RESOURCES FOR HIGH SCHOOL REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Contents

Illustrations

The article icon denotes an article.

The brief icon denotes a brief.

The guide icon denotes a guide.

The paper icon denotes a paper.

The presentation icon denotes a presentation.

The report icon denotes a report.

The website icon denotes a website.

USING DATA TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

Promoting the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction

1. American Institutes for Research. 2006. *Data-Driven Decision Making Based on Curriculum-Embedded Assessment: Findings from Recent California Studies*. Sacramento, CA: California Comprehensive Center. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.cacompcenter.org/pdf/cacc_dddm.pdf.

This brief summarizes the findings from three studies (two by the California Department of Education and one privately funded) that examined which practices were associated with student achievement in schools with large populations of low-income students and English language learners. Although not focused explicitly on data-driven decision making, these studies found that principals and teachers at the highest achieving schools cited systematic monitoring and data-driven decision making as the reasons for their success. Many of the schools used ongoing measures of progress on a six-week or quarterly basis. Results of the ongoing assessment allowed schools to gauge student understanding, determine the passing or failure status of students, identify improvement areas, form instructional strategies in English and mathematics, plan instruction, and create specific strategies for students most at risk for failure. The brief also provides an overview of how administrators, teachers, and parents contributed to the school's success by using the data to improve instructional and learning processes.

2. Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center. n.d. General Format. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.aacompcenter.org/cs/aacc/print/htdocs/aacc/home.htm.

This website is a combined effort of WestEd and the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing to provide state and district leaders with resources to fully implement, evaluate, and improve their assessment and accountability systems. The Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center provides resources to: 1) establish assessment and accountability systems that support special needs students, low-income students, and English language learners; 2) use data from large-scale assessments and formative assessments to identify needs, guide instruction, and monitor student progress; 3) implement efficient and user-friendly statewide data systems; 4) design accountability systems that measure status and growth of student achievement; and 5) meet the individual challenges of high school assessment and accountability. The website also offers district and state leaders access to toolkits, training materials, best practices, products, and strategies that have been shown to be effective in meeting assessment and accountability needs.

3. Bernhardt, V. 2005. "Data Tools for School Improvement." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 62, No. 5. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://eff.csuchico.edu/downloads/DataTools.pdf.

This article provides a step-by-step overview of how school leaders can begin implementing data systems within their schools. It also provides clear definitions and analyses of the key data tools schools can use as they initiate school improvement processes. The author is the executive director of the Education for the Future Initiative, a nonprofit organization that aims to build the capacity of educational institutions at all levels to gather, analyze, and use data to improve teaching and learning.

The article suggests implementing a student information system that houses demographic information for each student. It also provides information about data warehouses, which can enable schools and districts to analyze data across student information systems and test result data and other information such as perceptions of students and teachers. Instructional management systems can also be used by school leaders to analyze student performance on assessments and the extent to which learning matches what is taught in the classroom. Instructional management systems can also provide lesson plans, resources, and strategies for teachers to align curriculum to content standards. These instructional management systems are especially useful in helping teachers develop strategies to teach content that groups of students failed to master. This resource is intended for school leaders, principals, and superintendents. It provides a how-to guide on researching and implementing specific data systems within schools for the explicit purpose of analyzing data to improve educational practices.

4. Boudett, K.P., City, E.A., & Murnane, R.J. 2006. "The 'Data Wise' Improvement Process." *Harvard Education Letter.* Harvard Graduate School of Education. Vol. 22, No. 1. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.hepg.org/hel/article/297.

This article, adapted from the book *Data Wise: A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning*, describes how teachers can effectively use data within their classrooms to improve teaching and learning. Many practitioners and researchers assembled at the Harvard Graduate School of Education to help devise a method by which teachers could use assessment results meaningfully to improve pedagogy and student achievement.

The article highlights eight steps school leaders can take to ensure that the student assessment data they obtain are used to improve the achievement of students. The eight steps are organized in three phases: "Prepare, Inquire, and Act." The authors suggest that schools "prepare" for the work by setting a foundation to learn from assessment results. They can then "inquire," or find patterns, that provide them with information about problems with teaching and learning. Finally, they "act" on what they learn through the design and implementation of instructional improvement strategies.

The eight steps involve: 1) building a "data" culture in which faculty and staff feel comfortable having discussions about assessment results and opportunities where they

can look into student performance and teacher practice; 2) building literacy to interpret and use assessment results; 3) using different methods to display data so it is not overwhelming to look for patterns; 4) digging into student data to look for problems or skills that are common to many students; 5) reframing the learner-centered problem as a problem of practice and examining instructional technique; 6) developing an action plan; 7) developing a method to assess progress on the action plan; and 8) implementing the action plan and assessing periodically. This article would be useful to school leaders, administrators, faculty, and other practitioners who are interested in interpreting assessment results and other data for the purpose of improving student learning.

5. Lachat, M.A. & Smith, S. 2006. *Practices that Support Data Use in Urban High Schools*. Research Brief. October. Washington, DC: Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.centerforcsri.org/files/Center_RB_oct06.pdf.

This brief summarizes a journal article by Mary Ann Lachat and Stephen Smith on the practices that support and inhibit data use in urban high schools. The authors examined data on education improvement plans, content from interviews with faculty and data teams, and field notes taken in data analysis teams from five low-performing, high-poverty urban high schools over four years.

The brief highlights several lessons from the study that can be applied to schools that seek ways to improve teaching and learning through the use of data. The authors find that: timely access to student performance and demographic data affects how data are used in schools; disaggregation of data is key to improved data use; comfort levels increase when staffs work together to discuss and analyze school performance data; and leadership structures such as those that employ data coaches can be effective in creating a school culture that embraces data use for improved instruction and learning.

This resource also identifies challenges that schools and districts face in supporting data use, such as access to meaningful data and complex presentation formats. The brief would be most useful to school leaders, principals, and superintendents who may be responsible for organizing faculty schedules, hiring, and professional development.

6. Datnow, A., Park, V., & Wohlstetter, P. 2007. *Achieving with Data*. Los Angeles, CA: University of Southern California Center on Educational Governance. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.newschools.org/files/AchievingWithData.pdf.

This report highlights the findings of a study on data-driven decision making. The authors visited several schools and districts where data-driven practices to improve instruction and learning have become common. The report offers case studies of four school systems that have implemented performance-driven practices. It highlights the choices and tradeoffs these schools have made to succeed in their academic goals. The tools and case studies offered within the report may be most useful to school leaders, policymakers, and researchers who are interested in creating performance-driven school systems to enhance learning and teaching practices.

The key strategies highlighted within this report for school and district leaders are: 1) build a foundation for data-driven decision making by investing time and resources and developing specific, measurable goals throughout the process; 2) establish a culture of data use and continuous improvement; 3) invest in an information management system that makes data timely and accessible; 4) select the right data, such as system-wide interim assessments of students that are aligned to standards for the purposes of instruction, curriculum, resource allocation, and planning; 5) build school capacity for data-driven decision making on professional development, teacher collaboration, and connecting educators; and 6) analyze and act on data to improve performance by developing goal-monitoring reports for principals and teachers. Examples of how various school districts implemented such strategies are included throughout the report.

7. Education Trust. 2004. *Making Data Work: A Parent and Community Guide.* Washington, DC. Oakland, CA. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.blwd.k12.pa.us/district_info/districtreportcard/Shared%20Documents/Making_Data_Work_Parent_and_Community_Guide.pdf.

This guide is intended for parents, community members, policymakers, school counselors, and educators who seek to learn how to use test scores to understand how their schools are doing and how to improve them. The discussion is primarily focused on schools that serve high concentrations of students from low-income families and students of color.

The guide provides an understanding of how to interpret test scores over time by income, race, and ethnicity in order to determine achievement gaps between groups of students and whether students are meeting standards. It also helps readers understand whether students have sufficient opportunity to learn in school by reviewing data such as distributions of high-quality teachers in certain districts, eighth-grade math curriculum by race and ethnicity, and per-pupil funds by district. The guide provides a short discussion on how schools are succeeding with students and how parent and community groups can get involved to develop a school improvement plan. This publication would be helpful for a variety of groups interested in improving schools within their communities by providing them with an overview of knowledge needed to interpret basic educational data.

8. Foley, E., Mishook, J., Thompson, J., Kubiak, M., Supovitz, J., & Rhude-Faust, M.K. 2010. *Beyond Test Scores: Leading Indicators for Education*. Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from annenberginstitute.org/pdf/LeadingIndicators.pdf.

This report discusses indicators that can be used as early signals of progress toward academic achievement so that school and district leaders can construct strategic plans about services to address gaps in learning. The report focuses on four districts that provide promising examples of how data can be used to inform decisions and how the indicators are used to interpret the data. This report is intended for district leaders and administrators. The authors state that central offices are in the best position to develop

systemic supports as they make most decisions that pertain to altering strategic plans and offering new educational services for the district and schools.

The authors argue that the indicators most used in educational remediation are standardized test scores, but often these test scores are received too late to be of help for students who are struggling learners. Therefore, leading indicators are necessary to continuously monitor student learning. Leading indicators suggested by the authors are: early reading proficiency; enrollment in pre-algebra or algebra; students' credit accumulation compared with their age; use of college admission test scores to clarify high school placements; and student attendance and suspensions. The report highlights specific interventions that districts have used to address each of these leading indicators. Interventions include Reading First, inclusion, creating a grade 6 through 12 academy to reduce transitions, and adopting strategies to reduce violence, among others.

9. Institute for Education Sciences (IES). 2009. "Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making." *What Works Clearinghouse*. Jessup, MD: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=ED506645.

guide

This comprehensive guide from the IES provides educators with concrete recommendations on how to use student assessment data—such as those provided by state accountability tests, interim assessments, and end-of-course tests—to improve instruction. The guide was developed after consulting numerous causal studies, case studies, and experts in the field of data use and school improvement. It includes specific steps on such topics as: adapting lesson plans and assignments in response to student needs, changing classroom goals and objectives, and altering how students are grouped. The authors provide evidence for each of the recommendations and rate the strength of each piece of evidence based on how generalizable it is. The guide also includes information on creating the technology and organizations systems necessary for addressing challenges to using data for instructional improvement. The authors recommend implementing the strategies highlighted in the report together rather than individually. This tool was created for teachers, school leaders, school data leaders, and instructional coaches as well as for district administrators.

