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ABSTRACT

The csrdweb.net Web site is a cross-lab initiative to pilot the use of Web-based profiles and e-mail discussion groups as tools to support networking among Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) schools. A Laboratory Network Program (LNP) project, the initiative used resources from all 10 regional educational laboratories (RELS) to develop and support the Web site in order to learn how, to what extent, and under what circumstances Web-based networking can contribute to the resources that assist CSRD schools. After one year, the cross-lab Web site development team learned several lessons about CSRD schools' use of the Web as a networking tool and about successful LNP collaboration. After highlighting some of the major findings, this report outlines the purpose of the site; the four main networking and resource sharing components; major activities undertaken by the REL planning team for the csrdweb.net pilot project; and next steps. Also included are a table of comparative site statistics over time, a chart of unique visits to the site from November 7, 1999, through June 30, 2000, the CSRD Interactive Web Site User Feedback Questionnaire, and responses to CSRD Web site user. Appendices contain copies of two school profiles and discussion group messages from the csrdweb.net Web site. (AEF)

Report on Csrdweb.net As an On-line Learning Community

August 15, 2000

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Report on Csrweb.net As an On-line Learning Community

by

David Ogden

August 15, 2000

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The csrdweb.net Web site is a cross-lab initiative to pilot the use of web-based profiles and e-mail discussion groups as tools to support networking among Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) schools. A Laboratory Network Program (LNP) project, the initiative used resources from all ten regional educational laboratories (RELs) to develop and support the Web site in order to learn how, to what extent, and under what circumstances web-based networking can contribute to the resources that assist CSRD schools. After one year, the cross-lab Web site development team learned several lessons about CSRD schools' use of the web as a networking tool and about successful LNP collaboration. Some of the major findings include:

- CSRD schools showed great enthusiasm for web-based networking tools, but had difficulty finding time to participate in web-based networking activities.
- The open topic discussion group open to all participants, CSRDweb.net Open Forum, was more successful at generating e-mail message exchanges between participants than the three topic-based discussion groups that were limited to participants from CSRD schools.
- Of the four main links from the csrdweb.net home page, school profiles and links to other CSRD resources were visited much more frequently than discussion groups or the interactive area.
- The Web site's school profiles, originally conceived to help federally funded CSRD find other federally funded CSRD schools with similar characteristics, were also useful to prospective CSRD schools who were applying for CSRD funds in the second round.
- The RELs' promotion of the Web site at regional and national CSRD conferences and meetings was helpful but not sufficient to draw large numbers of CSRD schools to the site.
- The monthly CSRD resource bulletin sent to participants registered on the site was the most successful tool to draw individuals back to the site.
- Regular and frequent conference calls (virtual meetings) of the cross-lab planning team brought greater attention and focus to the LNP project and allowed for formative feedback that aided the development of the site.

The cross-lab planning team will use these findings through the end of the contract year to continue to improve the site's ability to help CSRD schools network and find resources. The RELs will also use the findings when planning future projects that use the web to enhance networking among schools.

Purpose

The national interactive CSRD Web site pilot project <<http://www.csrdweb.net>> is designed to allow federally funded CSRD schools to network and share information over the Internet. Using web-based technology, the site allows schools to create their own school profiles, participate in e-mail discussion groups, and search for resources related to comprehensive school reform. The csrdweb.net Web site seeks to build national capacity in school reform by creating an interactive learning community where CSRD schools and service providers will be able to learn more about one another and draw upon each others' advice and experience.

The interactive Web site is a collaborative LNP effort, led by WestEd, in which all ten RELs participate. Working together, the RELs conceptualized and guided the Web site's development and its promotion among CSRD schools in their respective regions. At the first collaborative planning meeting, the RELs decided that the purpose of the site should be:

- to allow CSRD funded schools to create their own school profiles in a central area from which schools can learn about school reforms at CSRD funded school sites;
- to foster effective discussions among all schools on issues related to CSRD and school reform;
- to add value to ongoing regional CSRD activities.

The primary audience for the Web site is individuals at the school site, or at the district level, who are responsible for and engaged in using federal CSRD funds to implement comprehensive school reform. The site's secondary audience is any other individual or organization at the local, state, regional, or national level interested in comprehensive school reform.

The csrdweb.net site has been operating for forty-five weeks. During this ten-month period, there is some initial evidence that the site is beginning to reach its intended audience and to serve its purpose as an interactive learning community. Since its launch in October 1999, the site has been visited over 6,800 times and attracted 299 registered participants. Fifty-two percent of the registered participants work at the school or district level. The remaining proportion of participants work at state educational agencies, technical assistance or research organizations, or have not identified their affiliation. Over the course of the last two quarters, the site has grown slowly but steadily. The site's concept and purpose is very well received among CSRD schools. However, schools report that they have difficulty finding time to use the site to network and share information. The RELs will have to continue the work they are actively engaged in now to find ways to increase the usefulness of the site for schools and the use of the site by schools.

Site features

The csrdweb.net Web site uses the same interactive web-based software system currently used by the US Charter Schools Web site and the EdGateway Web site, two other WestEd projects. The software system, written in Perl-based language, has several tools to facilitate on-line networking and information sharing via the World Wide Web and e-mail. The csrdweb.net pilot project uses four main networking and resource sharing components:

- School profiles
- Discussion groups
- Direct links to federal CSRD resource providers' sites
- Monthly CSRD resource announcements

School Profiles

Schools that have received federal CSRD funds may create their own on-line school profiles. To create a profile, a school finds its name from csrdweb.net's interactive database of CSRD schools and clicks a button. The system then draws contact and demographic information from the Southwest Education Development Laboratory's (SEDL) database of CSRD funded schools and begins a profile for the school. The school completes the profile by providing information not collected by SEDL, such as about student and teacher characteristics. The school profile also has areas for schools to share qualitative information about the purpose, goals, and actual practice of its comprehensive school reform plan as well as other contextual information about the school. WestEd and SEDL work together to ensure that the contact and demographic data entered in a school's profile is the recent data sent to SEDL by state departments of education. After a CSRD school creates a profile, it has the ability to modify their profile and the responsibility to keep it up to date. Visitors to the site can search for CSRD school profiles by state, by reform model, or by school and student demographic information.

Discussion Groups

The discussion groups hosted on the csrdweb.net Web site give CSRD funded schools across the nation a means to communicate with one another via e-mail about topics related to school reform. Currently, there are four discussion groups. Each discussion group has a moderator knowledgeable about the specified topic who helps keep the group's discussion productive and focused on the topic. To participate in a discussion group, an individual must first register on the csrdweb.net site and provide his or her e-mail address. Similar to a listserv, e-mail questions and answers sent by an individual to group are copied to all members of the group. Messages to a group can be sent by e-mail or from the Web site. An archive of the messages that are sent to each discussion group is also available on the Web site. Initially, the RELs selected three discussion topics to pilot: English Language Learners, Evaluation and Data Collection, and Reallocating Resources. The RELs decided to limit participation in these discussion groups to CSRD schools and individuals invited by REL staff. Recently, a fourth discussion group was added to the site, called the CSRDweb.net Open Forum. The group is open to all registered participants and all CSRD related topics. Individuals who register on the Web site are

automatically subscribed to the Open Forum group. In addition to the discussions that take place inside the discussion groups, schools and individuals can communicate with one another via e-mail outside the groups using the contact information they provide when they register on the site. To facilitate contact between participants, the site contains a link that provides a list of registered participants and their contact information.

