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ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) network forums were convened by McREL to share CSRD implementation strategies, discuss issues relative to technical assistance needs and CSRD model implementation support, and strengthen communication and collaborative links between the SEAs and regional providers for coordinated service delivery. Twenty-nine participants attended the forum on July 27, 1999. Participants included CSRD SEA coordinators, model developers, regional service providers, and McREL staff. Each CSRD SEA coordinator had an opportunity to share state status reports, which are provided. Each Regional Service Provider presented a report and update on their sites. These updates helped identify additional services needed and strategies that might be used to support CSRD implementation in local sites. The model developer panel, representing three comprehensive school reform models ("Success for All," "Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound," and "The Global Institute for Maximizing Potential") gave general overviews of their models, discussed successes and ongoing challenges, and answered questions regarding implementation. Appendix A provides brief descriptive materials for these models. Appendix B contains "McREL Research Projects and Evaluation Guide." (DFR)

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COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM DEMONSTRATION

SEA NETWORK FORUMS

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COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM DEMONSTRATION

SEA NETWORK FORUMS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 2

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORUM 2
- State Advisory Updates 2
- Regional Service Providers Updates 3
- Model Developer Presentations 4
- Information Session on CSRD Research and Evaluation 5
- Technical Assistance Needs and Action Planning 5

FOLLOW UP TO CSRD SEA NETWORK FORUM 6

CONCLUDING REMARKS 7

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) network forums were convened by McREL for the CSRD Central Region State Coordinators on July 27, 1999 and October 14, 1999. The purposes of these forums were

1. to share CSRD implementation strategies,

2. To discuss issues relative to technical assistance needs and CSRD model implementation support, and

3. To strengthen communication and collaborative links between the SEAs and regional providers for coordinated service delivery.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FORUM

Twenty-nine participants attended the forum on July 27, 1999. Participants included CSRD SEA Coordinators, model developers, regional service providers, and McREL staff. McREL's CSRD Coordinator welcomed participants and reviewed the forum's outcomes and agenda. McREL's Executive Director provided opening remarks and a member of McREL's Field Services team introduced an icebreaker activity, which encouraged participants to share their reflections on comprehensive school reform.

State Advisory Updates

Each CSRD SEA Coordinator had an opportunity to share state status reports, which are summarized as follows:

- The Colorado Department of Education funded 18 CSRD sites since March 1999. The average request for funding was $75,000. Additional funding is available for specific professional development opportunities upon receipt of a written request from CSRD sites. The Department plans to complete two site visits per year to monitor implementation of the CSRD initiative.

- The Department of Secondary and Elementary Education in Missouri funded eight CSRD sites as of July 1999. The funding was capped at $75,000. Presently, the Department is developing a consolidated application for federal funding centered on the state school improvement plan.

- The Nebraska Department of Education has funded two CSRD sites as of January 1999. Four additional sites will be funded in August 1999.

- The Department of Public Instruction in North Dakota reviewed six applications for CSRD funding and made four awards. Additional funding will provide opportunities for sites to network and visit other CSRD sites.

- The South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs revised its application for CSRD funding, which was approved by the Department of Education. All schools in South Dakota were informed about the CSRD process via written correspondence. Three school districts and four schools applied for funding. The Department asked that McREL staff present a workshop on CSRD awareness and the application process in support of the second round of funding.

- The Wyoming Department of Education awarded six schools CSRD funding. Fourteen schools applied and were reviewed in sessions hosted by McREL.

Regional Service Providers Updates

Each Regional Service Provider presented an update on their its to the field. These updates helped identify additional services needed and strategies that might be used to support CSRD implementation in local sites.

- At the NWREL Comprehensive Center, state liaisons are assigned to sites in the region. The Center currently focuses its technical assistance on evaluation issues. McREL and NWREL Comprehensive Center plan to coordinate services in presenting evaluation strategies at an upcoming CSRD Roundtable in Wyoming.

- The Eisenhower High Plains Consortium at McREL provides technical assistance, which addresses reform in math/science curriculum and assessment, and the alignment of curriculum to mathematics and science standards. Presently, the team is developing science lesson plans that are available on line as part of its NASA Genesis Mission outreach program.

