Poverty and Underachievement: How Schools/Districts Lead Students to Success

A Synthesis of Research on What Works In High-Performing/High-Poverty Schools

Professional Development Institute
Day 3

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Poverty and Underachievement: How Schools/Districts Lead Students to Success

Research on High Poverty / High Performing Schools
- 18 Studies / Reports / Data Analyses
- Representing Thousands of Schools Nationwide
- What They Did
- How They Sustain Remarkable Results
Turning High-Poverty Schools Into High-Performing Schools

William Parrett & Kathleen Budge

(ASCD, In Press, Fall 2011)
“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?”


Our “Kids” World Has Changed

Technology
Economics
Diversity
Policy
All students must succeed in school...period.
...or live out their lives unemployed, underemployed, or unemployable

In 2011... an education represents the ONLY door of opportunity...
...the ULTIMATE Civil Right

How Are We Doing?

Validate
Challenge to Improve

Eight Components of High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools (Self-Evaluation Rubrics)
Learner Outcomes

- Emerge with a substantially enhanced knowledge of what works for underachieving students that live in poverty.
- Learn what HP / HP schools do to increase student achievement and school success.
- Network with colleagues engaged in improvement of high poverty schools
- Create action plans to better meet the needs of your underachieving students.

A Framework for Action in High Poverty Schools

Turning High Poverty Schools into High Performing Schools
Parrett, Budge, ASCD 2011 (In press)
How Are We Doing?

What Does Our Data Tell Us About The Needs of Our Students?

Where Are We Going?

- 2010 / 2011 Goals?
- 2011 / 2012 Goals?
- School Improvement Plan?
- Efforts Underway?
What Leaders In High Performing/High Poverty School Do...

- Build Leadership Capacity
- Focus on Student, Professional, and System Learning
- Foster A Safe, Supportive, and Healthy Environment
Building Leadership Capacity

- 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?
- Are we working to eliminate mindsets, policies, structures, and practices that perpetuate underachievement?

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.


Building Leadership Capacity

- Low Expectations
- Inequitable Funding
- Ineffective Instruction
- Tracking / Retention Pullouts
- Miss-assignment to Special Education
- Blaming Families
- Inappropriate Teacher Assignments
Building Leadership Capacity

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Address Student Mobility

- Access and Maintain Accurate Data
- Be Ready
  - Departures—Counseling / Exit Interviews
  - Arrivals—Welcome packets / Diagnostics / Appropriate Placements
  - Catch up—Tutoring / Extended Day
- Build Relationships—Peers / Parents
- Frequent Communication
- Address Transportation Issues
- Engage All Staff—School-wide Support

Initiate Student Advisories

“Take care of them like they were your own.”

- Faculty / Student Ratio—20:1
- 30 Minutes / Day – 4 Days / Week
- Four-year Commitment
- Reading, Math, Portfolios, Homework, Careers
- Performance-based Graduation Requirements

“It's now cool to do well at Granger H.S.”

Optimizing Time

After School Programs

Strategy:
Developed a high-quality Supplemental Support Services model with BSU.
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

Source: Borman (2007); Barr & Pernetti, 2007

Where’s the time for all of this?

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
- Stop releasing students early
- Conduct parent / student led conferences outside school day
Foster a Safe, Supportive and Healthy Learning Environment

- 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?

“...I am convinced that the nature of the relationships among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with the school’s quality and character, and with the accomplishment of its pupils, than any other factor.”

-Roland S. Barth
Education Trust, 1984
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“There is compelling, research-based evidence that when schools and families work together, student achievement spikes, particularly in low-performing schools.”

- Henderson & Mapp, 2002

What every student wants more than anything else...

...a caring relationship with an adult.
It’s All About Relationships

- 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

The Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships

http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/center.htm

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Focus on Learning

- Do we have a common instructional framework to guide curriculum, teaching, assessment, and the learning climate?
- Do we have common assessments and embrace assessment literacy?
- Have we ensured that all students are proficient in reading?
- Do we provide targeted interventions?

Common Assessments & Assessment Literacy

- Teachers Understand Data
- Teachers Agree on Benchmarks and Common Assessments
- Teachers Use Assessment FOR Learning
- Teach—Assess—Meet Regularly to Discuss and Monitor (PLCs)
- Students Understand Goals / Targets

We MUST... Focus On Reading

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%.”