Links to federal resource providers

The RELs decided not to attempt to duplicate information or resources on csrdweb.net that were already available from other CSRD Web sites. Instead, the Web site provides direct links to the CSRD Web sites of the ten RELs, the fifteen Comprehensive Assistance Centers, the U.S. Department of Education (ED), and the National Clearinghouse of Comprehensive School Reform. Individuals can also use a search engine on the site to look for information about CSRD from REL Web sites and from the U.S. Department of Education. The search engine searches the eleven sites simultaneously and returns the most relevant links it finds.

Monthly Resource Announcements

To help CSRD schools learn more about the resources that RELs have developed for CSRD schools, a monthly announcement called *Tips and Tools for CSRD Schools* is sent to all registered participants on the csrdweb.net Web site. Each month, RELs have the opportunity to provide a brief description about a resource that they have developed that is helpful to schools undertaking comprehensive school reform. RELs may submit any type of resource for publication in the bulletin. However, it must be related to comprehensive school reform and it must be available to all CSRD schools nationwide.

Major activities

The major activities undertaken by all members of the REL planning team for the csrdweb.net pilot project include the initial development of the Web site, regular planning meetings, seeding the school profiles, developing discussion groups, and promoting the site in each REL's region. A description of the activities in each category and the lessons learned follow.

Initial Development

Activities – The first activity undertaken by the cross-lab planning team at its initial meeting included determining the purpose, primary audience, and a timeline of activities for the Web site. The RELs also planned how to coordinate the project with other ongoing REL CSRD projects. The team agreed that the primary goals of the interactive CSRD Web site pilot project would be to create a useful tool for schools and to help build national capacity in school reform. The intended primary audience for the site would be individuals at the school and district level implementing CSRD. The team did not want to duplicate CSRD projects or resources already offered by the RELs. They decided that the best use of the available web-based tool for schools would be: 1) to allow CSRD funded schools to create their own school profiles in a central area to learn about one another; 2) to foster effective discussions among all schools on issues related to CSRD and school reform; and 3) to add value to ongoing regional CSRD discussions.

During the initial planning meeting and successive conference calls, the team agreed upon a timeline for the initial development, rollout and promotion of the site. The initial development included creating an entry form for school profiles and selecting discussion group topics. A focus group of CSRD funded schools conducted by WestEd identified a number of data fields suggested by schools for inclusion in a school profile form. The team examined the list, provided feedback on the suggested items, and agreed on a final list of data fields and a format for the profile form. In selecting the first discussion group topics, each REL identified issues that concerned CSRD schools in its region. The RELs then reached a consensus on the initial three topics with which to start. In planning the site's rollout, the RELs created a timeline that would allow the site to be introduced and launched at the three Fall 1999 Improving America's Schools (IAS) conferences.

Lessons Learned – From the beginning, the planning team recognized the importance of creating incentives for schools to participate and use the interactive Web site. The focus group conducted by WestEd revealed that CSRD schools were interested in having access to high-quality information, the ability to contact and network with other schools across the nation, interesting school profile information, and lively discussion group topics. Feedback from users gathered at the IAS conferences indicated that the Web site was "straight forward and easy to use," "provides good info," had "questions [that] relate directly to [the CSRD] grant," and that "the topics for discussion groups is [sic.] right on target." However, despite the careful initial planning and positive feedback, RELs learned that schools implementing CSRD simply did not have the time to use the site. Some RELs also found that prospective CSRD schools, rather than schools implementing CSRD – the Web site's intended audience, were the schools that found the site the

most useful. Schools competing for funds in the second round researched profiles from funded CSRD school and the links to CSRD resources to help them complete their own applications.

Planning Meetings

Activities – Throughout the life of the project, the RELs have collaborated during every phase of the Web site's planning, roll-out, and ongoing promotion and development. Members of the REL planning team for the csrdweb.net pilot project have met ten times: an initial face-to-face meeting at the beginning of the project, eight subsequent times via regularly scheduled conference calls, and a second face-to-face meeting in August 2000. Each meeting has had representation from at least seven of the ten labs and all labs have attended at least six meetings. Between meetings, the planning team has communicated and shared documents through an e-mail listserv and one another by telephone.

As the lead lab, WestEd has taken on responsibilities in the project in addition to the ones common to all labs. WestEd developed the initial idea for the interactive Web site, gathered feedback from a focus group of CSRD schools, designed the Web site's architecture, and has coordinated the planning team meetings. However, each lab has dedicated a large amount of time and other resources to help make the site successful.

Prior to the site's launch, the RELs collaborated on developing the content and design of the school profile, the initial topics for the discussion groups, and selecting moderators for the discussions. After the Web site's launch and rollout at the Improving America's Schools conference, the team continued to work together to further develop the site in order to increase its usefulness for schools. For example, two components added to the site after the initial rollout and launch were an Open Forum discussion group and the *Tips and Tools for CSRD Schools* resource announcements.

Lessons Learned – The csrdweb.net Web site pilot project has been a good model of collaboration between the RELs. Regular team meetings and an e-mail listserv allowed the team to communicate frequently during the ongoing development of the site, report on the progress of the site, share ideas and strategies, and provide feedback on how the site was being used by schools in each region. Monthly cross-lab planning team meetings helped the RELs bring greater attention and focus to the project. At each meeting, RELs would receive reminders of their responsibilities, compare their progress with others, and refocus their efforts on the project. Regular communication helped RELs stay focused on the project while balancing many other related projects. It was also important in the ongoing development of the site. The addition of the Open Forum discussion group and the monthly resource bulletin, two of the important networking and resource sharing features of the site, both are a result of formative feedback gathered after the initial timeline for the development and rollout of the site.

School Profiles

Activities – One of the main Web site activities undertaken by the RELs prior to announcing the site to the general public was to "seed" the school profiles. The team wanted to seed the profiles

so that visitors would have something to view when they visited the site that would encourage them to use the site themselves. Each REL identified 10 "seed schools" in their region that they would assist in completing the school profile. The planning team ensured that the 100 seed schools identified by the RELs represented a variety of grade levels served, reform models, geographic locations, and student populations. RELs selected seed schools that they thought were most likely to use the Web site's interactive features. RELs were supposed to help the seed schools create the school profile, but it was recommended that the profile be the direct responsibility of a person in the school not the REL. In the timeline initially developed by the team, it was expected that the 100 seed schools would have their profiles entered by the end of Fall 1999.

Lessons Learned – The team learned that it was much more difficult to seed the school profiles than they expected. The RELs wanted the seed schools to take ownership of their csrdweb.net profile and encouraged schools to complete them on their own. The RELs tried a variety of ways to introduce their seed schools to the on-line school profiles and to assist them in completing the profiles, from presentations at conferences to hands-on help at the school site. However, they were unsuccessful in meeting their goal of 100 seed schools. All of the RELs reported that the seed schools expressed interest and excitement about completing a school profile on-line. However, the interest was not frequently followed up by action. Schools most frequently reported that they simply did not have time to complete the profile. The RELs that were the most successful in having all of their seed schools complete the entire school profile entered the information on behalf of the school. Eighty-four schools have started a profile, but only forty-two (50%) have completed the entire profile. Some schools reported that it took them very little time to create a profile, others had a harder time filling it out. Generally schools with partially completed profiles have not answered the profile questions asking for information about how the school implemented CSRD. Although the number of registered participants from CSRD schools has increased steadily each week for the past ten months, the growth number of school profiles has remained relatively flat. Chart 1 at the end of this report shows the difference in the rate of growth between registered participant profiles and CSRD school profiles.