- While the Center does not focus on services to CSRD sites, the Region VII Midwest Equity Assistance Center has funded 28 projects in its region. McREL staff will present *The CSRD Overview* at their annual Equity Update Conference during September in Kansas City, Missouri.

- The Region VII Comprehensive Center will sponsor a School-Wide Institute on August 9-11, 1999 in St. Louis, Missouri. McREL staff members will present a session on *CSRD and The Planning Process* at the Institute.

- The Region IX Comprehensive Center has targeted 12 schools in its region for intervention. John Dewey Middle School in Denver, Colorado has been

identified as one of the schools, and McREL staff will collaborate with CC staff in providing technical assistance in support of the school's reform efforts.

- The Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center will provide technical assistance in special education in ten states. The application of standards and assessments to the needs of special education students was the focus of over 170 technical assistance activities in eight states last year.

- McREL's Field Services' staff members recently provided workshops on *The CSRD Program, CSRD Model Selection,* and *Proposal Development* across its seven state region. Twenty-eight different research-based models are being implemented in the 54 CSRD sites selected as of July 1999.

Model Developer Presentations

The model developer panel, representing three comprehensive school reform models, *Success for All, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound,* and *The Global Institute for Maximizing Potential* gave general overviews of their models, discussed successes and ongoing challenges, and answered participants' questions regarding implementation. Appendix A provides brief descriptive materials for these models.

- Joan Kozlovsky, representative from **Success for All**, gave an overview of this program. There are 62 schools in the McREL region currently using the **Success for All** model. The model is a reading program that provides curriculum training, assessments, family support, and onsite support. Children are grouped based on performance levels. Students are reassessed and regrouped every eight weeks. Ongoing challenges for **Success for All** were

  - some schools feel a sense of isolation from being in a district where no other schools are engaged in reform efforts, and

  - some teachers do not recognize the stages of implementation of a new initiative, especially the implementation dip which affects some teachers negatively.

- Rob Stein, Director of Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning and representative for **Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound**, presented highlights of the program. He described the program as learning expeditions which are long-term, in-depth studies of a single topic that explore vital guiding questions, incorporate standards, and involve field work, service and adventure. The culminating event is a project, product, or performance. At the end of the year, community members are invited to review student portfolios and determine if students have met designated standards. It was reported that, after one year of

operation, the ITBS scores of students in the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning were the highest in the Denver Public School District.

- Susanne Richert, representative of the **Global Institute for Maximizing Potential**, presented highlights of this model design which integrates social-emotional components into the curriculum. These components include a gifted and talented component, an ethical component, and an emotional development component.

  Baseline data are gathered to determine performance levels of students and the overall school program. How much and how quickly the programs should be implemented is determined on an individual basis. The curriculum aligns to standards and requires no new textbook purchases. This model emphasizes maximum performances, not just minimums, by using instructional strategies that are successful with gifted as well as underachieving students. The model reduces discipline problems, improves self-esteem, and integrates technology with standards.

  The challenges identified for the **Global Institute for Maximizing Potential** are

  - Educators tend to want to implement one component rather than all of the necessary components, which is necessary for success.

  - Most school improvement plans incorporate too many goals, which often interferes with the successful implementation of this model.

Information Session on CSRD Research and Evaluation

Participants were provided information regarding research and evaluation. During an awareness session, McREL staff members shared details of their CSRD research projects underway and highlights of the newly developed evaluation guide (Appendix B).

Technical Assistance Needs and Action Planning

Specific technical assistance needs identified ranged from more on-site assistance, to more network opportunities for the CSRD schools, to more professional development opportunities for capacity building. Table 1 shows the distribution of specific needs identified across the states in McREL's region. The design of regional workshops focused on these identified concerns and will be determined in collaboration with the state agencies. In addition, resources such as the guide, *Working with Model Developers*, will be provided to address some of these needs and the challenges noted by the model developers.

Table 1

Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration:
Needs Assessment for Action Planning.

Technical Assistance Need	State						
	CO	KS	MO	NE	ND	SD	WY
Application process/proposal development			✓			✓	
Collaboration between teaching staff and community		✓		✓			
Leadership/capacity building issues	✓	✓		✓			
Limited number of substitute teachers	✓	✓		✓			
Model design implementation strategies				✓			✓
Network opportunities for CSRD sites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
On-site assistance/facilitation	✓						
Program evaluation strategies			✓	✓	✓		
Time for professional development							✓

Liaisons and regional partners closed the Forum by meeting with CSRD SEA Coordinators to revisit and update state CSRD action plans so they will reflect identified technical assistance needs.