10. Learning Point Associates. 2004. *Guide to Using Data in School Improvement Efforts: A Compilation of Knowledge from Data Retreats and Data Use at Learning Point Associates.* Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from www.learningpt.org/pdfs/datause/guidebook.pdf.

guide

This guide is designed for educators who are interested in learning how to use data in planning for school improvement. Acknowledging that many educators are not trained in data-driven planning, the guide can serve as an introduction on the types of data that it is necessary to collect, strategies for analyzing the data, and ways to use these data to adjust district- and school-level goals and planning processes.

The guide emphasizes the value and importance of using data for continuous school improvement and offers direction to school and district leaders in eight areas: 1) developing a leadership team; 2) collecting various types of data; 3) analyzing data patterns; 4) generating hypotheses; 5) developing goal-setting guidelines to improve instructional practices; 6) designing specific curriculum and instructional strategies to address each defined goal; 7) defining evaluation criteria to assess whether new strategies are effective; and 8) making the commitment as a leadership team and as a school to the school improvement plan that is developed.

The authors also argue that those who are leading the school improvement plan should inform teachers about the data, cue teachers in on patterns that exist within the data, summarize the various hypotheses, share the full improvement plan for teachers, assign roles to those within the team to ensure an effective rollout of the plan, and communicate the plan to all staff. This resource can be helpful to school leaders, district leaders, principals, data leadership teams, and teachers as they consider developing frameworks for data-driven instruction and school improvement.

11. McManus, S. 2008. *Attributes of Effective Formative Assessment*. Paper prepared for the Formative Assessment for Teachers and Students (FAST), State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Washington, DC: CCSSO. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2008/Attributes_of_Effective_2008.pdf.

This paper, intended for leaders and practitioners at the state, district, and school levels, defines formative assessment as a process used by teachers and students during instruction to provide feedback on teaching and learning so that greater student achievement can be realized. To promote the use of formative assessment, the CCSSO created a national initiative, the Formative Assessment Advisory Group, which consisted of measurement and educational researchers. The council also formed the State Collaborative on Assessment and School Standards to implement recommendations made by the advisory group. Both bodies made a substantial effort to clarify, based on literature, what is meant by formative assessment and how educators can best use it. This document presents the definition of formative assessment as agreed upon by twenty-five states and discusses the five characteristics of effective formative assessment.

Formative assessment involves collecting evidence, while students are learning, about how their learning is progressing so that instruction can be properly adjusted to meet student needs. The author emphasizes viewing formative assessment as a process rather than a formal test and that it involves both teachers and students. The author highlights five attributes that are critical features of effective formative assessment: learning progressions should clearly articulate the sub-goals of the ultimate learning goal; learning goals and criteria should be clearly identified and communicated to students; students should be provided with evidence-based feedback that is linked to the intended instructional outcomes and criteria for success; both self- and peer-assessment are necessary for providing students an opportunity to think metacognitively about their learning; and a classroom culture in which teachers and students are partners in learning

should be established. A follow-up paper provides examples of formative assessment practice (Wylie 2008). *Formative Assessment: Examples of Practice*. Paper prepared for the FAST SCASS of the CCSSO. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2008/Formative_Assessment_Examples_2008.pdf.

12. Pathways to College Network. 2007. *Using Data to Improve Educational Outcomes.*

College Readiness Issue Brief. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/pdf/data.pdf.

The Pathways to College Network developed five briefs to provide a comprehensive framework that can support states, districts, schools, and programs that seek to prepare students for success in college and the workplace. The brief on data use provides an overview of how data can be used to improve educational outcomes for underserved students. It argues that data on student achievement can provide important feedback to all stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, and school administrators) to improve instructional and curricular strategies that affect student progress.

The brief provides examples of the types of data (e.g., classroom assessment data, benchmarking data, or resource allocation data) that can be useful to various stakeholders. It also provides a list of factors that prevent data from being used effectively, such as limited common planning time for teachers to collaborate to interpret data. This brief would be most useful to superintendents, principals and school leaders, teachers, and counselors. It provides specific action steps that each group can take to use data-driven strategies for school improvement.

13. Schools Moving Up. 2011. *Assessment and Accountability*. San Francisco, CA:

WestEd. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/view/tpc/1.

This website provides over 50 publications and webinars that can help district and school leaders develop formative assessments. It provides tools to develop benchmark assessments and advice on analyzing these assessments. The site also contains numerous resources on how to monitor achievement for English language learners and examples of how several states and schools have used assessments. Several publications referenced on this website detail best practices that practitioners can follow as they attempt to develop accountability systems in their schools to improve teaching and learning. Practitioners can use this website to search for tools that can be used for accountability and assessment.

Implementing early warning systems to identify students who may be at risk of failing to achieve high standards or graduate

14. Allensworth, E.M. & Easton, J.Q. 2005. *The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation*. Chicago, IL: Consortium on Chicago School Research. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=10.

This groundbreaking report from the Consortium on Chicago Public School Research, which developed an on-track indicator system, is the basis for the accountability system for the Chicago public high schools. It also has set a framework for research on dropout indicators in other districts. The report defines the "on-track indicator" and provides a significant tool to help identify students at risk of dropping out of high school and to help design interventions specifically aimed for at-risk students. The consortium developed the on-track indicator in the late 1990s and followed it with school-by-school reports that showed high school student performance by examining credit accumulation, one component of the indicator, and its contribution to graduation rates.

The report examines the relationship between students being on track in the freshman year of high school and the likelihood of graduating. The report defines on-track students as those who have completed enough credits by the end of the school year to be promoted to the tenth grade and who have failed no more than one semester of a core subject area. The report cites evidence that these two factors are better predictors of high school graduation than eighth-grade test scores or student background characteristics. Consequently, school districts might focus their efforts on evaluating how well their students perform based upon the on-track indicator discussed in this report and target their efforts on this critical ninth-grade year. The report provides practitioners and school leaders with an important tool they can use to ensure their students are on track for high school graduation and to identify individual students who need specific interventions.

15. Balfanz, R. 2008. *Three Steps to Building an Early Warning System and Intervention System for Potential Dropouts*. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.every1graduates.org/legters-nettie/item/95-three-steps-to-building-an-early-warning-and-intervention-system-for-potential-dropouts.html.

This PowerPoint is a guide to understanding the dropout problem within a community; building an early warning, prevention, and intervention system to address the issue; and involving the community while doing so. It is intended for school leaders, district administrators, teachers, counselors, and any other educator who may be responsible for designing intervention systems for students within a school or district. The warning system has been developed by researchers at Johns Hopkins University, who examined trends among students in Philadelphia's Talent Development High Schools and Middle Grades programs.

The PowerPoint outlines key steps, such as completing a transcript analysis, looking at attendance histories, and implementing attendance surveys and interviews to determine the scope of the dropout crisis within a school or district. It also provides educators with

recommendations on how to implement warning and intervention systems to address three indicators: attendance; behavior; and course failure. It recommends that schools and districts focus on the transition points for students (e.g., into the middle grades, into high school, and out of high school) and meet both the academic and social needs of students along the way. It also discusses options, such as whole school preventative, targeted, and intensive interventions to address academic needs.

16. Balfanz, R., Herzog, L., & Mac Iver, D. 2007. "Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions." *Educational Psychologist*, Vol. 42, No. 4. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from www.every1graduates.org/analytics/item/download/9.html.

This article highlights four research-based indicators that have been found to identify students who are not likely to graduate from high school. The authors developed these indicators from their work in Philadelphia and their review of literature on student disengagement. They found that a middle or high school student's decision to not attend school, misbehave, or put forth less effort on academic pursuits indicates a student's disengagement and strongly predicts dropping out. The goal of this research was to use key indicators to identify students who are at risk of dropping out and then implement strategies that would help these students graduate from high school. This paper would be of use to school leaders, district leaders, counselors, and teachers.

The four warning flags that the authors tested and found relevant in identifying sixth graders at risk of dropping out of high school were whether they: attended school 80 percent or less of the time during the sixth grade; failed math in the sixth grade; failed English in the sixth grade; or received an out-of-school suspension in the sixth grade. A common misconception is that students will grow out of the behavior mentioned in the article. The evidence presented in this paper indicates that unless an early intervention system is developed, students who exhibit any of the four indicators of dropping out will likely drop out of high school. The authors discuss a variety of early intervention programs and strategies that can be implemented to prevent dropping out, such as engaging teacher pedagogies, extra-help mathematics and reading labs, small learning communities, teacher teams, collecting attendance and behavior data, individual targeting of students, and intensive efforts involving specialists (e.g., counselors, social workers).

17. Heppen, J.B. & Therriault, S.B. 2008. *Developing Early Warning Systems to Identify Potential High School Dropouts*. National High School Center. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/ews_guide.asp.

This guide from the National High School Center contains recommendations to help educators and policymakers at the school, district, and state levels utilize various types of data schools can collect to identify the likelihood of students dropping out and the types of early warning interventions that can be helpful once students are identified.

The report recommends that schools develop and use an early warning system by utilizing already available data housed at schools and districts—not only to indicate which students are likely to graduate or need specific interventions to prevent dropping out, but also to identify academic, behavior, and attendance patterns among students and determine which school climate issues contribute to dropping out. The authors suggest using three main types of course performance data that can predict graduation in addition to attendance benchmarks: freshman course failures (particularly core academics); freshman grade point averages; and credits earned in each semester/term. The report suggests how to calculate on-track indicators, provides benchmarks based on previous research for when students are considered at risk, and discusses the role of districts and states in developing and implementing an early warning system.

18. Jerald, C.D. 2006. *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System*. Washington, DC: Achieve, Inc. and Center for American Progress. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.achieve.org/files/FINAL-dropouts_0.pdf.

This white paper, developed for Staying the Course: High Standards and Improved Graduation Rates, is a joint project of Achieve and Jobs for the Future and gives policymakers and practitioners an overview of research concerning the high school dropout problem. It also highlights strategies for building an early warning system that can help schools identify students who are in need of intervention.

