

Annotated Bibliography

Quality Indicator 1: Aligned and Rigorous Curriculum

Enyedy, N. & Mukhopadhyay, S. (2007). They don't show nothing I didn't know: Emergent tensions between culturally relevant pedagogy and mathematics pedagogy. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 16(2), p139-174.

This article describes data from the Community Mapping Project, a set of statistical activities and inquiry projects within a summer seminar for high school students. In designing the Community Mapping Project, the authors attempted to create conditions under which urban students would come to recognize how mathematics is relevant to their lives and their communities. Using mixed methods, the authors analyzed the pre- and post-assessments and final projects of 25 high school students to investigate what they learned from their experience. They also analyzed the data from video case studies to begin to understand how learning was organized. The qualitative analysis revealed several tensions that emerged between the goals and norms of the instantiation of a culturally relevant pedagogy and the goals and norms of the mathematics pedagogy. The authors argue that how these tensions were navigated mediated the opportunity students had for learning statistics. This article provides some considerations and lessons learned that may help inform both teachers who wish to rethink their mathematics pedagogy, as well as designers who wish to create culturally relevant curricula.

Ford, D. Y., Moore, J. L., & Harmon, D. A. (2005). Integrating multicultural and gifted education: A curricular framework. *Theory into Practice*, 44(2). Retrieved August 25, 2008 from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0NQM/is_2_44/ai_n13783929?tag=ar tBody;col1

This article raises a number of critical questions related to multiculturalism and gifted education. In particular, the authors suggest that culturally relevant content is lacking in gifted education programs. They make the

case that gifted students of color are being shortchanged by gifted education programs that lack infusion of diversity issues; these students would benefit substantially from gifted education programs that infuse multiculturalism throughout the curricula.

IES National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2007, June). *Evidence-based decision-making: Assessing reading across the curriculum interventions*. Retrieved August 13, 2008, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/pdf/REL_2007003.pdf

When selecting reading across the curriculum interventions, educators should consider the extent of the evidence on intervention effectiveness and the fit with the school or district context, whether they are purchasing a product from vendors or developing it internally. This report provides guidance in decision making. It looks at what interventions states and districts might consider in their plans to improve reading outcomes at the secondary level. A primary purpose of this report is to compare these interventions in a way that is helpful to decision makers. One important dimension of comparison is the extent of evidence of intervention effectiveness.

IES National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2007, November). *The predictive validity of selected benchmark assessments used in the Mid-Atlantic Region*. Retrieved August 12, 2008, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/pdf/REL_2007017.pdf

This report examines the availability and quality of predictive validity data for a selection of benchmark assessments identified by state and district personnel as being in use within Mid-Atlantic Region jurisdictions. The report finds that evidence is generally lacking in predictive validity with respect to state assessment tests. The key question this study addresses is: What evidence is there for a selection of commonly-used commercial benchmark assessments, of the predictive relationship of each instrument with respect to the state assessment? While the commonly used benchmark assessments in the Mid-Atlantic Region jurisdictions may possess strong internal psychometric characteristics, the report finds that evidence is generally lacking of the predictive validity with respect to the required state or summative assessments.

Jitendra, A. K., Edwards, L. L., Sacks, G., & Jacobson, L. A. (2004). What research says about vocabulary instruction for students with learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 70*(3), 299-322.

This article summarizes published research on vocabulary instruction involving students with learning disabilities. Nineteen vocabulary studies that comprised 27 investigations were located. Study interventions gleaned from the review included keyword or mnemonic approaches, cognitive strategy instruction (e.g., semantic features analysis), direct instruction (DI), constant time delay (CTD), activity-based methods, and computer-assisted instruction (CAI). While findings for the keyword, cognitive strategy, DI, CTD, and activity-based procedures were generally effective in enhancing vocabulary performance for students with learning disabilities, results for CAI were mixed. The studies are discussed with regard to study characteristics (e.g., intervention intensity, instructional arrangement). Implications and recommendations for future research and classroom practice in teaching vocabulary to students with learning disabilities are discussed.