FOLLOW UP TO CSRD SEA NETWORK FORUM

The second CSRD SEA Network Forum was held in conjunction with the McREL Fall Conference on October 14, 1999, in Denver. The SEA CSRD Coordinators attended the session on *Evaluating for Success*. The Coordinators felt this would be a valuable session since assistance with program evaluation was identified as a need by some states.

After the session, the Coordinators met with McREL staff members to discuss specific needs and issues. Specific requests for assistance include continuing to facilitate the grant application process for prospective CSRD applicants, planning opportunities for CSRD schools to work and learn together, providing guidance to the new CSRD SEA Coordinators, and continuing to provide a session on CSRD evaluation strategies at regional meetings.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

After the two forums, CSRD state action plans were revised to reflect these specific state requests for assistance from McREL and other service providers. Overall, the convening of the SEA forums have contributed to McREL's ability to collaborate with other CSRD service partners, to provide and identify resources for states implementing comprehensive school reform, to identify new assistance needs quickly, and to craft assistance solutions targeting these needs.

APPENDICES

A Model Developers Descriptive Materials

B McREL Research Projects and Evaluation Guide

APPENDIX A

Success for All (PreK-6)

IN BRIEF Success for All	
Developer	Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, and a team of developers from Johns Hopkins University
Year Established	1987
# Schools Served (Jan. 1998)	747
Level	preK-6
Primary Goal	ensuring that all children learn to read
Main Features	• schoolwide reading curriculum • cooperative learning • grouping by reading level (reviewed by assessment every 8 weeks) • tutoring for students in need of extra assistance • family support team
Results	consistently, students in Success for All schools have outperformed students in control schools on reading tests; effects have been even more pronounced for students in the bottom quartile
Impact on Instruction	in reading classes — prescribed curriculum, cooperative learning; other subjects not affected (see Roots & Wings for a description of other curricular components that can be added)
Impact on Organization/ Staffing	building advisory committee; full-time facilitator; family support team; tutors
Impact on Schedule	daily 90-minute reading periods; tutoring
Subject-Area Programs Provided by Developer	yes (reading)
Students Served	
Title I	yes
English-language learners	yes
Urban	yes
Rural	yes
Parental Involvement	family support team works to increase parental involvement
Technology	none required
Materials	detailed materials provided

Origin/Scope

Success for All was founded by Robert Slavin, Nancy Madden, and a team of developers from Johns Hopkins University. It was first implemented in a single elementary school in Baltimore in 1987. The following year it expanded to six schools (five in Baltimore and one in Philadelphia). By January 1998, it had grown to 747 schools in 40 states.

General Description

Success for All restructures elementary schools (usually high poverty Title I schools) to ensure that every child learns to read in the early grades. The idea is to prevent reading problems from appearing in the first place and to intervene swiftly and intensively if problems do appear.

Success for All prescribes specific curricula and instructional strategies for teaching reading, including shared story reading, listening comprehension, vocabulary building, sound blending exercises, and writing activities. Teachers are provided with detailed materials for use in the classroom. Students often work cooperatively, reading to each other and discussing story content and structure. From second through sixth grade, students use basals or novels (but not workbooks). All students are required to spend 20 minutes at home each evening reading books of their choice.

Students are grouped according to reading level for one 90-minute reading period per day. The rest of the day they are assigned to regular age-grouped grades. Every eight weeks, teachers assess student progress using formal measures of reading comprehension as well as observation and judgment. The assessments determine changes in the composition of the reading groups and help identify students in need of extra assistance. Those students receive

summary of their findings. They also use these opportunities to coach staff and consult with the facilitator.

Costs

Success for All is typically funded by reallocating existing Title I, state compensatory, and special education funds in high poverty schools. The full-time facilitator and tutors required by the program generally come from existing school personnel, such as Title I-funded teachers. Costs for materials and training vary according to school size and other factors, but average about $70,000 during the first year, $28,000 the second, and $21,000 the third (estimated cost for a school of 500 students; add or subtract $65 per pupil over or under 500). Costs are lower for districts near locations of Success for All trainers and for districts implementing the design in multiple schools. Success for All staff work with schools and districts on how to use Title I, other compensatory education, special education, and state, local, and foundation sources to implement the design.