The paper reviews past research that indicates which social characteristics, educational experiences, and school characteristics are likely to lead to dropping out. It also offers an overview of studies on specific districts (e.g., Philadelphia; Fall River, MA; Chicago) that provide key information on risk factors. These case studies demonstrate the importance of ensuring student engagement throughout middle school and focusing on transition periods for students into middle school, high school, and out of high school. It discusses how districts can develop longitudinal studies of students to collect data on dropout factors, and it answers questions that educators may have as they start to consider developing a data system to address the dropout crisis. Such questions include what types of databases are necessary, which warning systems to monitor, which grade levels to report on, how frequently a system should report on risk factors, and what kinds of data to report and to whom to report it.

19. Neild, R.C. & Balfanz, R. 2006. *Unfulfilled Promise. The Dimensions and Characteristics of Philadelphia's Dropout Crisis, 2000-2005*. Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Youth Transitions Collaborative. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.csos.jhu.edu/new/Neild_Balfanz_06.pdf.

This report describes a study done in Philadelphia using data to follow cohorts of students over multiple years to examine their educational outcomes and the predictors of high school graduation and dropout. Researchers relied on the Kids Integrated Data System (e.g., KIDS), housed at the University of Pennsylvania, which merged individual-level data on students in Philadelphia public schools with data from the city's social service agencies. The report, which has been used to develop early warning systems within other

districts, answers general sets of questions concerning the characteristics of students who are likely to drop out and the trends in graduation and dropout rates within the district.

The report determined factors in the eighth and ninth grades that indicate a high probability of dropping out. Attending school less than 80 percent of the time in eighth grade and receiving a failing grade in either English or mathematics were associated with an increased probability of dropping out. A similar set of circumstances in the ninth grade was also associated with a likelihood of dropping out. The authors outline policy implications for district, state, and school leaders to consider, including the development of a broad-based coalition dedicated to minimizing high school dropout rates, the creation of an integrated and broad-based coalition to reform education in grades 6-12, involvement of social service agencies in the commitment to stop the dropout crisis in Philadelphia, and establishment of an effective system of credit recovery, second-chance schools, and alternative means of attaining a high school diploma.

20. Neild, R.C., Balfanz, R., & Herzog, L. 2007. "An Early Warning System." *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 65, No. 2. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.every1graduates.org/balfanz/item/download/42.html.

This article highlights research, conducted in several Philadelphia schools, which found indicators in middle school and early on in high school of potential high school dropout. Researchers followed 14,000 students who entered the sixth grade in 1996 to determine their dropout status six years later.

A sixth grader in Philadelphia with even one of the following four signals had at least a 75 percent chance of dropping out of high school: a final grade of F in mathematics; a final grade of F in English; attendance below 80 percent for the year; or a final "unsatisfactory" behavior mark in at least one class. Those students who had more than one signal had an even greater probability of dropping out. Researchers found that 50 percent of the students who ultimately dropped out exhibited one or more of these signals during the eighth grade, indicating that more than half could have been identified before entering high school. For ninth graders, two main signals indicated students who had at least a 75 percent chance of dropping out: earning fewer than two credits or attending school less than 70 percent of the time.

For school leaders, teachers, and district administrators, the article provides information on signals to look for among their students and the types of data that should be collected on students to determine their likelihood of dropping out. The article provides a series of interventions that schools can implement to increase the likelihood that students identified through an early warning system will earn a high school diploma.

21. Pinkus, L. 2008. *Using Early Warning Data to Improve Graduation Rates: Closing Cracks in the Education System*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.all4ed.org/files/EWI.pdf.

This brief stresses the importance of educators' use of early warning data to help students graduate from high school, and it offers concrete examples of current efforts to use early warning data to guide interventions in high schools throughout the country. School leaders and educators are encouraged to transform early warning data into strategic decision making that can lead to improvement in graduation outcomes.

The brief highlights research done in Boston, Philadelphia, Fall River (Massachusetts), and Chicago, where various well-researched indicators were used to identify students who struggled with attendance, behavior, and course grades. Additionally, the brief describes various options school leaders have in implementing tiered interventions, which include preventative, group, and individual strategies. Several examples of how early warning data are used to implement tiered interventions are described. The brief encourages the use of early warning data, not just for interventions at the student level, but also at the school and district levels, to: understand the nature of academic problems; more quickly assess the effectiveness of strategies; and gather support from stakeholders to develop interventions.

Identifying teachers who need additional support to provide effective instruction in the classroom

22. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2010. *Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists.* Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/July2010Brief.pdf.

This policy brief is intended mainly for districts and states as it provides recommendations to assist them in creating valid, reliable, and comprehensive evaluation systems for all teachers, including those serving special education students and English language learners. The recommendations within this report are meant for practitioners at all levels and teacher educators who prepare teachers. The brief highlights the results from a survey by the National Comprehensive Center on Teacher Quality. The TQ Center surveyed 1,100 state and district directors of special education and numerous administrators throughout the nation were interviewed to identify the challenges associated with evaluating special educators, to find out the status of current state and district policy and practice, and to determine what promising practices and instruments can be used for the evaluation of special educators.

The brief highlights different components (e.g., classroom observation) of teacher evaluations that are currently used and describes the literature that is associated with each component and how it applies to ELL and special education teachers. It highlights practical examples of how certain districts and states can implement these components in ways that are helpful for special education and ELL educators. The survey implemented

by the TQ Center found that few evaluation programs have modifications for special education and ELL teachers. It also found that special education and ELL educators must have strong abilities to handle the responsibilities of collaboration in a co-teaching setting, to provide increased attention to home language and cultures, and to build connections between students' home and school environments. The authors recommend including these competencies in teacher evaluation design. The brief also provides twelve policy recommendations (pp. 24-25) for the improvement of teacher evaluation for ELL and special education educators.

23. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2011. *A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems.* Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/practicalGuideEvalSystems.pdf.

This guide is meant to steer discussion about the development of a comprehensive teacher evaluation system. It is intended for state and district leaders who are interested in improving teaching and learning through the evaluation system. The guide discusses several studies that have had a great impact on teacher evaluation reform and discusses different approaches used to address state accountability and district autonomy when implementing teacher evaluation systems.

Most importantly, the guide provides seven components of designing what it describes as system goals: 1) securing and sustaining stakeholder investment and cultivating a strategic communication plan; 2) selecting measures; 3) determining the structure of the evaluation system; 4) selecting and training evaluators; 5) ensuring data integrity or transparency; 6) using teacher evaluation results; and 7) evaluating the system. Because this guide is not meant to be a step-by-step guide but is intended to initiate discussion about a teacher evaluation system, it includes a set of guiding questions associated with each component that can be used by state and district leaders who are considering the implementation of such a system.

24. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2011. *High Quality Professional Development for All Teachers*. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/HighQualityProfessionalDevelopment.pdf.

This brief is intended for state and district leaders who are responsible for allocating resources toward professional development and selecting those learning activities that may be most effective and useful for teacher learning and development. This brief takes into consideration struggling state education budgets and suggests investing resources in the promising professional development approaches that it highlights.

The brief includes a summary of current research and policy related to high-quality professional development, a discussion of factors to consider when making resource allocation decisions, a description of methods by which to evaluate professional development activities, examples of promising professional development approaches, and self-assessment tools that states and districts may find useful in determining whether they

are on track to ensuring that all of their teachers have access to high-quality professional development activities. The brief finds that high-quality professional development: 1) is aligned with school goals, state and district standards and assessments, and other professional learning activities including formative teacher evaluation; 2) is focused on core content and modeling of teaching strategies for the content; 3) includes opportunities for active learning of new teaching strategies; 4) provides opportunities for collaboration among teachers; and 5) includes continuous feedback and follow-up with teachers.

25. National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. 2011. *Alternative Measures of Teacher Performance*. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ_Policy-to-PracticeBriefAlternativeMeasures.pdf.

This brief is intended for regional comprehensive centers and state education agencies to build local capacity to use alternative measures of teacher performance as state evaluation systems continuously improve. The brief cites its five-point definition of teacher effectiveness from its 2008 report to highlight that there are important aspects of teaching that are not currently measured through teacher observations or student learning growth measures. The definition of teacher effectiveness consists of the following components: 1) effective teachers have high expectations of all of their students and help them learn, as measured by value-added or other test-based growth measures; 2) effective teachers contribute to positive academic, attitudinal, and social outcomes for students; 3) effective teachers use diverse resources to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities, monitor student progress, adapt instruction, and evaluate learning; 4) effective teachers contribute to the development of classrooms and schools that value diversity and civic-mindedness; and 5) effective teachers collaborate with other teachers, administrators, parents, and educational professionals to ensure student success.

The brief discusses five current examples of teacher performance that it claims should be considered to "ensure a robust teacher evaluation system" by supplementing growth measures and current observation rubrics. They include: 1) the Gallup student poll, which measures three variables that are identified as key drivers of student grades—hope, engagement, and well-being; 2) Scoop Network, which uses artifacts and related materials to represent classroom practice; 3) Surveys of Enacted Curriculum, in which teachers report information on subject coverage, length of time spent on certain topics, and cognitive depth covered in their classroom instruction; 4) Teacher portfolios that can include video clips, lesson plans, teacher self-assessments, and examples of student work; and 5) Tripod Surveys, which identify attitudes, perceptions, experiences, and classroom practices as they relate to teacher content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and relationships between teachers and students. The brief describes the type of information each example provides in more detail, the cost, and the pros and cons of each (based on currently available research). These five examples are aligned with the alternative measures that are specified in many Race to the Top grants.

26. Steele, J.L., Hamilton, L.S., & Stecher, B.M. 2010. "Incorporating Student Performance Measures into Teacher Evaluation Systems." *Distribution*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR917/.

This report describes five of the best-documented models for attempting to measure teachers' contributions to student learning, including teachers who do not teach subjects and grades that are tested annually. These models operate in Denver, Colorado; Hillsborough County, Florida; the state of Tennessee; Washington, DC; and the state of Delaware. Information was collected from media reports, prior studies, the websites of these five systems, and websites concerned with teacher quality. The report speaks to educational policymakers and practitioners at the local, state, and federal levels who seek to use data on student achievement to identify teachers who need additional support.