National Research Council Committee for a Review of the Evaluation Data on the Effectiveness of NSF-Supported and Commercially Generated Mathematics Curriculum Materials. (2004). *On evaluating curricular effectiveness: judging the quality of K-12 mathematics evaluations*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

This book reviews the evaluation research literature that has accumulated around 19 K-12 mathematics curricula and breaks new ground in framing an ambitious and rigorous approach to curriculum evaluation that has relevance beyond mathematics. The committee that produced this book consisted of mathematicians, mathematics educators, and methodologists who began with the following charge: Evaluate the quality of the evaluations of the 13 National Science Foundation-supported and 6 commercially-generated mathematics curriculum materials; determine whether the available data are sufficient for evaluating the efficacy of these materials; and, if not, develop recommendations for the design of a project that could result in the generation of more reliable and valid data for evaluating such materials. The committee collected, reviewed, and

classified almost 700 studies, solicited expert testimony during two workshops, developed an evaluation framework, established dimensions/criteria for three methodologies (content analyses, comparative studies, and case studies), drew conclusions on the corpus of studies, and made recommendations for future research.

Nolet, V., & McLaughlin, M. (2005). *Accessing the general curriculum: Including students with disabilities in standards-based reform* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

In this book, the authors provide updated frameworks and strategies with examples and flowcharts for fitting special education into the frameworks created by national standards and assessments. This invaluable resource provides K-12 educators with the support necessary to produce expected results from every learner. The authors begin with far-reaching legal implications and connect them with individual students to show teachers how to: (a) use curriculum as a map for guiding students toward achievement; (b) understand learning research as a bridge to the learning-teaching connection; (c) relate each student's disability to his or her academic performance; (d) design alternate assessment tools and curriculum; and (e) link goals, objectives, and benchmarks to state assessment criteria. Affording special education students accommodations and modifications to their individual curriculum will improve their performance, enhance educators' ability to help them advance, and, ultimately, improve the evaluation of their progress throughout their academic career.

Quality Indicator 2: Effective Instructional Practices

Davis, G. A. (2004). *Education of the gifted and talented*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

The new edition of this text provides updated views, events, and research findings, including a study of extraordinarily successful career women, more attention to gifted education in rural areas, counseling of gay students, and suicide prevention. Chapters have the following titles: Gifted Education: Matching Instruction with Needs; Characteristics of Gifted Students; Program Planning; Identifying Gifted and Talented Students; Acceleration; Enrichment and Grouping; Curriculum Models; Leadership, Affective Learning, and Character Education; Creativity I: The Creative

Person, Creative Process, and Creative Dramatics; Creativity II: Teaching for Creative Growth; Teaching Thinking Skills; Cultural Diversity and Children from Low Socioeconomic Backgrounds: The Invisible Gifted; Underachievement: Diagnosis and Treatment; The Cultural Underachievement of Females; Gifted Children with Disabilities; Parenting the Gifted Child; Understanding and Counseling Gifted Students; and Program Evaluation.

Fuchs, D. & Fuchs, L. S. (2005). *Enhancing mathematical problem solving for students with disabilities*. *Journal of Special Education*, 39(1), 45-57.

This article is a summary of three experimental studies designed to identify which of four instructional designs was most effective in improving mathematical problem solving by third graders with disabilities. The article outlines the researchers' step-by-step progression, from study one through study three, to design the most effective combination of mathematical problem-solving strategies using traditional math practices, activities designed to guide student development of schematics for mathematics problems, diagram development for mathematical problems, peer-assisted instruction, computer-assisted instruction, and small-group tutoring activities. In general, the authors found that mathematics problem-solving instruction is more effective with students with disabilities when it involves instruction on problem solution rules, schemata development activities, self-regulating learning activities, small-group instruction, and substantial practice requirements.