Student Populations

Success for All was developed primarily for inner city elementary schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged children. However, the design has also been implemented in many rural and suburban districts. Additionally, a Spanish version of Success for All's beginning reading program, *Lee Conmigo,* has been developed, and materials are available to support bilingual and ESL instruction through the sixth grade.

Special Considerations

Reading teachers must be willing to use detailed Success for All materials. Because the developers expect demand to exceed capacity, they have set priorities to work with districts that already have Success for All schools, with districts near training centers, and with districts or regions willing to bring on clusters of schools (more than four). Applications for a given school year must be filed before April 1 of the preceding school year.

Selected Evaluations

Developer

Madden, N. A., Slavin, R. E., Karweit, N. L., Dolan, L. J., & Wasik, B. A. (1993). Success for All: Longitudinal effects of a restructuring program for inner-city elementary schools. *American Educational Research Journal, 30,* 123-148.

Slavin, R. E., Madden, N. A., Dolan, L. J., & Wasik, B. A. (1993). *Success for All: Evaluations of national replications* (Report No. 43). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students.

Slavin, R. E., Madden, N. A., & Wasik, B. A. (1996). *Success for All / Roots and Wings: Summary of research on achievement outcomes.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk.

Outside Researchers

Dianda, M. R., & Flaherty, J. F. (1995). *Report on workstation uses: Effects of Success for All on the reading achievement of first graders in California bilingual programs.* Los Alamitos, CA: Southwest Regional Laboratory.

Ross, S. M., & Smith, L. J. (1994). Effects of the Success for All model on kindergarten through second-grade reading achievement, teachers' adjustment, and classroom-school climate at an inner-city school. *Elementary School Journal, 95,* 121-138.

Stringfield, S., Millsap, M. A., Herman, R., Yoder, N., Brigham, N., Nesselfodt, P., Schaffer, E., Karweit, N., Levin, M., & Stevens, R. (1997). *Urban and suburban/rural special strategies for educating disadvantaged children: Final report.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (K-12)

IN BRIEF Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB)	
Developer	Outward Bound, USA
Year Established	1992
# Schools Served (Jan. 1998)	47
Level	K-12
Primary Goal	high achievement for all students
Main Features	• challenging learning expeditions that involve authentic projects and fieldwork • high expectations for all students • shared decision-making • regular review of student achievement and level of implementation
Results	9 of 10 third-year ELOB schools have shown significant improvement on standardized tests
Impact on Instruction	interdisciplinary projects; frequent journeys out of the classroom for fieldwork
Impact on Organization/ Staffing	at least 3 hours of team planning time for teachers weekly; 15-20 days of professional development per teacher per year
Impact on Schedule	requires large, flexible blocks of time for in-depth investigation in school and in the field; students stay with same teacher for more than one year
Subject-Area Programs Provided by Developer	no
Students Served	
Title I	yes
English-language learners	yes
Urban	yes
Rural	yes (2 schools)
Parental Involvement	many opportunities for parents and community to be involved in students' learning expeditions
Technology	none required
Materials	provided

Origin/Scope

Formed in 1992, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) is based on the principles of Outward Bound, which educator Kurt Hahn founded in 1941. There are 47 ELOB schools in 13 states as of January 1998.

General Description

Expeditionary Learning focuses teaching and learning toward enabling all students to meet rigorous academic standards and character goals. Curriculum, instruction, assessment, school culture, and school structures are organized around producing high quality student work in learning expeditions — long term, in-depth investigations of themes or topics that engage students in the classroom and in the wider world through authentic projects, fieldwork, and service.

Learning expeditions are designed with clear learning goals that are aligned with district and state standards. Ongoing assessment is woven throughout each learning expedition, pushing students to higher levels of performance.

In Expeditionary Learning schools, teachers, students, and school leadership build a culture of high expectations for all students. Teachers work collaboratively in teams, with regular common planning time to plan interdisciplinary expeditions, critique each others' expedition plans, and reflect on student work and teacher practices to improve curriculum and instruction. To strengthen relationships in the classroom, students stay with the same teacher

decreases to $2,150 for each teacher after the first 25. Second year costs are typically 10-20% lower, depending on the initial level of implementation, and third year costs 10-20% lower again. Costs continue to decrease in subsequent years.

