

### **Results-Oriented Cycle of Inquiry**

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We guide district and school leaders as well as teachers through a continuous improvement process that involves defining a desired result, planning toward that result, putting the plans into action, and assessing the effectiveness of those actions in order to make adjustments that will enable you to get closer and closer to achieving your larger vision. The following resources guide our approach to continuous improvement and detail best practices in setting goals, planning, and using assessment to reflect and adjust.

Bryk, A.S., Gomez, L.M., Grunow, A., and LeMahieu, P.G. (2015) *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Harvard University Press.

Senge, P. (1995). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of a Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Currency Doubleday.

### **Equity and Social Justice**

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In pursuit of a system of education that prepares all students for a rigorous college education, and equips them with the necessary life skills to become thriving members of a democratic society, we actively seek to disrupt patterns of inequity in education by developing systems and structures that work effectively to close persistent achievement gaps based on race, class, and culture. To do this work effectively, we strive to develop our own cultural competence by seeking to understand of how race, culture, class, and gender impact how we understand and respond to the world around us.

Eubanks, E., Parish, R., & Smith, D. (1997). Changing the discourse in schools. In P. Hall (Ed.), *Race, Ethnicity, and Multiculturalism: Vol. 1. Missouri Symposium on Research and Educational Policy Series* (pp.151-168). New York: Garland Press.

Blankstein, A.N., Noguera, P. (2015). *Excellence Through Equity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.

Noquera, P.A. (2008). *The Trouble With Black Boys...and Other Reflections on Race, Equity and the Future of Public Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Singleton, G.E. & Linton, C. (2005). *Courageous Conversations About Race*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change (2005). *Structural racism and youth development: Issues, challenges and implications*.

## District Reform

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We have built our approach to working with districts based on studies of effective district transformation. We aim to support districts to shift their practices in order to catalyze and support school transformations, build pipelines of effective teachers and leaders, and provide effective resources to support the instructional core.

Austin, J.E., Grossman, A.S., Schwartz, R.B. & Suesse, J. (2006). *Managing at Scale in the Long Beach Unified School District*. Cambridge, MA, Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University.

Childress, S., Elmore, R., Grossman, A.S. & King, C. (2007). *Note on the PELP Coherence Framework*. Cambridge, MA, Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University.

David, J. L. & Talbert, J.E. (2012). *Turning Around a High-Poverty School District: Learning from Sanger Unified's Success*. Palo Alto: Bay Area Research Group and Stanford, CA: Center for Research on the Context of Teaching.

Elmore, R. F. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement: The imperative for professional development in education*. Washington, D.C. Albert Shanker Institute

Simmons, J. (2006). *Breaking through: Transforming urban school districts*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Waters, L.B. & Vargo, M. (2008). *Lessons Learned in Systemic District Reform: A Cross-District Analysis from the Comprehensive Aligned Instructional System (CAIS) Benchmarking Study*. Springboard Schools.

Zavadsky, H. (2009). *Bringing School Reform to Scale: Five Award-Winning Urban Districts*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

## Results-Oriented Leadership

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We develop the capacity of school leaders to perform the practices necessary for transforming instruction and sustaining results. Our work with leaders focuses on supporting their efforts to lead whole school improvement and create a school environment where high quality teaching and learning can take place. Our approach is grounded in the research in effective school leadership, the dynamics of change, and leadership necessary for large scale instructional improvement.

DuFour, R. & Marzano, Robert (2011). *Leaders of Learning: How District, School, and Classroom Leaders Improve Student Achievement*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Fullan, Michael (2001) *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schmoker, M. (2011) *Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum.

Waters, T. & Grubb, S. (2004) *Leading Schools: Distinguishing the Essential from the Important*  
[www.McREL.org](http://www.McREL.org).

Waters, T., Marzano, R., & McNulty, B. (2003) *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of leadership tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. [www.McREL.org](http://www.McREL.org).

### **The Core Instructional Program**

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We support schools to build a core instructional program in literacy and English language development that ensures that all students learn at high levels. The following research selections demonstrate that in order to support student mastery of the Common Core standards, teachers must learn to plan rigorous units, develop a repertoire of researched-based pedagogical practices, purposefully use assessments and data, engage in results-oriented planning, and strategically intervene when students may be behind.