IES National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2007, October). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement*. Retrieved on August 10, 2008, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southwest/pdf/REL_2007033.pdf

Of the more than 1,300 studies identified as potentially addressing the effect of teacher professional development on student achievement in three key content areas, nine meet What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards, attesting to the paucity of rigorous studies that directly examine this link. This report finds that teachers who receive substantial professional development—an average of 49 hours in the nine studies—can boost their students' achievement by about 21 percentile points. All

nine studies focused on elementary school teachers and their students. About half focused on lower elementary grades (kindergarten and first grade), and about half on upper elementary grades (fourth and fifth grades).

Learning First Alliance. (2003). *Beyond islands of excellence: What districts can do to improve instruction and achievement in all schools*. Retrieved July 28, 2008, from <http://www.learningfirst.org/publications/districts/>

To address the need for better information on successful systemwide reform of low-performing schools, the Learning First Alliance studied five high-poverty districts that have been making strides in improving student achievement. More specifically, the Learning First Alliance focused on learning more about how districts promoted good instruction across their systems. The report addresses five research questions: How did the districts create the will to begin instructional reform?; What strategies guided their reform efforts?; In what ways did districts change their approaches to professional development?; How did interactions among the stakeholders facilitate or hinder instructional reform?; and How was leadership distributed across stakeholders to facilitate improvement? To answer these questions, the Learning First Alliance conducted case studies of five school districts across the United States. The study found that these five districts had the courage to acknowledge poor performance and sought solutions; had put in place a systemwide approach to improving instruction that articulated curricular content and provided instructional support; had instilled visions that focused on student learning and guided instructional improvement; made decisions based on data, not instinct; adopted new approaches to professional development that involved a coherent and district-organized set of strategies to improve instruction; redefined leadership roles; and committed to sustaining reform over the long haul. The report makes several recommendations on instructional reform. Appendixes include methodology of study and district student achievement data for the five featured districts.

MDRC. (2007, December). *Instructional leadership, teaching quality, and student achievement: Suggestive evidence from three urban school*

districts. Retrieved August 5, 2008, from <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/470/full.pdf>

This instructional leadership study offers evidence that suggests providing instruction-related professional development to school principals can improve teaching and learning in their schools. The study examined a theory of school change articulated by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. The theory was that through leadership training, school principals learn about high-quality instruction and about actions they can take to motivate and support their teachers. Principals then organize professional learning for their teachers and otherwise help teachers improve their classroom practices. With improved instruction, the theory maintains, student achievement would improve. To test this theory, the researchers recruited 49 elementary schools in three districts that had been working with the researchers (and therefore receiving some level of professional development) for one to five years at the time the study began. The study focused on elementary schools because the researchers reasoned that the principal's role as an instructional leader would be especially pronounced in these settings. This study suggested that in-service professional development for principals can set in motion positive changes in teaching and learning.

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems.(2006). *Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy*. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/Diversity_Brief.pdf?v_document_name=Diversity%20Brief

As more and more students from diverse backgrounds populate 21st century classrooms, and efforts mount to identify effective methods to teach these students, the need for pedagogical approaches that are culturally responsive intensifies. Today's classrooms require teachers to educate students varying in culture, language, abilities, and many other characteristics. To meet this challenge, teachers must employ not only theoretically sound but also culturally responsive pedagogy. Teachers must create a classroom culture where all students, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, are welcomed, supported, and provided with the best opportunity to learn. This publication defines culturally responsive pedagogy and offers strategies for policymakers, school districts, and

teachers. Specific activities and instructional methods are provided for schools and teachers to promote culturally responsive classrooms.