Mini Case: 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.

When Dealing With A Resistant Colleague

- Rethink
- Relocate
- Retire

-Principal, HP/HP School, Midwest

Getting to High Performance
High-Poverty
High-Performing Schools

Build Leadership Capacity

Focus on Learning: Student, Professional, System

Foster a Safe, Healthy, and Support Environment

Five Key Points to Take Back Home!

1. Create a culture of high expectations ... provide the needed support
2. Make decisions based on data...select and prioritize strategies based on needs
3. Eliminate practices that perpetuate underachievement
4. Take action...implement and evaluate "needs-based" strategies
5. Remember...relationships make it work

Homework I

- Complete Data Snapshot
- Prioritize Greatest Needs
- Identify Work In Progress
- Select Targets for 2011
- KLB- Connect / Read
**Homework II**

- Prioritize 2010-2011 Needs
- Complete Action Planning Tool
- Prioritize 2011-2012 Needs
- Complete Action Planning Tool

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**Homework III**

- Prioritize 2011-2012 Needs
- Complete Action Planning Tool
- Complete Critical Conversations Planning Tool
- Identify Summer Work
- Schedule August Implementation Meeting
- Help a Student in Need This Summer!

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**Action Planning Tool**
Compelling Conclusions

Any school can overcome the debilitating effects of poverty...

...demographics do not equal destiny!

We know how to improve any school...

Every school can become a high performing school
Believe in success for everyone

Strategy:

- Have you asked yourself: “Do you really believe 100 percent of the students can make it?”

Teachers Make The Difference!

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

What do we choose to do?

...our students are waiting
For PDF version of “Poverty and Underachievement: How Schools/Districts Lead Students to Success” handout, please visit http://csi.boisestate.edu/ and click on the “Resources” link.
William H. Parrett

William H. Parrett is the Director of the Center for School Improvement & Policy Studies and Professor of Education at Boise State University. He has received international recognition for his work in school improvement, small schools, alternative education, and for his efforts to help youth at-risk. His professional experiences include public school and university teaching, curriculum design, principalships and college leadership, media production, research and publication.

Parrett holds a Ph.D. in Secondary Education from Indiana University. Parrett has served on the faculties of Indiana University, the University of Alaska and Boise State University. As Director of the Boise State University Center for School Improvement & Policy Studies (1996 to present), Parrett coordinates funded projects and school improvement initiatives which currently exceed $8.8 million. His research on reducing achievement gaps and effective schooling practices for youth at risk and low performing schools has gained widespread national recognition.


Parrett’s media production, Heart of the Country (1998), is a documentary of an extraordinary principal of a village elementary school in Hokkaido, Japan, and the collective passion of the community to educate the heart as well as the mind. Since its release, the production was nominated for the Pare Lorentz Award at the 1999 International Documentary Awards (Los Angeles, CA); has won the Award of Commendation from the American Anthropological Association, a Gold Apple Award for best of category at the National Education Media Network Festival (Oakland, CA), a National CINE Golden Eagle Award (Washington, D.C.), and a Judges’ Award at the 24th Northwest Film Festival (Portland, OR). In addition, Heart of the Country was an invited feature and screened at the Cinema du Reel festival in Paris (1998) and the Margaret Mead Film Festival (1998) in New York City. This work has received critical acclaim for its cinematography and insight into the universal correlates of effective teaching and learning and the power of community participation in public schools.

Parrett has also served as visiting faculty at Indiana University, the University of Manitoba, Oregon State University, Hokkaido University of Education (Japan), Nagoya Gakiun (Japan), Gifu University (Japan) and Heilongjiang University (People’s Republic of China). His consultancies include state departments, boards of education, state and regional service providers and school districts in 41 states and 10 nations.

Throughout his career, Parrett has worked to improve the educational achievement of all children and youth, particularly those less advantaged. Toward this goal, as director of the CSI&PS, he has overseen the acquisition of over twenty million dollars in external funding to create programs and interventions designed to help educators, schools, communities, and universities benefit from research and best practice. These efforts have positively impacted the lives of thousands of young people.