The report draws five policy recommendations from the case studies and literature reviews. The proposed recommendations are approaches that policymakers and practitioners can consider as they move toward using student achievement measures to evaluate teacher effectiveness. These five recommendations call on school and district leaders to: 1) create comprehensive evaluation systems that incorporate multiple measures of teacher effectiveness; 2) attend to how assessments are being used in high-stakes contexts; 3) promote consistency in the student performance measures that teachers can choose; 4) use multiple years of student achievement data when estimating teachers' value-added efforts; and 5) hold teachers accountable for students not included in their value-added estimates.

27. The New Teacher Project (TNTP). 2010. *Teacher Evaluation 2.0*. Brooklyn, NY. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://tntp.org/files/Teacher-Evaluation-Oct10F.pdf.

This guide argues that teacher evaluations help teachers reach their full potential and ensure that the best teachers continue to teach. Teacher evaluations also can provide school districts with information to build strong instructional teams and hold districts accountable for supporting their teachers' development.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) offers a set of core principles to help districts develop a framework for a teacher evaluation system: 1) a teacher should believe that his or her students are capable of mastering challenging material, regardless of socioeconomic background; 2) a teacher's main responsibility is to ensure that students learn; 3) teachers contribute to student learning in ways that can be observed and measured; 4) evaluation results should be primarily used for teacher development, not for punitive measures; 5) evaluations should play a large role in employment decisions, such as hiring, salary increases, promotion, tenure, and retention; and 6) no evaluation system is perfect.

With these guiding principles in mind, TNTP recommends six design standards that the organization believes any teacher evaluation system must meet: 1) all teachers should be evaluated annually (at minimum); 2) evaluations must be based on clear standards of instructional excellence; 3) evaluations must incorporate multiple measures of

performance; 4) evaluations should use four to five rating levels to describe effectiveness; 5) evaluations should encourage frequent observations and critical feedback; and 6) evaluation data should play a major role in employment decisions about teachers. This document describes the various pitfalls to avoid when developing a teacher evaluation system that meets each of these criteria and provides examples of how these design standards are implemented in school districts.

ACCELERATING LEARNING

Providing intensive interventions to assist students who enter high school with reading/language arts or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level to "catch up" quickly and attain proficiency

1. Brown, J.E. & Doolittle, J. 2008. *A Cultural, Linguistic, and Ecological Framework for Response to Intervention with English Language Learners.* Practitioner Brief. Tempe, AZ: National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/Framework_for_RTI.pdf.

This brief, which is aimed at school and district practitioners, describes Response to Intervention (RTI), a multi-tiered approach that provides academic interventions to students at increasing intensity. Children who are not responding to classroom instruction are identified during early screenings and given support through research-based interventions at each tier while their progress is monitored. Given that RTI focuses on intervening early in a student's academic trajectory, the authors argue that it can therefore improve reading ability among English language learners (ELLs).

The authors present a framework for addressing the learning needs of ELLs. It includes: a systematic process for examining specific background variables that affect academic achievement for ELLs; examination of the appropriateness of classroom instruction and the classroom context based on what is known about individual student factors; information gathered through formal and informal assessments; and nondiscriminatory analysis of assessment data. The report provides an extensive overview of each tier within the RTI approach, emphasizing the importance of early identification so that ELLs can begin to receive support before they fall too far behind.

2. Colorado Department of Education. 2008. *Response to Intervention (RTI): A Practitioner's Guide to Implementation.* Denver, CO: Colorado Department of Education. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/downloads/RtIGuide.pdf.

This guide describes the expectations and the key components to the Response to Intervention model. RTI provides evidence-based, tiered interventions with varying degrees of intensity to improve the educational outcomes of students, particularly those in need of academic or behavioral support. The guide provides recommendations for developing problem-solving teams and identifying roles for staff. It discusses examples that could assist teachers in their student problem-solving teams, data collection, and monitoring of progress. It gives examples on how RTI can be integrated with existing programs and populations. District and school practitioners may best utilize this guide as they consider interventions for students who struggle to meet their academic goals.

The Colorado Department of Education determined six areas to be most important in RTI implementation: leadership; curriculum and instruction; school climate and culture;

problem-solving processes; assessment; and family and community involvement. The guide describes each component in detail, with advice for practitioners on how to shape each component as they design intervention systems. The document also provides an extensive discussion of Colorado's three-tiered approach to RTI, as well as steps practitioners should take to put the model into practice. Finally, the guide considers RTI as it relates to gifted and talented students, students with Individualized Education Plans, and students with specific learning or emotional disabilities.

3. Davis, M.H. & McPartland, J.M. 2010. *Supporting High School Teachers with Instructional Approaches for Adolescent Struggling Readers.* Baltimore, MD: Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from www.every1graduates.org/gradnation/item/download/41.html.

This report from the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University highlights findings from its study on ways to implement specific instructional practices to close adolescent literacy gaps. The research was part of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's National Adolescent Literacy Network, with additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Research and Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

A team at Johns Hopkins developed and evaluated an instructional package to assist ninth-grade students who enter high school two or more years behind in reading. The package includes four approaches that are frequently recommended: teacher modeling of the reading process; pre-reading preparations for vocabulary and background knowledge; student team discussions of comprehensive topics; and self-selected reading of diverse texts. This document may be most useful for practitioners (e.g., teachers, literacy coaches, and instructional leaders) at the school and district levels who seek interventions for students struggling with literacy.

4. Elliott, J. & Morrison, D. 2008. *Response to Intervention Blueprints: District-Level Edition.* Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education & Council of Administrators of Special Education. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/DISTRICT.pdf.

This document provides a framework around which an intervention system can be built to improve educational outcomes and decision making. It is designed to provide guidance to state education agencies, local education agencies, and schools to develop, implement, and evaluate Response to Intervention (RTI). The report defines RTI as the practice by which schools can provide high-quality instruction and intervention to match student needs while using learning rate over time and level of performance to make important decisions about educational practices.

This guide is a blueprint for implementing RTI. It offers critical implementation steps that must be considered in each intervention. It provides a host of illustrative resources that can be used by those implementing the RTI model for a particular context. It also provides expert advice from implementers throughout the country. The report is a practical guide for district leaders and administrators who are considering an intervention

system to better address student learning needs. An accompanying blueprint guide is available for schools at http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/SCHOOL.pdf.

5. Francis, D.J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H.H. 2006. *Research-based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions.* Portsmouth, NH: Center on Instruction. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.centeroninstruction.org/practical-guidelines-for-the-education-of-english-language-learners-research-based-recommendations-for-instruction-and-academic-interventions.

This report, the first of three from the Center on Instruction, focuses on the education of English language learners (ELLs). It provides evidence-based recommendations for teachers, school and district administrators, and policymakers who seek to develop academic interventions in reading and mathematics for ELLs. The authors highlight both class-wide interventions and targeted interventions for individual students in the K-12 setting. The authors draw on findings from two other reports: *Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth (NLP)* and *Educating English Language Learners: A Synthesis of Research Evidence*. The authors also consider other empirical research published after 2002 and use a variety of this research-based evidence to construct the recommendations for practitioners within this report.

With respect to language support, the authors call for: early, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonological awareness and phonics in order to build decoding skills; increased opportunities for ELLs to develop sophisticated vocabulary knowledge within their K-12 classrooms; strategies and knowledge to comprehend and analyze challenging narrative and expository texts through appropriate reading instruction within K-12 classrooms; instruction and intervention to promote reading fluency that focuses on vocabulary and increased exposure to print media; significant opportunities within classrooms to engage in structured academic talk; and independent reading that is structured, purposeful, and has good reader-text match.

For mathematics instruction, the authors recommend providing: explicit and intensive instruction and intervention in basic math concepts and skills; academic language that is related to mathematics; and academic language that is necessary to solve word problems often used for assessment and instruction.

6. Francis, D., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. 2006. *Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners: Research-Based Recommendations for Serving Adolescent Newcomers*. (Under cooperative agreement grant S283B050034 for U.S. Department of Education). Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL2-Newcomers.pdf.

This guide is the second in a series of three created by the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation and Statistics at the University of Houston for the Center on Instruction, under cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Education. The

guide provides evidence-based recommendations to help inform practitioners', administrators', and policymakers' decisions about instruction and academic interventions for adolescent newcomers who are also English language learners (ELLs). It builds on seminal reports as well as recently published empirical research.

The authors define adolescent newcomers as ELLs who are currently enrolled in grades 6 through 12 and have attended an English-speaking school for fewer than two years. As is consistent through the series, the authors argue that academic language is the key to academic success. They offer a conceptual framework and recommendations to help administrators and teachers create and improve programs to serve newcomers. The report's two sections discuss the instructional elements to effectively meet learners' needs, as well as organizational elements of programs designed to support teaching and learning. This resource is a useful summary of current research to inform decision making in local communities as educators and school systems adjust to changing student populations.

7. Irvin, J.L. 2006. *A Resource Guide for Adolescent Literacy.* Prepared for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Tallahassee, FL: National Literacy Project. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.nationalliteracyproject.org/addRead/ResourceGuideWdate.pdf.

This resource guide to promote improvement in adolescent literacy gives an overview of the most promising programs and practices in adolescent literacy. It discusses 1) how the various programs for struggling readers work to improve reading competencies; 2) the main features and design of these programs; and 3) their overall strengths, weaknesses, and costs. The guide also lists promising professional development opportunities, based on a framework developed by the National Staff Development Council, in adolescent literacy.

Numerous tools for literacy coaches are included, as are school literacy models for teaching and learning and a list of experts in adolescent literacy. The guide provides a list of books, categorized for beginner readers, more advanced learners, and English language learners, that schools can encourage students to read and discuss. Additionally, it lists a series of formative and summative assessments (for individual and group administration) that have been reviewed by postsecondary researchers, educational organizations, and educational laboratories. This guide would be most useful for literacy coaches, literacy instructors, and school leaders who seek strategies to improve adolescent literacy outcomes in their schools.

8. Raphael, J. & Kassissieh, J. 2010. "Accelerated Support and Advanced Learning." *Principal Leadership*, Vol. 10, No. 5. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://educationnorthwest.org/webfm_send/640.

This article highlights efforts at two high schools to increase rigor in mathematics and science for all students. The authors describe current practices at Forest Grove High School in Oregon and Hillsdale High School in San Mateo, California.