National Education Association. (2005). *Culture Abilities Resilience Effort (C.A.R.E.): Strategies for closing the achievement gaps*. Retrieved August 4, 2008, from <http://www.nea.org/teachexperience/careguide.html>

Despite recent gains in student achievement, gaps continue to exist among populations of students. The purpose of the guide is to offer research-based suggestions for practice, to challenge educators to be both accountable to demands while offering quality education, and to show educators where to gain access to additional resources. It is the goal of the writers to inspire educators to raise the achievement level of underachievers by embracing C.A.R.E. (Culture, Abilities, Resilience, and Effort). Each chapter emphasizes one of these themes and includes references to original research, websites, books, and other publications educators may find helpful. Additional chapters examine how to incorporate the themes of C.A.R.E. in community involvement and systemic organization. Numerous ready-to-use approaches, strategies, and activities are included, and are supplemented by references and resources.

National High School Center. (2006, November). *Emerging evidence on improving high school student achievement and graduation rates: The effects of four popular improvement programs*. Retrieved August 13, 2008, from http://betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_EmergingEvidence_010907.pdf

This study offers research-based lessons from four high school-specific programs. Insight on how to address the challenges of assisting students who enter high school with poor academic skills, improving instructional content and practice, creating a personalized learning environment, preparing students for the world beyond high school, and stimulating change in schools and districts is highlighted. Primary findings indicate that instructional improvement and personalization are the twin pillars of high school reform. The research from this study suggests that extended class periods, special catch-up courses, high-quality curricula, and training for

teachers in those curricula can improve student achievement. Further, transforming schools into small learning communities and assigning students to faculty advisers can increase students' feelings of connectedness to their teachers.

Noguera, P. (2004). Transforming high schools. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 26-31.

A study of 10 high schools found that some schools just go through the motions of reform, whereas other schools listen to teachers, parents, and students and make sure stakeholders understand the purpose of reforms. The schools involved in this study had high minority and low-income student populations. The researcher studied the reform process and focused on the following factors: high-stakes testing, attempts to personalize school, and ability to implement reform. The author discusses the reasons for success in two of the schools under study. Several school-level instructional strategies are highlighted for their ability to raise student achievement.

Williams, T., Perry, M., Oregon, I., Brazil, N., Hakuta, K., Haertel, E., Kirst, M., & Levin, J. (2007). *Similar English learner students, different results: Why do some schools do better? A follow-up analysis based upon a large-scale survey of California elementary schools serving high proportions of low-income and EL students*. Mountain View, CA: EdSource.

This report extends the analysis of an earlier *Similar Students, Different Results* study. The new analysis is based on survey data of 4,700 K-5 classroom teachers and principals in 237 California elementary schools from 137 different school districts across the state. All the schools chosen for the study has high levels of student poverty and English language learners (ELLs) as well as low parent education levels. The study found that there were four interrelated broad school practices that differentiated the lower from the higher performing elementary schools: (1) hiring teachers who possess specific qualities and experience; (2) using assessment data to improve instruction; (3) implementing a horizontally and vertically aligned, standards-based curriculum; and (4) setting high standards for student learning. The new analysis also includes a small set of questions about specific ELL instructional practices and teacher qualifications that were not included in the previous study.

Quality Indicator 3: Use of Formative Assessment and Analysis of Student Assessment Data

Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (2008). *Beyond test scores: Leading indicators for education*. Retrieved August 10, 2008, from <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/LeadingIndicators.pdf>

This report presents alternative forms of data that school districts and schools can use along with test scores. These forms of data are described as leading indicators that allow a glance at school progress prior to actual test results. The authors list the following indicators as useful to the data-informed decision making process: (a) early reading proficiency, (b) enrollment in pre-algebra and algebra, (c) over-age/under-credited students, (d) college admissions test scores to clarify high school placements, and (e) student attendance and suspensions. Harder-to-quantify indicators are described as (a) special education enrollment, (b) student engagement, and (c) teacher and principal quality.

Felner, R. D., Bolton, N., Seitsinger, A. M., Brand, S., & Burns, A. (2008). Creating a statewide educational data system for accountability and improvement: A comprehensive information and assessment system for making evidence-based change at school, district, and policy levels. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(3), 235-256.