Discussion Groups

Activities – Similar to the school profiles, the team wanted to seed the discussion groups in advance of the site's launch at the IAS conferences. The RELs were encouraged to invite their seed schools to join one of the three original topic based discussion groups. The planning team realized that several model providers already had discussion groups or listservs for their members. However, they believed that schools would also be interested in participating in discussions that would be independent and free of one model provider's bias or discussions that might provide information or technical assistance outside of the scope of a particular model provider. The RELs selected three topics for the discussion groups that cut across all models and types of schools based on common issues and concerns that CSRD schools faced in each region. No goal was set for a certain number of participants in each discussion group, but it was expected that the number of participants and messages in the discussion groups would rise as the number of visitors and Web site registrations rose. RELs volunteered staff knowledgeable in issues surrounding English Language Learners, Evaluation and Data Collection, and Reallocating

Resources to moderate the three topic-based discussions. After eight months, a fourth discussion group was added to the site, CSRDweb.net Open Forum. In contrast to the three topic-based groups, the new discussion group was open to all participants and open to any topic that participants wanted to discuss. Additionally, all individuals who register on the site become automatically subscribed to the Open Forum discussion group. Similar to the other groups, the Open Forum is moderated by a REL staff member. All CSRD-related topics are welcome to the Open Forum, but participants are asked to refrain from advertising or soliciting particular reform programs or commercial products.

Lessons Learned – The amount of activity by CSRD schools in the three topic-based e-mail discussion groups, to which CSRD schools must send a request in order to subscribe, has been much lower than expected. Instead of rising steadily over time, the number of participants and messages exchanged in each of these three groups reached a plateau after the first three months. In contrast, the number of messages exchanged in the Open Forum discussion group, to which participants are automatically subscribed when they register on the site, started off strong and has continued to grow in its first eight weeks. Thirty-two messages were exchanged on the group in the first three weeks, which is greater than the total number of messages exchanged in all of the other groups combined. One reason for the greater number of messages exchanged in the Open Forum discussion group may be because it has a much larger number of participants. Since more people receive questions that are posted to the group, more people can reply to the postings. Another reason may be that individuals are more likely to ask and reply to short, focused questions related to an immediate need rather than engage in a potentially lengthier conversation on a specific topic. A comparison of the number of participants and the number of messages sent in all four discussion groups can be found in Table 1 at the end of the report.

Promotion

Activities – To increase CSRD schools awareness of the csrdweb.net Web site, RELs have promoted the site in their own region and at the Improving America's Schools (IAS) conferences. A variety of promotional activities have been initiated and replicated in the different regions. Each REL uses the same full color promotional flyer to distribute at regional CSRD conferences and workshops for CSRD schools and state education agency CSRD contacts. RELs have also provided hands-on demonstrations of the site at their meetings. Many RELs have promoted the Web site in postcards or newsletters sent to all CSRD schools in their region. Additionally, most RELs have created a link from their own CSRD Web sites to the csrdweb.net Web site. ED has also helped promote the site on its own Web site, at the three 1999 IAS conferences, and at presentations to state CSRD contacts and model developers. During the three IAS conferences, four RELs worked together to demonstrate the csrdweb.net Web site in the Cyber Café. At the demonstrations, schools had a chance to investigate the site, start a school profile, and provide feedback about the site. The Web site was also highlighted at each IAS conference by ED's CSRD program staff during the program's main conference presentations, the lunch for state contacts, and the final day of the conference dedicated to CSRD schools.

Lessons Learned – The promotional activities have helped introduce the Web site to CSRD schools and others interested in comprehensive school reform, the site's primary and secondary

audiences. At conferences and workshops sponsored by ED, and by the RELs where the csrdweb.net Web site has been demonstrated or explained, the feedback has been unanimously positive. Schools and state contacts have indicated that the Web site is a useful and important resource for CSRD schools nationwide. Promotional activities undertaken by ED and the RELs have helped increase the visibility and the number of registered participants on the site. The average number of weekly visitors to the site during the last eight weeks has doubled since the first eight weeks. The number of registered participants has increased by 150% from the first eight weeks to the last eight weeks and the number of registered participants grows each week. However, the average number of weekly visitors, shown in Table 1, is relatively low compared to number of CSRD schools and individuals working with schools undertaking comprehensive school reform. Additionally, the number of weekly visitors tends to fluctuate widely from week to week as demonstrated in Chart 2 at the end of the report. Continuous promotion of the site by all of the RELs and by ED is needed to inform schools of the resources and networking opportunities the site provides. One element of the site that appears to be effective in increasing the number of visitors is the monthly *Tips and Tools for CSRD Schools* resource announcement. As shown in Chart 2, each week that an announcement is sent out the number of visits to the site tends to increase.

Next Steps

At the second face-to-face cross-lab planning meeting, in August 2000, the csrdweb.net development team reviewed the original purpose, audience and goals for the Web site, as well as the site's progress over the past year, in order to plan the LNP project's activities through December and the REL recompetition. The RELs agreed that the csrdweb.net pilot project is a good resource for schools whose potential may not be fully realized. They also believed that it was a LNP project that should be considered for continuation after in the next REL contract period. At the meeting, the RELs agreed to participate in the following activities through December 2000:

- Ensure that 10 seed schools from each REL region have completed a profile on the Web site, or complete one for the seed schools that are unable to find the time.
- Continue to send *Tips and Tools* resource bulletins on a monthly basis and to moderate the four discussion groups that have been created.
- Explore how state educational agencies (SEAs) might take advantage of the Web site's resources for networking purposes. For example, the RELs could create a private discussion group for CSRD contacts at SEAs that would allow SEAs to contact one another and receive assistance around common questions and challenges, such as the required state CSRD evaluations due in December 2000.
- Explore how csrdweb.net could partner with other organizations, such as the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform, to leverage each partners' resources for the benefit of schools and districts planning for or implementing CSRD grants.

Table 1
Comparative Site Statistics
 csrdweb.net Web site

	First 8 weeks	Last 8 weeks
<i>Avg. number of user sessions per week</i>	<i>103.5</i>	<i>235.6</i>
<i>Total number of registered participants</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>299</i>
<i>School/District Participants</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>157</i>
<i>State Education Agency Participants</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>Total number of school profiles</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Total number of discussion group members (messages)</i>		
<i>English Language Learners</i>	<i>16 (6)</i>	<i>26 (6)</i>
<i>Evaluation and Data Collection</i>	<i>20 (4)</i>	<i>35 (4)</i>
<i>Reallocating Resources</i>	<i>16 (1)</i>	<i>28 (16)</i>
<i>CSRDweb.net Open Forum</i>	<i>268(42)</i>	<i>279 (44)</i>

Chart 1
Growth of Participant and School Profiles
 (October 20, 1999 - July 31, 2000)
 csrdweb.net web site