At Forest Grove High School, the principal opened access to Advanced Placement programs and created a math workshop for incoming freshmen who scored below proficiency on the state test. The workshop was taught by the school's best teachers, and students could take the course for two years or until they passed the tenth-grade test. Forest Grove also eliminated its honors track and increased teacher collaboration to support a more rigorous regular mathematics offering. The staff at Hillsdale High School focused on efforts to improve science proficiency. Both schools adjusted their curricula based on higher expectations, found ways for staff to work together to support lower-achieving students, and increased staff members' personal connections with students.

This article is an important resource for school leaders and teachers as they develop strategies to accelerate learning for all students. The focus on specific schools provides an opportunity for educators to follow up and ask questions of colleagues at the sites mentioned in the article.

9. Salinger, T. 2011. *Addressing the "Crisis" in Adolescent Literacy*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 29, 2011 from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finalcrisis.pdf.

This paper, produced for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Smaller Learning Communities Program, provides an overview of the literacy challenges facing many students in grades 4 through 12. It summarizes current research as it focuses specifically on highlighting actions that can be taken at the state and local levels, with explicit attention on the literacy skills needed to attain postsecondary goals.

The paper describes the challenge of adolescent reading as rooted in the transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn," and notes how significantly the complexity of students' reading tasks increase. The author argues that states could provide more guidance around instruction in this area, noting that this increasing complexity is rarely incorporated in state standards before grade 5. Salinger also uses National Assessment of Educational Progress (e.g., NAEP) data to describe the dimensions of the current crisis. The section on Planning to Meet the Adolescent Literacy Crisis is the most actionable as it provides guiding questions for deep analysis of data and suggested steps in the process of planning new comprehensive literacy plans using the Common Core State Standards, with their focus on college and career readiness. The section also includes recommendations for sources of data beyond test scores that may help diagnose literacy challenges in specific contexts, and a discussion of common implementation challenges. The paper will be useful for practitioners who are interested in taking a fresh look at their strategy to improve adolescent literacy.

10. Salinger, T. 2011. *On-Model Implementation of Adolescent Literacy Programs and Sustaining Their Effects*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finalmodel.pdf.

This paper, produced for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Smaller Learning Communities Program, focuses on the

implementation of adolescent literacy programs at the school and district level. It summarizes current research as it emphasizes the keys and challenges to implementing literacy programs in a way that adheres to its core principles. It is based on studies conducted in five school districts where practitioners negotiate the bridge from theory to practice.

The paper describes the current landscape of research-based literacy interventions, and details factors that contribute to or detract from on-model implementation (e.g., duration and program delivery, instructional focus and student match, teacher training and support, and technology, supplies, resources, and space). The author emphasizes critical drivers of on-model implementation, including: communication of guidelines and expectations; intermediaries; monitoring of implementation and student progress; time; and sustainability. This paper provides a helpful on-the-ground perspective on the organization-wide supports that are essential to successful implementation of adolescent literacy programs. It will be helpful to school and district leaders as they plan and/or troubleshoot their own initiatives.

Increasing graduation rates through credit-recovery programs, competency-based instruction, and performance-based assessments

11. Blackboard Inc. 2009. *Credit Recovery: Exploring Answers to a National Priority*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.blackboard.com/resources/k12/Bb_K12_WP_CreditRecovery.pdf.

This report emphasizes the promise of online learning to support credit-recovery programs. It summarizes current trends in online learning, as well as research that suggests that students perform equally well or better in formal online learning situations as with traditional instruction. The report incorporates viewpoints from the Education Week *Technology Counts* report, expertise from Anthony Picciano, a CUNY professor and researcher at the Sloan Consortium, and anecdotes of current practices from schools and districts across the country.

The report includes descriptions of a credit-recovery program in Ector County, Texas, and the Kentucky Virtual High School to illustrate the potential of online learning for credit recovery. It describes online platforms as an innovative response to the challenges for dropouts cited in *The Silent Epidemic* (e.g., Bridgeland, DiIluio, & Morison, 2006). The authors also present an argument for the cost effectiveness of online credit-recovery programs. This is an important resource for district leaders who are considering credit-recovery programs and are interested in better understanding the potential benefits of online programs.

12. National Center for Homeless Education. 2010. *Maximizing Credit Accrual and Recovery for Homeless Students*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://ftp.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/credit.pdf.

This brief focuses on the importance of credit-recovery opportunities for an often invisible population of students. While geared to state policymakers, it includes

suggestions that can be implemented at the district and school levels. The brief defines the legal responsibilities to homeless children that are assigned to districts under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Important suggestions contained in the brief include: "award students partial credit for work completed" and "complement regular classes with independent study programs, including learning labs, online learning and computerized modules." The brief discusses how these strategies might be implemented, identifies potential community partners, and offers descriptions of state policies that provide the flexibility and structure needed to effectively support homeless students. This resource is important for school and district leaders as they consider the needs of diverse groups of students who need a more robust suite of learning opportunities.

13. Oregon Department of Education. 2011. *Proficiency-based Teaching and Learning in Oregon: An Evolution from State Policy to Practice.* Salem, OR. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/standards/creditforproficiency/proficiency-based-tl-evolution.pdf.

In 2002, Oregon's State Board of Education adopted a policy referred to as Credit for Proficiency, a proficiency-based teaching and learning system that focuses on teacher practice and student learning. With this policy, districts could provide students with the opportunity to earn graduation credits by demonstrating what they know and what they can do. This brief describes how the policy evolved and the results of the pilot projects in seven districts.

The Credit for Proficiency policy has three purposes: offer flexibility to schools and districts so they can meet student needs and interests; create additional options for students based on Oregon's high standards and accountability system; and empower and encourage local decision making. The brief argues that proficiency-based teaching and learning can build upon standards-based education by providing student engagement, student-centered instruction, and well-defined standards that articulate what students should know how to do. The goal of the proficiency-based system is for students to take an active role in their learning. Although each state is likely to confront different challenges, Oregon's policy serves as an example of what many states and districts can consider as a means to improve graduation rates.

14. Perrenoud, M.R. 2010. *Credit Recovery (CR) Solutions Offered in After-School Programs*. Davis, CA. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/publication/credit-recovery-solutions-offered-after-school-programs.

This publication is part of the California After-School Network's series on promising practices in high school afterschool programs. It describes the design and implementation of BlairLEARNS in a magnet International Baccalaureate school.

BlairLEARNS is regarded as a critical component of the school's strategy for decreasing the dropout rate and accelerating learning. The report describes program implementation, academic structure, and program guidelines. BlairLEARNS is aligned to help fulfill California's graduation requirements and prepare students for college. The report contains four years of program data, including attendance and graduation rates, in addition to a rich description of challenges and the collaboration necessary to manage them. Finally, the report advances 10 recommendations for educators who plan to implement afterschool, credit-recovery programs, as well as contact information for educators with experience in such programs.

15. Watson, J. & Gemin, B., 2008. *Using Online Learning for At-risk Students and Credit Recovery.* Vienna, VA: North American Council for Online Learning. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.inacol.org/research/promisingpractices/NACOL_CreditRecovery_PromisingPractices.pdf.

This report is part of a series of white papers on promising uses of online learning in K-12 education. The authors outline challenges of online learning for at-risk students and credit-recovery programs and provide examples of successful practices.

The report summarizes six instances where school districts have used online learning to reach at-risk student populations or offer credit recovery. Many of the summaries include data about the effectiveness of online programs compared with more traditional programs. The report concludes with a set of lessons learned, notably the importance of maintaining a face-to-face component, the scalability of these programs, and the need for further research. This report would be helpful to district leaders focused on increasing the diversity of learning options available to students. It provides a range of examples and specific districts to contact for more information.

Establishing schedules and implementing strategies that provide increased learning time

16. Clark, P., Dayton, C., Tidyman, S., & Hanna, T. 2006. *Scheduling Guide for Small Learning Communities.* Berkeley, CA: University of California at Berkeley, Career Academy Support Network. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://casn.berkeley.edu/resource_files/scheduling_guide10-07-07-04-57-18.pdf.

This report is designed to help school leaders navigate the complex process of developing a schedule to support the successful implementation of small learning communities. The authors, who have experience as practitioners and researchers with career academies in California, do not advocate for a single best practice.

Chapter 1 emphasizes why scheduling is critical to the success of small learning communities. Chapter 2 explains why specific stakeholders should be involved in developing a master schedule. Chapter 3 describes how to build a master schedule in five stages, with a suggested timeline. Chapter 4 discusses potential conflicts and constraints to consider. Chapter 5 identifies features needed in scheduling software. The Appendix

summarizes alternative bell schedules and provides details about software options and features, as well as a glossary of terms. A corresponding PowerPoint is available on the website of the Career Academy Support Network.

This resource will be helpful to school and district leaders involved in scheduling decisions. It is a powerful guide that orients participants to the process. It could be a common reference point as participants engage in local planning processes.

17. Farbman, D.A. 2011. *Harnessing the Power of Expanded Time to Improve Schools: A Study of Three Districts.* Boston, MA: National Center on Time and Learning. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.timeandlearning.org/?q=node/99.

The National Center on Time and Learning, an organization committed to improving student achievement and providing a well-rounded education through expansion of learning time in schools, conducted a qualitative analysis of three districts that have implemented expanded learning time: the Superintendent's School Improvement District in Buffalo, NY; the Accelerated Learning Academies in Pittsburgh, PA; and the Plus One schools in Volusia County, FL.

The report examines these districts because of their shared theory of action regarding expanded learning time. Additional time in these districts is not only used to help some students become proficient at certain academic skills but also to provide all students with more time on each task, which enhances instructional quality. Apart from the benefit to students, expanded learning time served as the basis for school improvement in each district. The report details school improvement strategies in each district, how students experienced the expanded schedule, how different modifications affected student learning, and how the process of teacher professional development was transformed to enhance instruction. Finally, the report describes how the district office played a role in ensuring that reform took place in each of the schools and across the districts. This resource provides several examples and frameworks that practitioners at the district and school levels can follow as they expand learning time.