Student Population

ELOB serves disadvantaged students, minority students, and English language learners. The program has been implemented in Title 1 schools and primarily in urban areas.

Special Considerations

Schools should provide for 15-20 days of professional development time for each teacher and budget for at least three hours of common team planning time per week.

Selected Evaluations

Developer

Working towards excellence: Results from schools implementing New American Schools designs. (1997). Arlington, VA: New American Schools.

Outside Researchers

Bodilly, S., with Purnell, S., Ramsey, K., & Keith, S. J. (1996). *Lessons from New American Schools Development Corporation's demonstration phase.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Sample Sites

King Middle School
92 Deering Avenue
Portland, ME 04102
202-874-8290
Principal: Mike McCarthy

Raphael Hernandez School
61 School Street
Roxbury, MA 02118
617-635-8190
Principal: Margarita Muniz

Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning
3755 South Magnolia Way
Denver, CO 80237
303-756-2193
Director: Rob Stein

For more information, contact:

Meg Campbell
Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound
122 Mt. Auburn Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: 617-576-1260
Fax: 617-576-1340
E-mail: meg_campbell@elob.ci.net
Web site: http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~elob

What Teachers Say

This is the most meaningful training I've ever had."
"It has changed my life."
"I understand why my own child has had problems."
"Students can now solve their own problems."
"I was amazed! There was one student who had done nothing before."
"Students are making decisions that require higher level thinking. They work independently."
"The students really like the feeling that they control the choices they make."
"Scores have gone up; absenteeism is down."
"The quality of work is improving and the volume is increasing because they have more choices."
"They are learning more."
"They are working in groups, even on the evaluation process. They are taking more ownership."
"They are very conscious of respecting others."

What Students Say

"I've learned that I can do almost anything if I put my mind to it."
"I learned I couldn't work well with others. But now I've learned how to."
"I would like to make a difference in our world by teaching people how to respect one another."
"It has helped me a lot with my grades...It means going to school rather than staying home."
"I always wanted to be the first black president of the U.S.A. If I was, I would stop street hunger and world hunger."
"Teamwork, friendship and pride are some of the things that have been strengthened for me."
"I've learned that I am smart and can be smart with all the fights and arguments around me."

LOCATIONS & DEMOGRAPHICS

Elements of Richert's Maximizing Potential Model are in place in **17 urban districts**, plus 48 demographically diverse districts, annually impacting over 83,000 students worldwide.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

You can now have

a Comprehensive School Reform Model that:

MEETS ALL CSR REQUIREMENTS for federal funding;
HAS PROVEN GAINS on both elementary and secondary state assessments, as well as norm referenced tests;
OFFERS CHOICES of
- rate of implementation,
- elements to be adopted,
- professional development emphasis;

RETAINS & REINFORCES successful practices and materials;
CUSTOMIZES THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS based on each school's needs and priorities;
ALIGNS CURRICULUM to state standards. but requires no new text purchases;
EMPHASIZES MAXIMUMS, not just minimums, by using instructional strategies that are successful with gifted and underachieving students;
REDUCES DISCIPLINE problems, and improves self-esteem;
GENERATES SUPPORT from parents, teachers, and students;
INTEGRATES technology with State Standards.

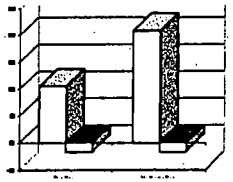
Global Institute

Comprehensive School Reform

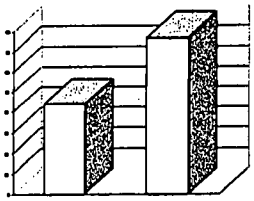
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

Global Institute's PK-12 **CSR** model is one of the few ComprehensiveSchool Reform models proven to **raise scores on performance assessments with 5-76% annual rates of gain.**

- In a large urban district, 15 schools, in comparison to 7 control schools, had average rates of **gain of 22% & 12%** in achieving Minimum Levels of Proficiency in state **math and reading tests.** Five targeted schools had **20-39%** increase in students achieving MLP; thirteen had rates of **gain of 20-76%** in reading, math or writing.