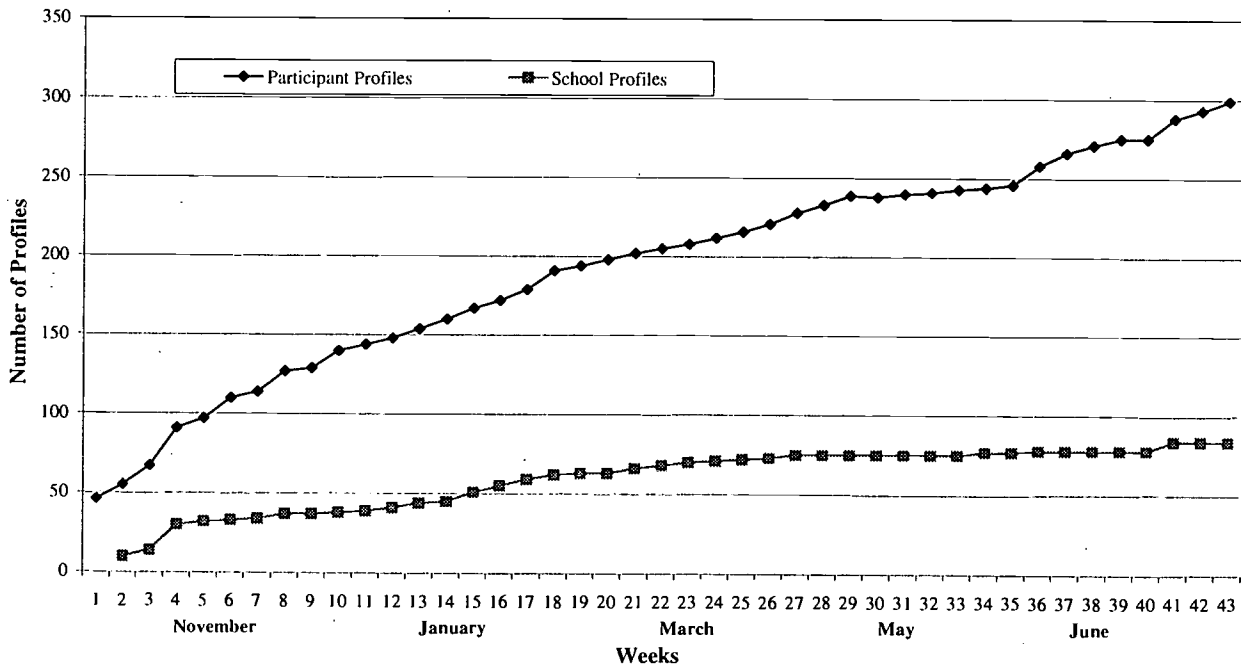
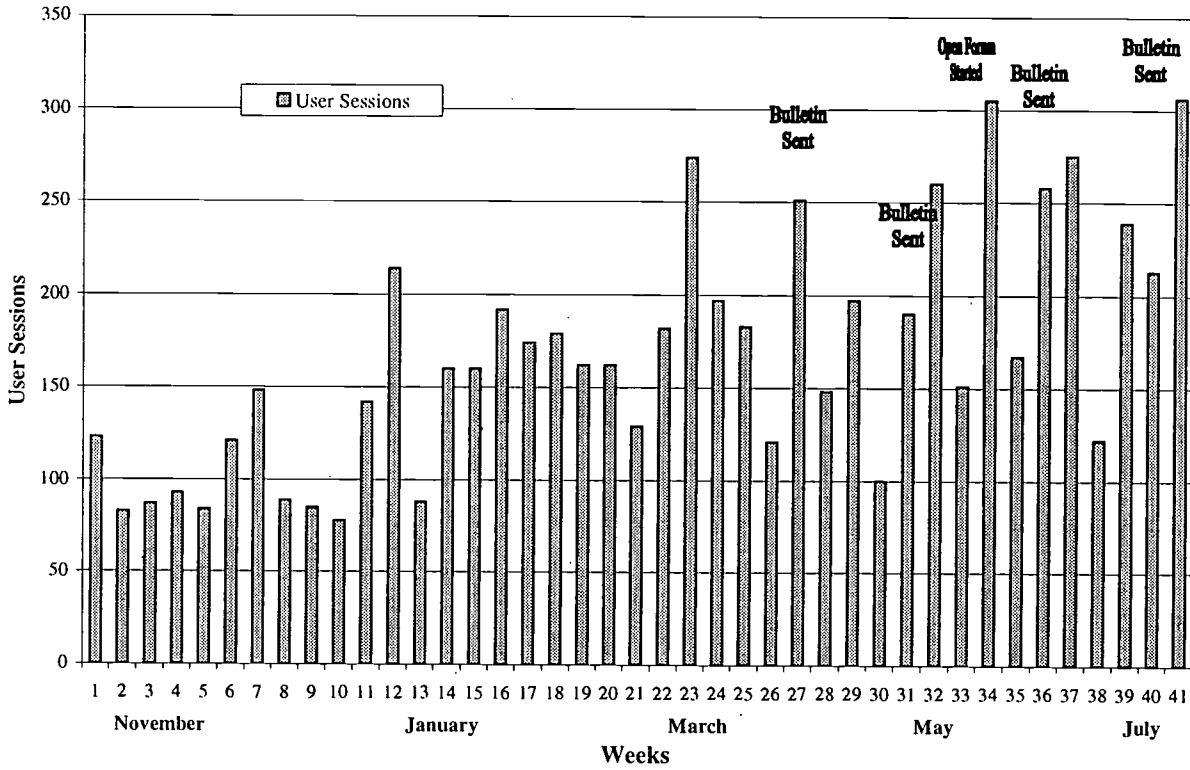


Chart 2
 Number of Unique Visits
 (November 7, 1999 - June 30, 2000)
 csrdweb.net web site



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Responses to CSRD Interactive Web Site User Feedback from all three IAS Conferences

N = 14

My occupation is: teacher (4), school administrator (2), state representative (4), district representative (2), federal representative (1), community representative (1)

My state of residence is: CA (4), DC (3), GA (1), ID (1), MD (1), MA (1), NV (1), PA (1), Yap (1)

I work at a school that receives federal CSRD funds (circle one): Yes (9) No (5)

I heard about the web site from: IAS conference (12), WestEd (1), colleague (1)

How would you rate the site overall [circle 1 (low) through 5 (high)]:

	1	2	3	4	5
For its usefulness?				2	12
For its ease of navigation?				1	13
For its quality of				1	13
For its appeal to the eye?				2	12

Please make comments about any of the sections of the web site you visited

School Profiles (viewing one)

Best thing about it is: great info, other info from schools, being able to search them and find schools with similar programs, questions and answers from each school, information about schools is readily available, easy way to see what is happening on time frame (sic.), straight forward and easy to use, ease to obtain demographic information and ability to locate schools by state, very easy to navigate and modify profile,

Problems encountered or things I did not understand:

Things I'd also like to see: more info about the school and community, not-sure yet, the number of teachers that participate in long-term professional development to get a sense of its impact on the changes in student achievement,

School Profiles (creating one)

Best thing about it is: easy, simplicity and the fill in the box style is very non-threatening, ease in entering, have not created one yet, data already available that I don't have to enter, questions relate directly to grant, example that is easy to follow,

Problems encountered or things I did not understand: no replies

Things I'd also like to see: no replies

Discussion Groups

Best thing about it is: easy and fun and provides good info, ease of subscription, didn't try it yet but will at home, variety of discussion groups, the topics for discussion groups is right on target,

ability to obtain feedback quickly from participants on a particular subject, I very much want to network with other CSRD schools especially those using our model