18. Frank, S. 2010. *Time and Attention in Urban High Schools: Lessons for School Systems.* Watertown, MA: Education Resource Strategies and Boston, MA: National Center on Time and Learning. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://erstrategies.org/resources/details/time_attention_in_urban_high_schools/?/documents/TimeandAttentionFINALApril2010.pdf.

Education Resource Strategies spent over a decade partnering with urban schools and districts to help them improve the use of their time, money, and staff while improving students' educational outcomes. This report describes how time and individual attention are allocated in six urban school districts. It compares patterns in these districts with best practices on time and attention and explores why system-wide transformation has not occurred. It also recommends how districts can align their policies on time and attention with those of highly successful urban schools.

The report provides findings on time and attention in the six urban school districts examined: student time in school varies by 30 percent across districts, which is equivalent to 50 days per year; time allocation is similar across districts because it is driven by traditional graduation requirements and the rigid structures of the school schedule; little is done to reduce class sizes or teacher loads to give attention to high-priority subjects or students; schools do not use data from formative assessment to adjust time and attention; and struggling students generally receive support through special education placement, which shifts many resources away from general education programs.

To address these challenges, the report suggests: adding time to the school calendar; helping teachers adjust interventions based on student progress; serving struggling students in general education programs whenever possible so as to prevent their placement in special education programs; providing school leaders with professional development and tools to organize their staff, time, and money; and improving collection, reporting, and use of student-level time and attention data. This report is useful for district and school practitioners and leaders who can reallocate resources to provide extra time and attention to students who are most in need.

19. Kaplan, C. & Chan, R. 2011. *Time Well Spent: Eight Powerful Practices of Successful Expanded-Time Schools.* Boston, MA: National Center on Time and Learning. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from: http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/view/tpc/2.

This report from the National Center on Time and Learning highlights the ways in which expanded-time schools have used additional time and the specific practices that schools use to make sure that additional time is used in a productive manner. This report would be most useful to district and school leaders, teachers, curriculum planners, and other school administrators.

The report highlights practices that successful expanded-time schools have implemented: making every minute count through the development of lesson plans that make class time productive and routinely modifying schedules to eliminate wasted time such as locker breaks, transitions, arrivals, and dismissals; prioritizing time according to focused learning goals by using student data to determine what skills students need time to master; individualizing learning time and instruction based on student needs by offering intervention classes, review sessions, and one-on-one tutoring for students that require extra support; using time to build a school culture of high expectations and mutual accountability by investing time and energy into reinforcing a positive culture; using time to provide a well-rounded education by going beyond literacy and numeracy to include a broad range of subjects such as the arts, community service, foreign languages, hands-on science, business, and leadership; using time to prepare students for college and careers by investing time in a range of programs that are necessary for success after high school and providing opportunity for independent learning; using time continuously to strengthen instruction by providing teachers with time to meet with instructional coaches and receive feedback; and using time to relentlessly assess, analyze, and respond to student data.

20. Roza, M. & Miles, K.H. 2008. *Taking Stock of the Fiscal Costs of Expanded Learning Time.* Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/07/pdf/elt2.pdf.

This report concerns the costs associated with expanding the length of the school day and considers the recommendation of the Center for American Progress, which advocates the expansion of learning time for high-poverty, low-performing schools by at least 30 percent (e.g., equivalent to two hours per day) and for all students within a school. Following a short introduction on the different models for implementing expanded learning time, the authors provide a framework for policymakers and practitioners to consider the associated costs and compare the costs with alternative reform initiatives. They discuss tradeoffs and strategies that district leaders could consider in adopting an expanded learning time policy.

The authors contend that expanded learning time can vary in three ways: how much time is added; which students participate; and how the time is used. Schools can use expanded learning time to offer tutoring groups, math and literacy initiatives, longer class blocks, enrichment activities, special projects, and increased time for professional development and planning. The authors also argue that costs do not grow in proportion to the total increase in time and depend on the school's current use of time, goals of the program, how staffs are structured, how compensation changes, and the level of available funding.

The report presents various options when considering each of these components. For example, when considering compensation changes, schools could: increase salaries of teachers and certified staff; increase salaries of existing paraprofessionals; provide stipends to teachers or certified staff; reallocate time of existing teachers, paraprofessionals, or certified staff; hire new staff to cover expanded learning time; or hire contractors or use community partners.

21. Shields, A. & Miles, K.H. 2008. *Strategic Designs: Lessons from Leading Edge Small Urban High Schools.* Watertown, MA: Education Resources Strategy. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://erstrategies.org/resources/details/strategic_designs_lessons_from_leading_edge_small_high_schools/

This report, the product of a three-year study of nine small urban schools, is designed to help school and district leaders use staff, time, and money more strategically. Each school uses innovative strategies and outperforms most high schools in its district.

Based on an analysis of these nine "leading edge" schools, the authors report that, compared to local districts, there is more formal time for teacher professional development and collaboration, more student time in core academics, and more time for targeted individual and small group academic support from teachers. Education Resources Strategy has posted these case studies on its website for individual review as well. This report's study of the relationship among use of time, allocation of staff, and financial decisions should interest district and school leaders.

BUILDING A COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

Creating a safe and disciplined school climate aimed toward improving attendance and behavior

1. Ashley, J. & Burke, K. 2010. *Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.restorativejustice.org/RJOB/illinoisschoolguide.

This guide advocates for restorative justice over punitive models of behavior modification. The authors note that restorative justice is supported by research in schools in the United Kingdom, Scotland, and the state of Pennsylvania. Skills that are taught through restorative justice, such as conflict resolution and critical thinking, are valuable in preparing students for college and careers, according to the authors.

The authors contend that when fully embraced, the underlying philosophy of restorative justice—that wrongdoing and conflict present teachable moments where learning can occur—permeates schools and communities. The guide offers descriptions of restorative practices that can be embedded in school and classroom contexts. It includes detailed examples of more complex restorative program models, such as peacemaking circles, peer juries, mediation and conferencing, designed to respond to conflict in the school community.

2. Bear, G.G. & Duquette, J.F. 2008. "Fostering Self-Discipline." *Principal Leadership*, Vol. 9, No. 2. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/nassp_fosteringselfdiscipline.pdf.

The authors presented this column in *Principal Leadership* magazine in cooperation with the National Association of School Psychologists. The authors' research and experience—one is a professor, the other a school psychologist—served as their basis for concluding that self-discipline, once attained, reduces the burden on educators to manage and correct misbehavior.

The authors describe ways of engaging teachers, students, and families in a culture of self-discipline. The column includes tips for parents that could be incorporated into a newsletter, a series of questions for school leaders to consider as they promote self-discipline among their students, and a list of recommended websites. Though brief, the column could be a useful tool to start a conversation among staff members about the goals and current state of self-discipline in a school.

3. Bridgeland, J.M., Dilluio, J.J., & Morison, K.B. 2006. *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*. Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises, LLC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.ignitelearning.com/pdf/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf.

Civic Enterprises produced this report as part of an effort to better understand the lives and circumstances of students who drop out of high school. It emphasizes the students' perspectives as an often overlooked resource that may help in developing strategies to address the dropout crisis. The report summarizes a study that used focus groups and interviews with ethnically and racially diverse 16- to 25-year-olds who dropped out of high schools in 25 rural, urban, and suburban locations throughout the country.

The report provides compelling statistics about the national dropout crisis, and these are given voice by students who share their reasons for dropping out and their regrets. Against this backdrop of data and anecdotes, the authors make suggestions about what might help students stay in school, such as better quality supports for struggling students and a school climate that fosters academics. The report includes policy recommendations for school, system, and state leaders, as well as powerful charts and graphs. The comments from dropouts provide a perspective that is often missing from the equation. Consequently, this report provides insight to leaders who wish to engage those students who are least engaged. The report is also a model for institutional researchers seeking to collect data from communities about the experiences of high school dropouts.

4. Christenson, S.L. & National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities. 2008. *Engaging Students with School: The Essential Dimension for Attendance and Academic Achievement.* Clemson, SC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.ndpc-sd.org/documents/Teleseminars/Christenson-080122/Christiansen-Engaging-Students-20080122.pdf.

This webinar from the National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities focuses on ways to improve attendance and academic achievement. It gives an overview of research on student engagement and includes a description of "Check and Connect," an evidence-based dropout intervention developed at the University of Minnesota. Check and Connect is the only dropout prevention program among those reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse that had a positive influence on students staying in school.

Originally designed for urban middle schools, Check and Connect is being K-12 field-tested in urban and suburban communities. The webinar includes lessons learned from implementing Check and Connect, as well as insights from additional sources of research. Diagrams, pictures, and summaries help practitioners understand student engagement from the student perspective. The slides also contain information to diagnose and remedy disengagement by focusing on individual relationships and contextual factors at home, at school, and in the community.

5. Dignity in Schools. 2009. *Fact Sheet: Creating Positive School Discipline*. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.dignityinschools.org/sites/default/files/Creating_Positive_Discipline_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

This two-page fact sheet provides an at-a-glance understanding of two approaches to discipline: Restorative Justice and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. It includes findings and references from research on implementation of these practices in schools throughout the United States.

Key elements of both strategies are conveyed clearly with bullet points and graphics. The Restorative Justice section emphasizes the need to train teachers and staff to improve their communication and interaction with students and the use of small and large group circles as vehicles for community building. With Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, the emphasis is on defining core values, rewarding positive behavior, and using data to monitor and improve discipline.

6. Flannery, K.B. & Sugai, G. 2009. "Introduction to the Monograph on High School SWPBS Implementation." In B. Flannery & G. Sugai, eds. *SWPBS Implementation in High Schools: Current Practice and Future Directions.* Eugene, OR: University of Oregon. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from https://www.epiconline.org/publications/college_readiness.

This monograph, produced by the Technical Assistance Center in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a part of the Office of Special Programs in the U.S. Department of Education. It provides lessons learned from 13 successful implementers of School-wide Positive Behavior Supports in nine states. One goal of the document is to give high school implementers guidance on promising practices and systems.