Calderón, M., Slavin, R., & Sánchez, M. (2011). Effective Instruction for English Learners. *The Future of Children*, 21(1), 103-127.

Davis, L. (2012). [5 Things Every Teacher Should be Doing to Meet the Common Core State Standards](#). Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Farrington, C.A., Roderick M., Allensworth, E., Nagaoka, J. Seneca Keyes, T. (2012). Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners. The role of Noncognitive Factors in Shaping School Performance: A Critical Review of the Research, The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

David W. Johnson, and Nicole O. Beechum (2012). Teaching Adolescents to Become Learners: The Role of Noncognitive Factors in Shaping School Performance: A Critical Literature Review. The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Hammond, Z. (2014). *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hollie, S. (2011) *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Teaching: Classroom Practices for Student Success*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.

Marzano, R. (2007). *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

### **Teacher Professional Learning**

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We build the capacity of school leaders to develop and strengthen the systems that support teachers' professional learning to ensure sustained student-achievement results. Research on teacher

professional learning has demonstrated that when teachers receive high-quality professional development, have regular opportunities to collaborate, and are supported by a skilled instructional coach, the quality and effectiveness of their instruction improves.

Darling Hammond, L. & Richardson, N. (2009). Teacher Learning: What Matters? *Educational Leadership*. 66(5), 46-53

DuFour, R. (2004). What is a Professional Learning Community? *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 6-11.

Knight, J. (2008). *Coaching: Approaches and Perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

### **Coaching and Change Management**

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We define coaching as the practice of partnering with school leaders to transform individual and organizational capacity to maximize student achievement. We work with school leaders and teachers to help them articulate their vision for teaching and learning, to support them to learn the practices and skills needed to achieve that vision, and to learn to work collaboratively and with accountability to one another. Because this is complex work, our approach draws not only from the leadership coaching literature, but also from organizational change, social interaction and adult learning theories.

Aguilar, E. (2013). *The Art of Coaching: Effective Strategies for School Transformation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fullan, M. (2003). *Change Forces with a Vengeance*. Routledge Falmer: New York, NY

Kotter, J.P. (2013) *Leading Change*. Harvard Business Press.

Platt, A., Tripp, C., Fraser, R., Warnock, J., & Curtis, R. (2008). *The Skillful Leader II: Confronting Conditions that Undermine Learning*. Acton, MA: Ready About Press.

Wheatley, M. & Dalmau, T. (1983). *Below the Green Line or the 6 Circle Model*.

### **Family Engagement**

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Despite 30 years of consensus in the field about the importance of family engagement, many schools and districts are still struggling to execute high impact strategies for engaging families. Guided by the latest research, we support schools to understand how well their current efforts are working, to gather input and feedback from families and to shift fundamental mindsets and practices to develop more effective learning partnerships with students and their families.

[Afterschool: A key to successful parent engagement](#) (2012). Metlife Foundation: Afterschool Alert, Issue Brief No. 57.

Henderson, A. and Mapp, K. (2002). [A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of Family, School, and Community Connections on Student Achievement](#). Austin, TX: National Center for Family and Community Connections With Schools.

Iheoma U. Iruka. (2013). [The Black Family: Re-Imagining Family Support and Engagement](#). pp.18-23. Chapter in *Being Black is Not a Risk Factor: A strengths-based look at the state of the Black child*. National Black Child Development Institute.

Jeynes, W. (2012). A meta-analysis of the efficacy of different types of parental involvement programs for urban students. *Urban Education*, 47(4), 706-742.

Moorman, K.E., Coutts, M. J., Holmes, S. R., Sheridan, S. M., Ransom, K. A., Sjuts, T. M., & Rispoli, K. M. (2012). Parent involvement and family-school partnerships: Examining the content, processes, and outcomes of structural versus relationship-based approaches (CYFS Working Paper No. 2012-6).

Weiss, Heather B., Lopez, M. Elena, and Rosenberg, Heidi. (2010). Beyond Random Acts: Family, School, and Community Engagement as an Integral Part of Education Reform. Harvard Family Research Project.