Problems encountered or things I did not understand: no replies

Things I'd also like to see: no replies

CSRD Links

Best thing about it is: great sites and newsletter, so informative, ability to share ideas with people all over the world, comprehensive, ease of use, didn't get to it and will return tomorrow, ease of going directly to the lab web sites and the search feature, easy access – in the past I had to go from the USDOE site to locate them, I was able to view school districts in my state that are actually using the program

Problems encountered or things I did not understand: seems like the links here should go beyond the LAB network

Things I'd also like to see: no replies

APPENDICES

an introduction to the web's on-line CSRD community

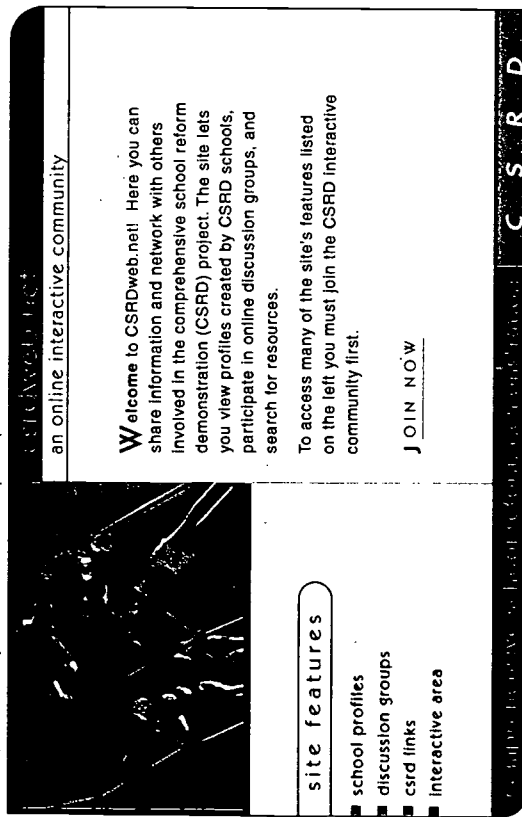
The csrdweb.net web site is designed to help CSRD schools across the nation gain and share information, and to build national capacity in comprehensive school reform. The web site allows schools who have received federal CSRD funds to create their own profile on the web and join online, moderated discussion groups focused on comprehensive school reform issues. Through this interactive learning community, schools will be able to learn more about one another and draw upon each others' advice and experience.

THE PRIMARY GOALS OF THE SITE ARE:

- ▶ to help CSRD schools gain and share information
- ▶ to help build national capacity in comprehensive school reform

Explore csrdweb.net at <http://www.csrdweb.net>. All visitors can read profiles created by CSRD schools and search the web sites of federally sponsored resource providers. To create a school profile or to join the moderated discussion groups you must join the interactive community first.

home | search | about csrdweb | help



Visit
 csrdweb.net
 and join the
 community. It's
 quick, easy,
 and free!

For more information contact
 David Oaxden at WestEd (415) 615-3143

School Profiles

View, search, or create a profile of a federally funded CSRD school. Find schools serving similar populations or using the same model.

Discussion Groups

Join online, moderated discussion groups about topics important to CSRD schools, such as English language learners, reallocating resources, and evaluation.

CSRD Links

Search federally funded resource providers' web sites for CSRD information and resources. Learn more about the CSRD activities taking place in your region.

Search

Look for other CSRD schools, interactive community participants, and useful resources on the web.



Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School

4615 South 22nd Street

Phoenix
AZ 85040

- school profiles
- discussion groups
- csrd links
- homebase
- participants
- interactive area

School Contact and Demographic Information

Contact: Gloria Henderson or Doug Allen
E-mail: hendersong@rsd.k12.az.us
Phone: (602)232-4910
District: Roosevelt School District #66 **NCES:** 407080
Locale: Large Central City (pop. > 250,000)
Grades Served: K - 4

CSR Reform Models (Year began)

Reform Model 1: Waterford Early Reading (1998)
Reform Model 2: ()
Other Models: ()
Amount of CSR Award: \$306,000

Teacher Characteristics

Number of Teachers: 33 **Teacher Mobility Rate:** 0 - 5%

Student Characteristics

Number of Students: 400 - 800 **Student Mobility Rate:** 15 - 30%
Attendance Rate: 98 %
Am. Indian/Alaska Native: 0 - 5% **Asian-American:** 0 - 5%
Black/African-American: 50 - 75% **Hispanic/Latino:** 15 - 30%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0 - 5% **White:** 0 - 5%
English Language Learners: 5 - 15%
Special Education: 0 - 5%
Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch: 75 - 100%

School Narrative

1. What are your main school reform goals and objectives? What specific strategies or models are you using to address the goals? How do you get them to all fit together? (Component 2: Comprehensive design with aligned components)

§ Primary Goal: Raise student achievement a minimum of five percentile points by addressing the literacy gap early and aggressively through a comprehensive coordination of resources focused on prevention and early intervention.

§ Align school-wide curriculum with state performance and testing standards

§ Coordinate and align school management, curriculum, technology, professional development, and assessment toward the goals of prevention and early intervention in grades K-2 (over three years and starting with K in year one) using the Waterford Early Reading Program (WERP).

§ Support the achievements gained from early intervention with excellent and aligned instruction in the third and fourth grades

2. Where did your school get the ideas that form the foundations of your comprehensive reform program? How did your school find or create the program you are using? What was the process? Why did you select or create it? (Component 1: Effective, research-based methods and strategies)

Research indisputably shows that minority and economically disadvantaged children often come to school with little preparation, creating a learning deficit that plagues them throughout much of their academic career (Adams, 1990; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). King's students most certainly fit this generalization-while they possess great potential, their lack of essential preliteracy skills and experiences tragically dooms them to struggle in school from the outset. Ensuring that every student becomes a fluent reader by the end of third grade represents the keystone of our mission to provide every child with an extraordinary education. Thus, King's vision for school reform is guided by two research-based premises: reading is the fundamental building block for successful learning in all content areas and reading failure can and must be prevented (Snow et al., 1998). The Waterford Early Reading Program stands as the centerpiece of our vision. This research-based reform model is designed to prevent the need for remediation by ensuring that all children become fluent readers by the end of second grade. As we align school management, curriculum, professional development, assessment, and parent involvement to support a total instructional program focused on prevention and early intervention, we will meet Arizona Academic Standards, raise student achievement, and most importantly, launch our students to lifelong learning.

3. How did your school achieve the staff support necessary to implement the school's reform plan? What obstacles did you face? How did you overcome the obstacles to building support? (Component 5: Support within the school)

As the entire staff recognizes the need for school reform to more effectively serve our very at risk student population, 100% of King staff members elected to support the King School-wide Reform Plan and the implementation of the Waterford learning model at a staff meeting on August 13, 1998. King staff will participate in an ongoing series of over 20 carefully planned and aligned staff development workshops provided by professional Waterford program trainers, district staff, and Dr. J. Jeffries McWhirter, a reading expert from the Division of

Psychology in Education at Arizona State University.

4. How does your school engage or involve parents and the community in your CSRD reform effort? (Component 6: Parental and community involvement)

A strong school-to-home link is built into the structure of the Waterford Early Reading Program. Because becoming a good reader requires practice and support outside of school, the Waterford program provides tools and information to involve parents in their child's literacy development. To "level the playing field" for less prepared students, every child receives reading materials, as well as audio and videotapes for the home that reinforce the classroom instructional activities. Additionally, creating a strong parent and community involvement component is emphasized during Waterford teacher training. Teachers and administrators will collaborate with the King PTA to sponsor a series of "Parents as Partners in Reading Nights," where parents can come to the school to learn about the Waterford program, how to use the take-home student materials, and how to build their child's literacy skills at home. Continual communication with parents and parent involvement in school activities are also key strategies.

