes the story others tell about your school and district.

Build Leadership Capacity

Basic Website, Newsletters, Intra-District Mail / E-mail, Reader Boards

RECAP and REFLECT

#10 Consider Your Budget A Moral Document
#11 Go Back... Find The Time
#12 Use Bright Spots!
Professional Accountability for Learning

“Whatever it takes.”

Believe in success for everyone

Compelling Conclusions

(Parrett & Budge, Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools, ASCD 2012, 78)
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 the handout: “Turning High Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools: 12 Strategies That Make The Difference” please visit http://csi.boisestate.edu/ and click on the “Presentations” link.