- Two urban middle schools made gains in state writing performance assessments in just one year. One school achieved a phenomenal **75% rate of gain.**



- In a large urban district, from 1996 to 1997, a K-8 school in a group of 6 high need schools, with the lowest scores in each cluster of 3 subjects, dramatically **moved from 6th to the 2nd** highest scoring school in **all state tested subjects.**
- An urban middle school improved grades, discipline and attendance along with state math performance assessments in just one year.
- In 1998, students in an urban high school made a comparative **gain of 9%** in achieving MLP in **reading and writing.**

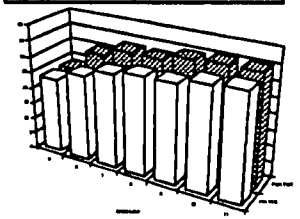
RESEARCH TESTED

The effectiveness of Richert's Maximizing Potential Model© was first evaluated with over 3,000 grade 1-12 students in 16 schools. Over 70% of these students were from urban, New Jersey School districts.

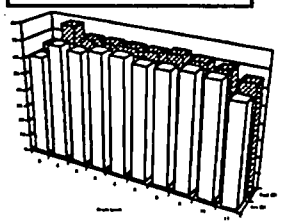
When teachers applied Richert's Maximizing Potential Model©, students demonstrated:

(1) *Statistically significant increases* in critical thinking related to all state tests;

Critical Thinking



Self Esteem

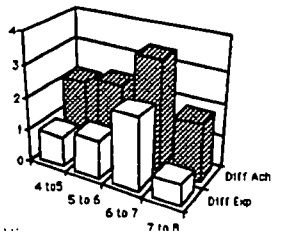


(2) *Statistically significant increases* in mean self esteem in all grades;

Math Gains

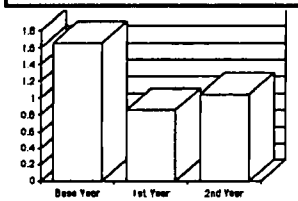
3) *300% rate of gain* in achieving state minimums in pre-algebra in a LA case study;

Reading Gains



(4) *Double the rate of gain* in reading in an elementary school case study;

Behavior Problems



(5) A *50%* drop *in behavioral problems* in an urban middle school case study.

COMPREHENSIVE on site SERVICE *to MAXIMIZE* Instructional *IMPACT*

CONSULTING to:

- **Conduct needs & resources assessments**
- **Align curriculum, materials, authentic pre & post-assessment, technology & all resources, & staff assessment** with State Standards;
- **Reorganize staffing, grouping patterns for** teaming, cross grade classes, looping, inclusic of special needs student, equitable advanced classes, mentoring or other options;
- **Expand instructional time & resources;**
- **Implement authentic discipline** procedures
- **Support for staff** through change process.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT to

- **Raise test scores, improve discipline.**
- **Integrate standards across the curriculum**
- **Meet students' developmental social & emotional needs,** learning styles, cultural diversity, multiple intelligences;
- **Establish authentic: instruction, portfolio evaluation, interdisciplinary units;**
- **Shift major responsibility for learning,** reinforcement & discipline **from teachers to students** through powerful grouping strategies
- **Develop student-centered classes that maximize student potential** by fostering intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, self-discipline increased personal responsibility & work-place readiness.

Global Institute for *Maximizing* Potential

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APPENDIX B

McREL's Comprehensive School Reform Model Implementation Study

McREL is conducting a study of the 58 schools in the mid-continent region currently receiving CSRD funds. The study focuses on the implementation of CSRD models, with the goal of identifying important issues that schools and districts in the mid-continent region face in the implementation process. Previous research findings show that staff buy-in, school autonomy, strong leadership, and district backing are important for successful implementation. This study will build on previous research by examining three main questions:

1) What are the procedures and status of the CSRD program in the central region?

2) What factors contribute to successful CSRD implementation?

3) What are the issues unique to implementing CSRD models in geographically isolated communities compared to other reform initiatives?

McREL is also heading a collaboration among the 10 regional educational laboratories to share the methods, results, analyses, and interpretation of CSRD research being conducted at each lab. This collaboration should benefit each individual research project and lab region by amassing a larger set of research results.

Use of Research Findings

The results of this study will inform federal, state, and local education agencies of factors contributing to successful implementation of CSRD models. The findings of this project will inform policy and practices of education agencies, especially in the mid-continent region and rural communities. In addition, valuable findings regarding strategies for whole school reform, in general, will be informative to the education community.