The monograph is divided into six chapters: 1) Introduction; 2) Administration Roles and Functions in PBIS High Schools; 3) Establishing and Maintaining Staff Participation in PBIS High Schools; 4) Connecting School-wide Positive Behavior Supports to the Academic Curriculum in PBIS High Schools; 5) Data-based Decision Making in PBIS High Schools; and 6) Implementation of Secondary/Tertiary Supports in PBIS High Schools. Each chapter includes strategies and ideas related to the topic and larger case studies based on the experiences of participating schools. The report also includes detailed summaries about each school. This resource, which provides school based examples and tips from experienced educators, will be helpful for educators whose schools are at all levels of implementation of PBIS.

7. Lewis, S. 2009. *Improving School Climate: Findings from Schools Implementing Restorative Practices*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.realjustice.org/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf.

Since little formal research has been done on the use of restorative practices in schools, this report by the International Institute for Restorative Practices includes excerpts from

articles, other reports, and disciplinary data from schools and districts to provide an overview of how restorative practices are changing the climate of many schools. The report includes case studies of six U.S. schools, two districts in Canada, and two schools in the United Kingdom. Each case study describes the school context and contains quotes from a narrative about the school community, graphs that illustrate changes in disciplinary problems, and examples of key discipline data points to paint a more comprehensive picture of the school climate.

8. Metropolitan Center for Urban Education. 2008. *Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Strategies*. New York, NY. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/005/121/Culturally Responsive Classroom Mgmt Strat2.pdf.

This article introduces culturally responsive classroom management as a pedagogical approach to guide the management decisions that teachers make and shine a light on the negative consequences of classroom management on students whose behaviors do not conform to middle-class norms. While the article summarizes a wealth of research on student discipline in schools, it focuses on the challenge of classroom management when students and teachers come from different cultural backgrounds.

Cultural responsiveness requires teachers to know their students' cultural backgrounds and the cultural lenses through which they view their students, to be aware of the broader social, economic, and political climate, and to use management strategies that emphasize respect, connectedness, and community, while also setting boundaries. The authors point to research on the success of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports as a promising tool that supports a culturally responsive classroom and a school climate that is conducive to student learning.

9. Mirsky, L. 2009. *Restorative Practices and the Transformation at West Philadelphia High School*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.safersanerschools.org/uploads/article_pdfs/37284_wph.pdf.

This article from the International Institute for Restorative Practices describes the implementation of restorative practices at West Philadelphia High School, a school once identified as a "persistently dangerous school." It describes current practice from the perspective of the school's staff and students. The principal describes the school's introduction to restorative practices, as well as the process and the challenges of gaining staff buy-in. In this case, while all teachers were exposed to information on restorative practices, implementation was inconsistent. Nevertheless, veteran and novice teachers who employed restorative practices saw powerful responses that convinced other teachers to try the approach. Students describe the importance of having a space to share out loud. In an accompanying video, school leaders discuss the importance of reversing a culture of disrespect, listening to students, and teaching students to engage in the act of building community. The article contains a link to the video: http://www.iirp.edu/westphilahigh/.

10. Nixon, C. 2010. *Keeping Students Learning: School Climate and Student Support Systems.* Charleston, WV: Edvantia, Inc. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.edvantia.org/pdta/pdf/SchoolClimateHandouts_TNLEAD9.10.pdf.

This set of resources features a checklist, created by Edvantia, that draws on unpublished materials from the National School Climate Center. The checklist defines roles and responsibilities for a school-based, school-climate coordinator, as well as for principals, student services professionals, teachers and paraprofessionals, central office staff, parent leaders, and community partners/providers who will be involved in implementing a systemic approach to school climate.

11. Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center 2011. *School Climate Survey Compendium*. Accessed on Decemer 23, 2011, from http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=133.

This resource, compiled by the Safe and Supportive Schools Technical Assistance Center in the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, offers a list of student, staff and family surveys that can be used in local contexts to measure school climate needs.

Many of the surveys described on this list are publicly available, or can be requested from an identified key contact. The compilation describes the specific constructs that each survey measures as well as reports from their use and validation. This resource will be very helpful to educators who seek to collect data from key stakeholders to understand school climate needs.

12. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. Accessed from http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/Search.aspx.

This website, developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, offers a searchable database of evidenced-based interventions that is continually growing. The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices includes a description of the intervention as well as a summary and quality review for each study (e.g., effectiveness of intervention).

Practitioners will find a wealth of information. For example, a search for school-based interventions for adolescents yields 67 interventions related to challenges including, but not limited to, eating disorders, bullying, anxiety, substance abuse, and problem sexual behaviors. Searches can be further refined to target urban, rural, or suburban communities as well as specific populations. This resource will be helpful to educators as they look for strategies to support students and families as they navigate adolescence.

13. Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Services. 2005. *Improving School Attendance: A Resource Guide for Virginia Schools,* Vol. 57. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/prevention/dropout_truancy/improving_school_attendance.pdf.

guide

This guide, developed for practitioners seeking to improve student attendance, incorporates research on causes and consequences of truancy. It describes current practices with regard to early interventions, legal interventions, and interfacing with the legal community. Additionally, it contains information from the U.S. Department of Education on online courses on truancy and school connectedness.

Practitioners on three levels of attendance intervention—prevention, early intervention, and legal intervention—will find a wealth of information. The guide provides a comprehensive understanding of attendance issues, tools to help educators implement specific interventions, and descriptions of effective practices in other states. Links to additional research are highlighted throughout the text. The guide also contains prevention information, a robust list of references, and appendices with sample forms and policies. The variety of resources and anecdotal information may help school and district leaders as they craft a customized suite of strategies to improve attendance.

Equipping students with "college knowledge" and the academic behaviors that are an essential component of college readiness

14. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. 2010. *This School Works for Me: Creating Choices to Boost Achievement. Leadership, Implementation and Analyst Guides*. Seattle, WA. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.gatesfoundation.org/united-states/Pages/school-works-for-me.aspx.

guide

This series of guides draws on data, lessons learned, and insights gained through practices used in a diverse group of urban school districts (e.g., Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Dallas, Portland, and New York City) to support urban school improvement. These communities were part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Small Schools Initiative, a partnership that also involved educational consultants: The Bridgespan Group, Boston Consulting Group, McKinsey & Company, Education Resource Strategies, and The Parthenon Group.

The Leadership Guide outlines strategies that have been used to identify struggling students, put students on track for a diploma, and result in a mix of school programs and options that help students transition to college and careers. *The Implementation Guide* describes current practices for diagnosing a district's strengths and challenges and for designing context-appropriate improvement processes. The tools in *The Data Analyst Guide* facilitate the use of high-quality data and analytics to improve graduation and college readiness, focusing on analyses that inform understandings of student progress, school/program strengths, and district investments. Tools in *The Data Analyst Guide* include explicit connections to college readiness, key questions that need to be addressed,

step-by-step lists of key tasks, time-saving tips, and insights to inform data-management strategies. A supplement to *The Data Analyst Guide* details analytic strategies to guide robust investigations of school and district data.

15. Conley, D. 2007. *Redefining College Readiness.* Eugene, OR: Education Policy Information Center. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from https://www.epiconline.org/publications/college_readiness.

This monograph, produced by David Conley's Education Policy Information Center, provides a comprehensive overview of college readiness that captures the content knowledge, thinking strategies, behaviors, and skills that enable students to succeed in college without remediation. Dr. Conley expands upon older definitions of college readiness, which focused on meeting admissions requirements.

Conley offers four components of college readiness: 1) Key Cognitive Strategies; 2) Academic Knowledge and Skills; 3) Academic Behaviors; and 4) Contextual Skills and Awareness. He describes these components in concrete terms, providing examples of how students demonstrate their competencies in school. He uses these items to emphasize the importance of a culture focused on intellectual development, and he offers clear steps that schools and students can take to foster college readiness and build a college-going culture.

16. Educational Policy Improvement Center. 2009. *Creating College Readiness: Profiles of 38 Schools that Know How*. Eugene, OR. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from https://www.epiconline.org/files/pdf/Profiles.pdf.

This report profiles 38 high schools that consistently graduated college-ready students from underrepresented groups, many of which also had high proportions of would-be, first-generation college goers. The case studies emphasize strategies to promote and advance college readiness, and the schools studied are diverse in size, location, urbanization, and student demographics. Schools are organized by type: alternative schools; charter schools; comprehensive schools; early college high schools; magnet schools; and private schools.

Each case study includes an overview of the school, its state and local context, and a rich description of features that promote college readiness. Many schools in the study forged strong partnerships with local colleges and universities. Some built strong interpersonal relationships with students, while others integrated career and technical education with college preparation.

17. Le, C. & Allen, L. 2011. *From Remediation to Acceleration*. Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.jff.org/publications/education/remediation-acceleration-early-lessons-t/1319.

Produced by Jobs for the Future, this report describes early efforts of two Philadelphia high schools to revamp their instruction to build college readiness among older students

who entered high school several years behind grade level in reading or math. The report documents implementation of JFF's Common Instructional Framework (CIF) as an emerging practice to increase college readiness. Strategies in the CIF are designed to engage students in high-level intellectual discussion and make difficult material engaging and accessible. Early data suggest that more than half of the students in the high schools that used the JFF framework advanced at least two years in reading and/or math.

The report features lessons learned about the importance of structure. Specifically, off-track students benefitted from teaching one another and quickly learned to take academic initiative. As a result, behavioral problems decreased dramatically, and students developed the social skills needed for success in college and the workplace. The report notes that successful implementation and sustainability of these changes depend on strong leadership, systemic supports, and ongoing coaching. This resource describes an important model for success with a population many schools struggle to reach.

18. McDonough, P.M. 2005. *Counseling and College Counseling in America's High Schools*. Alexandria, VA: National Association for College Admission Counseling. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.inpathways.net/McDonough Report.pdf.

Prepared for the National Association for College Admission Counseling, this report describes the important role of counselors in helping students acquire college knowledge and the challenges that public school counselors face in performing that role. The author summarizes recent research on college counseling, provides important information about the professional context of college counseling, and includes comparisons to counselors at private and college preparatory schools. She describes current practice and the need for rethinking counseling as a college-readiness tool.

The author offers a big-picture perspective on what is a common local challenge, and she includes a comprehensive description of the landscape of college admissions today. The report discusses research that contrasts the importance of college counseling and college knowledge in improving college access with the level of support and funding available for counselors in traditional public schools. It also cites data on the scarcity of college counseling resources available to students in communities with the least amounts of college knowledge.