5. What benchmarks have you set? What measures are you using to assess progress? Who supplied them? (Component 4: Measurable goals and benchmarks)

The Waterford Early Reading Program contributes to the measurable goals and benchmarks of our comprehensive school reform program in two ways. First, goals and benchmarks are built directly into the program. The on-line "Classroom Management System" stores performance data for every student using the program and then presents that data in student reports and class summaries. An 80% average is considered "mastery level"-this built-in benchmark and reporting system helps teachers understand ongoing student progress throughout the year. Secondly, the district-wide curriculum alignment process, in which King is currently participating, will culminate in the development of specific performance benchmarks and guidelines. These benchmarks are being developed in the context of our school reform plan and district alignment goals. The Waterford program will serve as a powerful evaluation tool that will enable King staff to measure student achievement against these benchmarks and state content standards at any time.

6. What forms of professional development are you using? What seems to be especially successful in helping teachers learn new practices? (Component 3: Professional development)

The comprehensive learning model of our reform plan includes over 20 days of professional development focused specifically on implementing the Waterford program in each classroom and understanding early intervention strategies. Our school will be assigned a professional Waterford trainer, who will conduct ten full days of on-site professional development as well as provide ongoing implementation support. This training will empower teachers to integrate the Waterford program into their content curriculum and classroom, use on-line student diagnostic and evaluation features, use class and student reports generated by the program to provide individualized instruction focused on student learning

needs, use new instructional tools creatively and effectively in the classroom, and involve families in our literacy initiative. Using a regular schedule of 11 early release days and after school/Saturday workshops, King staff will also participate in sustained professional development focused on the research foundations of reading, best teaching practices, and effective early intervention. While these general topics are based on recommendations from the latest research reports (Snow et al., 1998), they will be tailored to the unique needs of our staff.

7. Which organizations or agencies provide outside technical assistance in your reform? What does each provider do to support your reform goals? (Component 7: External technical support and assistance)

The Roosevelt School District Teaching & Learning Division will continue to provide support for Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School's (King) comprehensive school reform program through implementing an ongoing formal district-wide curriculum alignment. This alignment includes Content Curriculum Analysis, which ensures that the content and format of each school's curriculum, including Reading, Language Arts, and Mathematics, match the content of the Arizona Academic Standards, SAT 9 and Aprenda, and the AIMS performance objectives. Using "main objectives" derived from these performance and testing measures, this process identifies the percentage of alignment for each of the district's adopted programs, which then provides each school with the data and guidance they need to "fill the gaps," establish performance benchmarks, and deliver a total instructional program. As this process was developed and initiated during the 1998-1999 school year, King has been an active participant and will continue this ongoing process as a foundation for comprehensive school reform.

8. Cite examples from your school reform plan in which you are using existing resources in more effective and efficient ways. Which programs or practices have you had to eliminate because of the changes? Which resources (time, people, money, materials) are coordinated in new ways? (Component 9: Coordination of resources)

The Waterford Early Reading Program represents a partnership between the Waterford Institute and the Electronic Education Division of Scott Foresman - Addison-Wesley Longman. This alliance is very effective because it combines the resources and expertise of the nonprofit research sector with those of an experienced and established educational publisher. The resources of both of these organizations will be available to support our school reform, especially in terms of professional development, evaluation, technical support, curriculum implementation, and parent involvement, as previously discussed. Significantly, King has established a special partnership with Arizona State University specifically for this school reform plan. Other school partnerships include the ASU Service Learning Department, Phoenix Think Tank ExCel Project, Junior Achievement, and the Phoenix Memorial Hospital School-Based Health Centers. Additionally, King teachers have received mini grants for implementing Cognitive Guided Instruction (CGI) strategies in Math and Family Math workshops. King will use these partnerships and services to coordinate resources, promote ongoing staff development, increase parental involvement, and practice effective prevention and early intervention strategies.

9. What activities are the staff at your school engaged in to monitor and evaluate your school's progress in implementing your reform and achieving your goals? Which activities are the responsibility of certain individuals? Which activities are the responsibility of a group or group(s)? (Component 8: Evaluation strategies)

The King reform plan includes a strong evaluation component designed to provide a complete picture of our implementation success using longitudinal, process, and product assessments. Dr. J. Jeffries McWhirter (from ASU) will serve as our collaborative partner in evaluation in both developing appropriate assessment instruments and evaluating results. Longitudinal assessment will occur based on a three-year implementation of the Waterford program starting in kindergarten this year to second grade in 2000-students will be evaluated according to their reading ability as they exit third grade using the SAT 9, Aprenda, and AIMS.

Process Evaluation. Process evaluation focuses on gathering information about how successfully the plan is implemented. This information will be used by the "School Reform Committee" and "School Site Council" to monitor and modify (if needed) the project:

- § Quarterly Principal teacher interviews
- § Ongoing Waterford student and class reports
- § Professional development surveys
- § Parent surveys and feedback
- § Classroom-based assessments based on district benchmarks and state standards

Last Questions

What else should people know about your school?

Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary is a project-driven school that has received State and National recognition for the quality and effectiveness of its educational programs.

Are there particular areas of your reform in which you would like additional assistance?

Strategies on "How to Increase Parental Involvement"

■ Profile Manager(s)			Total 1
First Name	Last Name	Organization	
Douglas	Allen	Martin Luther King School	



Manual High

1700 East 28th Avenue

Denver
CO 80205
<http://manual.denver.k12.co.us>

- school profiles
- discussion groups
- csrd links
- homebase
- participants
- interactive area

School Contact and Demographic Information

Contact: Nancy Principal
E-mail: nancy_sutton@ceo.cudenver.edu
Phone: (303) 391-6300
District: Denver 1 **NCES:** 803360
Locale: Large Central City (pop. > 250,000)
Grades Served: 9 - 12

CSRD Reform Models (Year began)

Reform Model 1: Coalition of Essential Schools (1999)
Reform Model 2: AVID (1996)
Other Models: ()
Amount of CSRD Award: \$75312

Teacher Characteristics

Number of Teachers: 65 **Teacher Mobility Rate:** 5 - 15%

Student Characteristics

Number of Students: 800 - 1,200 **Student Mobility Rate:** 75 - 100%
Attendance Rate: 77% %
Am. Indian/Alaska Native: 0 - 5% **Asian-American:** 0 - 5%
Black/African-American: 30 - 50% **Hispanic/Latino:** 5 - 15%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0 - 5% **White:** 30 - 50%
English Language Learners: 0 - 5%
Special Education: 15 - 30%
Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch: 75 - 100%

School Narrative

1. What are your main school reform goals and objectives? What specific strategies or models are you using to address the goals? How do you get them to all fit together? (Component 2: Comprehensive design with aligned components)

Manual High's proposed reform initiative is driven by three primary objectives:

• To create a school that is focused on the intellectual development of students, making their academic achievement its primary mission.

• To create a shared sense of community at Manual so students, faculty, administrators, parents, and community members feel they are part of a common endeavor.

• To implement a professional development strategy that supports the first two objectives.