For more information regarding the McREL Comprehensive School Reform Model Implementation Study, contact Helen Apthorp at 303/632-5622 or through email at hapthorp@mcrel.org.

McREL's Study of the Institutionalization of Complex School Reform

McREL is conducting a study of 14 districts in South Dakota to examine the longterm process of complex school reform and the influence of temporary reform initiatives. In South Dakota, an initiative similar to the federal CSRD program was in place from 1991 to 1994. The seven districts that participated in the South Dakota initiative for all three years and a comparison set of seven similar districts that did not participate in the program will be examined to (1) identify specific policies and practices that were implemented during the initiative and still remain, and (2) document the districts' paths of complex school reform more generally. Examination of reform in districts that did and did not participate in the initiative will provide information about the longterm impact of the temporary initiative on participating districts.

Use of Research Findings

The results of this study will help to identify both specific and general changes that remain and become sustained, or institutionalized, in a district as a result of a temporary reform initiative. The reform process in funded and comparative, unfunded districts will be contrasted. These findings will inform CSRD of important issues that schools and districts should address during the funding period in order to achieve longtern, sustained improvements.

For more information regarding the McREL Study of the Institutionalization of Complex School Reform Model, contact Judy Florian at 303/632-5625 or through email at jflorian@mcrel.org.

McREL's Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program Policy Study

McREL is conducting a study of the CSRD application and funding process in the mid-continent states. The study examines several policy questions about the characteristics of the LEAs which are submitting proposals and the distinguishing characteristics of the proposals which are funded to determine whether CSRD funding is reaching the schools and populations of students intended by the program. Specifically, the following questions will be addressed in this research:

- What percentage of schools specifically targeted for CSRD program funds (e.g., "low achieving" schools) submit CSRD program proposals?
- What is the success rate of these schools in obtaining CSRD program funding and how does this rate compare to other schools?
- What percentages of urban and rural schools are applying for and receiving CSRD funding?
- What are the major differences between successful and unsuccessful CSRD program proposals? What are the major weaknesses of the latter?
- Why did schools targeted for CSRD program funds not submit proposals? What types of assistance are necessary for them to submit winning proposals?

To maximize the value of the findings from this regional effort, McREL is also collaborating with other regional education laboratories on the CSRD policy research being conducted by each lab.

Use of Research Findings

The results of this study are expected: (a) to help state and federal policymakers understand more clearly the issues confronting low achieving schools, (b) to identify areas where additional outreach and assistance are necessary to increase the probability that targeted schools are successful in applying for and receiving CSRD funding, and (c) to help provide guidance on policies which assist LEAs in preparing competitive proposals.

For more information regarding the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program Policy Study, contact Phyl Thomas at 303/632-5564 or through email at pthomas@mcrel.org.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM
CSRD NETWORK FORUM
July 27, 1999
Sponsored by the
Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory

EVALUATION STRATEGIES ROUND TABLE

- Establishing a priority for evaluation
- Using a logic model to guide evaluation
- Enabling use of evaluation findings
- Identifying evaluation capacities in schools & districts
- Why It's Working, Why Its Not – McREL's Evaluation Guide for CSRD Programs

Prepared by Zoe Barley, Evaluation Team, McREL, (303) 632-5622, zbarley@mcrel.org

ESTABLISHING A PRIORITY FOR EVALUATION

(Adapted from Evaluating School Programs, J.R.Sanders)

- Successful program development cannot occur without evaluation. How good is the program? How do you know how good it is? Is there room for improvement? What should be improved, and in what ways should it be changed?

  Some of the best evaluation occurs in response to tough questions and problems that are then confronted by teachers and other school personnel.

USES OF EVALUATION

- the process used to identify needs
- the process used to set priorities among needs and translate them into program objectives
- the process used to identify and select among different program approaches, staff assignments, materials & equipment, facilities, schedules, etc.
- the process used to monitor and adjust programs
- the process to determine if desired outcomes are achieved
- used by outsiders to determine if funding should continue.

BENEFITS OF EVALUATION

to students:

- improvement of educational practices
- development of support materials

to teachers

- recognition and support
- help in making decisions about practices & materials

to principals

- direction in setting priorities
- identification of needs

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