19. Minnesota Office of Higher Education. 2011. *Within My Reach*. Get Ready for College.org. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.getreadyforcollege.org/pdfGR/WithinMyReach.pdf.

Within My Reach is a workbook to guide students through the many important decisions and deadlines they face on the path from middle school to a range of postsecondary options.

This tool includes key information, as well as space for students to record their thoughts and plans as they learn about themselves, colleges, careers, and financial aid. Snapshots of actual college students appear throughout the book, along with interest inventories and

short tests of college knowledge. Eye-catching graphics, easy-to-read language, and an inviting format define this publication, which stresses college as a path toward independence.

20. Tornatzky, L., Cutler, R., & Lee, J. 2002. *College Knowledge: What Latino Parents Need to Know and Why They Don't Know It*. Claremont, CA: The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.trpi.org/PDFs/College_Knowledge.pdf.

This report summarizes research conducted by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute on how and to what extent Latino parents get the information necessary to help their children transition from high school to college. The authors conducted telephone surveys and interviews with Latino parents in Chicago, New York City, and Los Angeles. They describe gaps in parents' college knowledge and differences by social class, recommending gap-closing strategies based on their research.

The authors discuss positive outliers—those who, despite limited income and parental education background, successfully transition to college. The outliers provide a context for identifying obstacles for Latinos in securing essential resources. Finally, the report provides suggestions for data collection that will help schools and districts monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

Implementing services and strategies to support the successful transition of students to postsecondary education

21. American Youth Policy Forum. 2011. *Exploring Innovative Schools and Policies that Prepare Students to be College and Career Ready*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.aypf.org/tripreports/2011/tr022311.htm.

This website summarizes a study tour to the San Francisco Bay Area to examine innovative and promising approaches to developing college and career readiness. The tour included visits to the Napa New Tech High School and the Envision Schools, as well as presentations from experts and school leaders on promising practices in California and across the nation. In one presentation, Dr. David Conley gives his definition of college readiness and presents his seven research-based principles of college readiness, with examples of how schools can put the principles into operation.

The website stresses the need for students, teachers, counselors, and school and system leaders to shift from a focus on achievement as measured by testing toward a goal of increasing the depth of cognitive engagement to help students transition from novice to expert. Additionally, the *Multiple Pathways Report,* in which the California Department of Education proposes a vision for redesigning the state's high school system, provides an example of innovative thinking at the system level.

22. Bottoms, G., Carpenter, K., Farmer, D., Fails, P., & Graiser, P. 2010. *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers: Transitional Senior Mathematics*. Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://publications.sreb.org/2010/10V26_Senior_Transitional_Math.pdf.

This report presents the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) list of 17 indicators of readiness for postsecondary mathematics, along with learning activities designed to support schools in preparing students to succeed in math courses at community and technical colleges. The indicators are the result of a three-year SREB project that involved a panel of curriculum and national test developers and six high school field-test sites. At the project's completion, 50 percent of the students met mathematics readiness standards, compared with 24 percent initially.

The report begins with an overview of the indicator development and field testing, followed by a detailed discussion of the indicators and corresponding sample learning activities. The learning activities incorporate real-life investigations, require the use of higher-order thinking, and demand that students use multiple modes of work and presentation (e.g., individual, groups, and technology). The learning activities also provide opportunities for students to develop and practice academic behaviors associated with college readiness. Similarly, the alignment of the readiness indicators with college placement tests suggests that exposure to this curriculum will also build students' college knowledge. The report supports curricular alignment at the classroom, school, and district levels. It is also a valuable tool for the development of senior-level mathematics courses.

23. Bottoms, G., Young, M., & Han, L. 2009. *Ready for Tomorrow: Six Proven Ideas to Graduate and Prepare More Students for College and 21st-Century Careers*. Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://publications.sreb.org/2009/09V20_Ready_for_Tomorrow.pdf.

This Southern Regional Education Board report is designed to support school leaders in building academic pathways that blend high-level academics and high-quality career/technical studies to put students on a path to success. The report derives lessons from 20 years of research and field experience as part of the High Schools That Work network and draws from Jeannie Oakes and Marisa Saunders' 2008 book, *Beyond Tracking—Multiple Pathways to College, Career and Civic Participation.*

The report offers ideas for ensuring that all students have: a rigorous academic core curriculum; high-quality career/technical courses that use authentic assessments to blend academic and technical content; high-quality career/technical programs that focus on 21st-century skills; expectations that they will meet standards in their classrooms; adequate support; and an adult advisor or mentor. In its conclusion, the report details specific steps that schools and policymakers can take to support the blending of high-level academics and high-quality career/technical education.

24. Fazekas, A. & Warren, C. 2010. *Building a Pathway to the Future: Maximizing High School Guidance and Advisory Support*. Accessed on December 23, 2011, from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finalbuilding.pdf.

This paper, created for the U.S. Department of Education's Smaller Learning Communities Program, argues for a more comprehensive view of school guidance and advisory support to include more collective responsibility. They present a model for this alternative structure and discuss the different roles that guidance staff, teachers, parents, students, alumni, and community members play in carrying out these reports.

This paper provides educators with ideas for moving away from the traditional sink-or-swim approach to college readiness, as well as examples, resources and compelling data from the field. It includes references to both schools and resource centers where educators can access more information. The suggestions included in the report are practical and manageable, as they are organized around students' needs for information and support as they navigate the postsecondary planning process, beginning early in their high school careers. This is a helpful resource for schools building a college-going culture, as it clearly communicates the important contributions that all members of the school community can make to students' postsecondary success.

25. Gardenhire-Crooks, A., Collado, H., & Ray, B. 2006. *A Whole 'Nother World: Students Navigating Community College*. New York, NY: MDRC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.mdrc.org/publications/434/full.pdf.

This study is a complement to the Opening Doors impact evaluation, which examines the effectiveness of interventions at the community college level. Findings are based on interviews with 47 students between the ages of 18 and 25 attending community college in New York City and Ohio. Glimpses into the experience of community college students are rare, and the report affords an opportunity for secondary educators to understand some of the nuances of attending community college so they can better prepare students for this next step. The findings of the report describe students' reasons for attending community college, the challenges they face, and the resources they found most helpful.

26. Tierney, W.G., Bailey, T., Constantine, J., Finkelstein, N., & Hurd, N.F. 2009.*Helping Students Navigate the Path to College: What High Schools Can Do: A Practice Guide* (NCEE #2009-4066). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/higher_ed_pg_091509.pdf.

Produced by the What Works Clearinghouse, this guide presents recommendations from 16 studies that offer evidence of the effectiveness of college access programs. The recommendations involve academic preparation, college aspirations and expectations, and steps for college entry. Specific recommendations include surrounding students with adults and peers who build and support their college aspirations and who assist students and families in filing college and financial aid applications.

The guide summarizes the research that undergirds each recommendation and includes a checklist of steps schools should take to implement recommendations tied to curriculum and assessment. Additionally, the guide offers examples of how these recommendations have been implemented in a variety of contexts and models that can be adapted for local sites.

27. Jobs for the Future. 2010. *Hidalgo Early College District Toolkit.* Boston, MA. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://hidalgo.jff.org.

This online toolkit is a resource for practitioners who are committed to the postsecondary success of all students. It presents lessons learned from the promising Early College High School Initiative in the Hidalgo (Texas) Independent School District.
With a focus on the district's knowledge from the district perspective, the website includes background information about Hidalgo and insight about operations and financing, aligning college and career pathways, developing student supports, developing and retaining talented educators, creating a college-going culture, engaging family and community, and building strong college partnerships.

Each section includes resources, data, and downloadable special reports and tools that have been instrumental to Hidalgo's efforts and that provide evidence of early success. The site includes voices of individuals throughout the district to give an understanding of Hidalgo's strategies from multiple perspectives. This toolkit is valuable for schools and districts engaging in comprehensive reform to support college readiness.

28. Jobs for the Future. 2009. *College and Career Readiness for All Texas High School Graduates: An Issue Brief Submitted to the Communities Foundation of Texas.* Boston, MA. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://www.jff.org/publications/education/college-and-career-readiness-all-texas-h/737.

This brief provides an overview of the Hidalgo Early College High School as an educational model to support college and career readiness. It includes data on student outcomes, examples of student-level programs, and perspectives from educational leaders throughout the Hidalgo Independent School District, a rural district in Texas that serves a predominately low-income and Hispanic population along the Mexican border.

The district used state policy and local resources to support college and career readiness district-wide and become a self-described "Early College District." The report discusses funding streams and performance challenges that motivated Hidalgo and emphasizes the importance of creating pathways to both college and careers, the district's partnerships with colleges and technical centers, and the benefits of the initiative as told by students and staff.

29. Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Moeller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. 2008. *From High School to the Future: Potholes on the Road to College*. Chicago, IL: Consortium on Chicago School Research, University of Chicago. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from www.ccsr.uchicago.edu.

This report presents the finding of a two-year study of students' transition to college. It looks at how students manage the college application process and the kinds of schools where they ultimately enroll.

Emphasized in the report is the importance of a strong college-going culture in schools, with teachers pushing students to go to college, ensuring they are prepared, and helping with college applications. Filing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* and applying to multiple colleges increases the likelihood that students will enroll in a four-year college, according to the authors. They note that many students who could get into institutions that are at least somewhat selective do not apply, and many who could gain admission to a four-year institution only apply to two-year colleges. Among the most highly qualified students, strong connections to teachers and discussions about postsecondary planning are critical to their enrollment in appropriately selective institutions.

Graphics and powerful case studies of individual students enhance this report, which is a strong resource for assisting students in the transition from high school to college.

30. The College Board National Office for School Counselor Advocacy. 2010. *Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling*. Washington, DC. Accessed on December 2, 2011, from http://advocacy.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/10b_2217_EightComponents_WEB_100625.pdf.

This report promotes school counselors as leaders in advancing school reform and student achievement, and it outlines a systemic approach for school counselors to play a key role in ensuring equity of process and results with regard to promoting college readiness. According to the report, strategies and interventions should: take into account the context of the community and diverse populations the school serves; target interventions at the student, school, family, and community levels; and use data to identify inequities, develop goals, inform practice, and demonstrate accountability.

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