Manual's desired results are that after four years of our reform initiative, all 12th grade students with an 85% attendance rate will graduate by passing the state assigned graduation assessment and demonstrating proficiency on Manual portfolio requirements. In two years, when the CSAP test is administered at the high school level, our expected results are that 50% of Manual 10th graders with an 85% attendance rate, will reach or exceed Colorado and Denver Public Schools standards, and the remaining 50% will be engaged in a focused, intensive set of safety nets that will enable them to meet standards by the 12th grade. To accomplish these goals, Manual has defined objectives in the areas of student achievement, parental and community participation and professional development, and developed a detailed action plan to begin to implement in the upcoming year.

One of the oldest and most experienced school reform efforts in the nation, CES is specifically designed to achieve the results of increasing parental involvement and improving student achievement in a standards-based system. To do this, member schools embrace the core tenets of the CES theory, known as the "Common Principles." The Common Principles help schools rethink their priorities and redesign their structures and practices.

2. Where did your school get the ideas that form the foundations of your comprehensive reform program? How did your school find or create the program you are using? What was the process? Why did you select or create it? (Component 1: Effective, research-based methods and strategies)

Coalition of Essential School model matched many of the strategies already implemented to meet our specific school needs. The faculty overwhelmingly supported the decision to select CES model.

3. How did your school achieve the staff support necessary to implement the school's reform plan? What obstacles did you face? How did you overcome the obstacles to building support? (Component 5: Support within the school)

Support was already established since many strategies were already implemented.

Obstacles encountered related to lack of staff understanding of how the CES model complemented existing initiatives already in place. Once linkages between the 10 Common Principles of CES and recently implemented initiatives were made apparent, faculty were overwhelmingly supported.

4. How does your school engage or involve parents and the community in your CSRD reform effort? (Component 6: Parental and community involvement)

Parents are included in our Site Base Management Collaborative Decision Making Committee, Parent Involvement Committee, and the Community Outreach Initiative.

5. What benchmarks have you set? What measures are you using to assess progress? Who supplied them? (Component 4: Measurable goals and benchmarks)

At Manual no student will be allowed to fall through the cracks. Every student will be expected to meet or exceed rigorous, academic standards and any student who has difficulty will be identified early on in their educational career and be given the necessary support to succeed.

Staff has rewritten the entire core curriculum to align with state/district standards and has designed performance assessments.

6. What forms of professional development are you using? What seems to be especially successful in helping teachers learn new practices? (Component 3: Professional development)

Embracing the CES model, Manual's comprehensive school reform program will provide professional development on-site and through a national support network. CES professional development is embedded in the daily life and work of teachers, building their capacity to create, sustain and expand school improvements. It includes:

• Use of CES "coaches" to provide technical assistance and guidance in school reform and the implementation of the CES principles on an ongoing and regular basis.

• Development of "Critical Friends Groups" of teachers, led by trained coaches, designed to provide collegial coaching and support for improved teaching practice.

• On-site consultation and training for faculty by CES staff in specific areas of need.

7. Which organizations or agencies provide outside technical assistance in your reform? What does each provider do to support your reform goals? (Component 7: External technical support and assistance)

To assist with the implementation of Manual's comprehensive school reform plan Manual and the district are forming partnerships with the Coalition of Essential Schools, CES regional centers, Fenway High School in Boston (a CES demonstration school with similar vision and demographics), and local staff developers with CES background.

Consultants from within this multi-level partnership will provide the high-quality external support and technical assistance needed to make this three-year plan a success. They will be working with Manual staff on the adaptation of the Ten Common Principles. They will be helping Manual to examine its curricula for

intellectual rigor, develop short term subgoals that that impact daily teaching and benchmarks toward accomplishing these goals, develop (or replicate from CES pilot schools) personalized units of instruction, develop rubrics for measuring qualitative content in a quantitative way for all standards-based teaching units, and to construct Rites of Passage and Graduation by Exhibition for all Manual students. CES consultants will visit Manual at critical junctures (see tables in section C) to assist in this process, while weekly CFG's and planning groups continue the work on an on-going basis. Faculty will visit local and national sites to observe the implementation of the CES model at other schools. Manual faculty will attend the CES Fall Forum to keep abreast of developments within CES, and will be linked locally, regionally, and nationally via the internet and CES list-serves.

8. Cite examples from your school reform plan in which you are using existing resources in more effective and efficient ways. Which programs or practices have you had to eliminate because of the changes? Which resources (time, people, money, materials) are coordinated in new ways? (Component 9: Coordination of resources)

We implemented a 4 x 4 Block Schedule to consolidate time. We have structured our 1 professional development within the regular school schedule. We have leveraged our CSRD monies with grants from Kellogg, Goals 2000, PITON and the Rose Foundation to provide opportunities for local and regional site visits, professional development conferences, and other essential networks.

9. What activities are the staff at your school engaged in to monitor and evaluate your school's progress in implementing your reform and achieving your goals? Which activities are the responsibility of certain individuals? Which activities are the responsibility of a group or group(s)? (Component 8: Evaluation strategies)

Manual will assess progress towards student achievement on two levels, using a variety of indicators. First, the evaluation will examine such broad, quantitative indicators of student achievement as dropout rates, college attendance rates, SAT/ACT scores, CSAP scores (once the tests become available for high school), standardized test scores (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills), and course failure rates. These are appropriate, necessary and available data sources that will allow Manual to track progress over time.

As part of its reform agenda, Manual will also implement two rigorous forms of qualitative assessment. The first will be portfolios of their best work that students must present to continue from the Foundations House of 9th and 10th grade into the Programs of Excellence of 11th and 12th grade. Then, to graduate from Manual itself, students will be required to present an "exhibition" of their work as the culmination of their work in the Programs of Excellence. These measures of student achievement will be complemented by interviews with students and teachers as well as with ethnographic observations of student performance within their classes.

Last Questions

What else should people know about your school?

Last year we implemented Rites of Passage at Manual High School for end of year sophomores in which the students develop and present portfolios of exemplary work to a panel of judges in order to be promoted to the 11th grade.

Are there particular areas of your reform in which you would like additional assistance?

We need creative strategies to more successfully integrate our comprehensive reform program to meet the needs of our English language learners, special needs students, and our changing diversified population.

Profile Manager(s)

Total 1

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Santo	<u>Nicotera</u>	manual high school



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■ Discussion Group

CSRDweb.net Open Forum

To send a question or a message you must enter your user name and password. If you do not have a user name and password for the csrdweb.net site you can register now.

You may post a message or a question to this discussion group on any topic or issue related to CSRD. All individuals engaged in comprehensive school reform are welcome to share common challenges, experiences, and advice. However, please do not use this forum for the express purpose of advertising or soliciting services or to complain about services received or not received. If you are ever in doubt please contact the moderator.

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1 LAB at Brown Needs Educator Feedback by Aug. 19

8/11/2000 10:37 [MaryAnne Mather](#)

2 Thanks to everyone

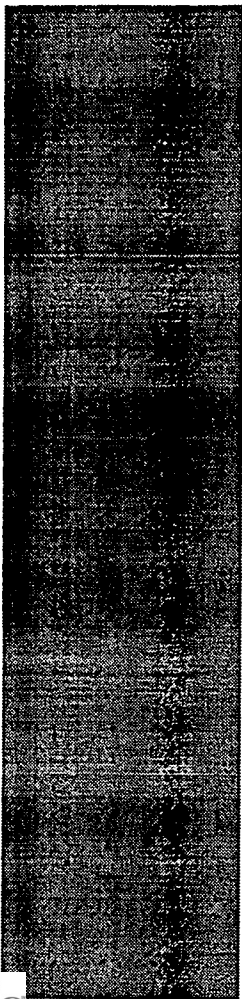
7/5/2000 14:58 [Pam Moore](#)

3 CSRD Lightspan Achieve Now

7/4/2000 15:00 [Patricia Blevins](#)

- [CSRD Re: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/26/2000 10:30 [VieVie Baird](#)
 - [CSRD Re: Re: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/27/2000 18:15 [Christina BACA](#)
- [CSRD RE: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/18/2000 12:30 [Sandi Jacobs](#)
- [CSRD Re: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/12/2000 7:30 [VieVie Baird](#)
- [CSRD RE: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/5/2000 12:45 [Rex Hagans](#)
- [CSRD Re: Lightspan Achieve Now](#)
7/4/2000 15:15 [Nancy Lance](#)

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CSRDb Target Teach

6/5/2000 7:15 *Donald Cooper*

Melrose Elementary has a CSRDb Grant; the district has hired Evans-Novac who brought in a program called Target Teach. Does anyone know anything about this program?

- **CSRDb Re: Target Teach**

6/6/2000 20:00 *Lisa Simao*

Yes, I have just heard a little about Target Teach and what I understand about it is that you bring in a consultant to your school to align up all the curriculum to the SAT-9 test.

I have heard that this will bring up the scores.
Lisa - CSRDb School - Monroe - Stockton, CA

Donald Cooper wrote:

- > Written By: Donald Cooper
- > To: CSRDbweb.net Open Forum
- >
- > Melrose Elementary has a CSRDb Grant; the district has hired Evans-Novac who brought in a program called Target Teach. Does anyone know anything about this program?
- >
- >
- > -----
- > To reply privately to Donald Cooper, create a new message and address it to dcooper@hbgsd.k12.pa.us.
- >
- > To share your reply with the CSRDbweb.net Open Forum group, reply to this message.
- >
- > To send a message to the CSRDbweb.net Open Forum group on a new topic,
- > create a new message addressed to 61861@mail.edgateway.net
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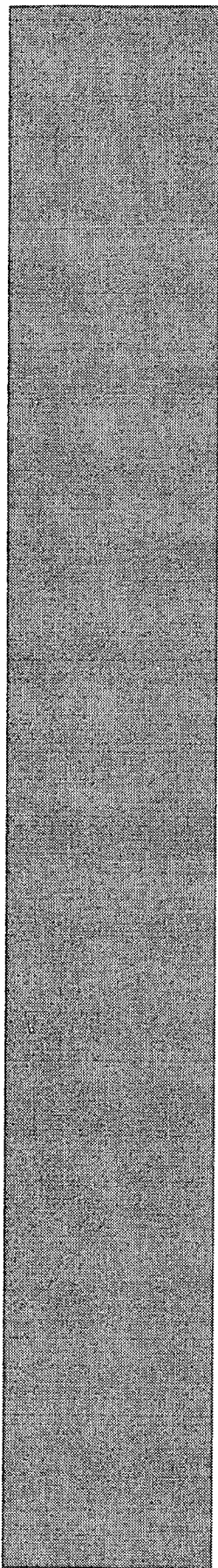
- **CSRDb Re: Target Teach**

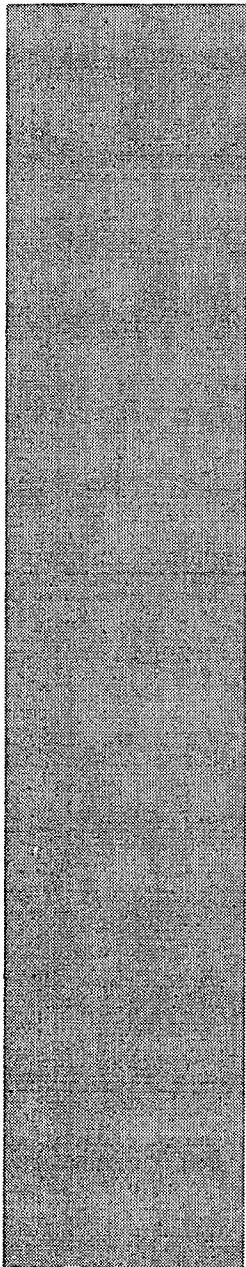
6/5/2000 15:00 *Nancy Lance*

Yes I do. My district hired Evans Newton to do an Alignment in Math. What would you like to know?

- o **CSRDb Re: Target Teach**

6/6/2000 9:45 *Donald Cooper*





Math is the easiest area to align. How helpful was the alignment for standard based instruction? Also, is your current computer equipment sufficient to handle all the reports required or will you have to purchase new equipment? What did the teachers find helpful and what did they find to be of little help?

As a follow-up, I would be interested in knowing how the implementation plays out in the classroom, etc.

Thanks,

Don

>>> 06/05 5:45 PM >>>
Written By: Nancy Lance
To: CSRdweb.net Open Forum

Yes I do. My district hired Evans Newton to do an Alignment in Math. What would you like to know?

To reply privately to Nancy Lance, create a new message and address it to NLance@aol.com.

To share your reply with the CSRdweb.net Open Forum group, reply to this message.

To send a message to the CSRdweb.net Open Forum group on a new topic, create a new message addressed to 61861@mail.edgateway.net . This is the EdGateway email address for CSRdweb.net Open Forum.

To remove yourself from this group, reply to this message with the word unsubscribe placed in the SUBJECT LINE of the email address.
!

■ CSRd Re: Re: Target Teach
6/6/2000 15:15 *Nancy Lance*

We worked with Evans Newton for one year to align math. We purchased scanners and trained operators in each school. We switched to IOWA State using the School Improvement Model to align all other curriculum areas. This model is based on behavioral objectives and Bloom. Teachers fussed a great deal about math at first but the bottom line is that test scores did improve significantly and most feel they do a better job of teaching math. We give our students Pre and Post Assessments in Math, Lang. Arts, Science and Social Studies. The Middle and High school do the same in their subjects. We wrote the scope and sequence, tests, and objectives under the training and supervision of Evans Newton for Math K-8 and IOWA State for Math 9-12 and all other subjects K-12. We give "Horizon tests each six weeks in Math (grades 2-12) 2 times a year in 1st. We are teaching what we test. However, our state is changing from the ITBS to the SAT-9 next year so we have to make sure our alignment matches a different test. All subjects were aligned to our State Curriculum, National Standards and the ITBS.
Nancy Lance

Program Evaluation

6/1/2000 15:19 *Maurice Smith*

In addition to our model developer evaluation and other external evaluations, we are trying to develop some of our own instruments. In particular, we are developing survey instruments for parents, staff and students. We are also looking for a useful school climate or school culture survey instrument.

We are willing to share what we develop (we make no claims to validity) and we are looking for ideas. Any?

- CSRd Fw: Program Evaluation

6/2/2000 16:00 *margery ginsberg*

-----Original Message-----

From: Dr. Margery Ginsberg
To: CSRdweb.net Open Forum <61861@mail.edgateway.net>
Date: Friday, June 02, 2000 9:01 AM
Subject: Re: CSRd Program Evaluation id::62274

>Maurice, Hello. Cabrillo Elementary School in Fremont, CA is a CSRd site.
>It's research and evaluation tools are developed by a team of teachers,
>parents, district, and regional folks (They call themselves the CARE team -
>which stands for Cabrillo Action Research for Equity) and they are assisted



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