This article reports on one ongoing statewide effort to create a high-quality data reporting and utilization system (i.e., High-Performance Learning Community [HiPlaces] Assessment) to inform an educational accountability and improvement system. This effort has undergone refinement for more than a decade. The authors describe the features of this system, particularly how empirically-based psychological theory and research informed both the development and the overall design of the assessment method. This system, unlike those used by other educational institutions, is unusual in that from the onset of the development through implementation, the assessment moved well beyond the simple assessment of the performance and achievement of students to include a comprehensive assessment of all aspects of the developmental, educational, fiscal, and policy conditions that comprise the ecology of the public education system,

at all levels, as well as of the developmental and educational needs and attainment of students. The use of data was integral in guiding specific and ongoing, state-, district-, school-, and classroom-level improvement plans and efforts, including the development, monitoring, evaluation, and refinement of the program. The major goal that guided this system is, and always has been, the enhancement of schools and students' lives.

Lachat, M. A. & Smith, S. (2005). Practices that support data use in urban high schools. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 10(3), 333-349.

This article presents initial findings of a case study focusing on data use in five low-performing urban high schools undergoing comprehensive schoolwide reform. The case study investigated: (a) the ways in which disaggregated data can be used to examine progress and guide improvement in the process of restructuring urban, low-performing high schools; (b) factors and conditions that either promote or act as barriers to data use; and (c) the policy and practice implications of achieving effective data use in a high school reform process. Study findings point to several key factors that have an impact on data use in the study sites: the quality and accuracy of available data, staff access to timely data, the capacity for data disaggregation, the collaborative use of data organized around a clear set of questions, and the leadership structures that support schoolwide use of data. The findings build on current literature and contribute new knowledge of the key roles played by a data team and a data coach in fostering effective data use in high school reform.

Mertler, C. A. (2007). *Interpreting standardized test scores: Strategies for data-driven instructional decision making*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

This book is designed to help K-12 teachers and administrators understand the nature of standardized tests and, in particular, the scores that result from them. This useful manual helps teachers develop the skills necessary to incorporate these test scores into various types of instructional decision making—a process known as “data-driven decision making”—necessitated by the needs of their students. This book: helps readers understand, interpret, and use standardized test scores to improve classroom instruction (i.e., several specific examples are given for interpreting test scores and developing a plan to revise instruction based on those results); offers activities for application and reflection (e.g., follow-up activities and discussion points are provided for experienced and pre-service teachers across K-12 grade levels); and presents successful case studies. The

author includes interviews with classroom teachers, building administrators, and district-level administrators who have successfully engaged in a process of incorporating test scores into decision making.

North Central Regional Laboratory. (2004). *After the test: Closing the achievement gaps with data*. Retrieved August 5, 2008, from <http://www.ncrel.org/gap/studies/basrc.htm>

The primary goal of this study was to examine and compare two groups of schools: one group that demonstrated progress in closing achievement gaps, and one group that did not. Thirty-two schools were selected for study across the six counties of the San Francisco Bay Area. Evaluators collected data through the use of surveys to all 32 schools that inventoried the policies and strategies being used. Three schools with data to show they were closing achievement gaps significantly were selected and researched through interviews, observations, and document review as case studies. Finally, focus groups were conducted with teachers and students from six gap-closing schools. The findings suggest several areas on which the gap-closing schools focused in order to improve the achievement of students of color. Schools that closed the gaps used data to drive school improvement, and provided professional development and support for teachers to use data. These schools also dealt with issues of race directly and fostered an environment that was supportive of discussions about race. Leadership was important in this area. Finally, gap-closing schools focused their efforts around a few specific issues (such as literacy) rather than trying to implement a wide variety of programs.

Tienken, C. & Wilson, M. (2001). State standards, assessments, and instruction. *ERIC Digest Reproduction Service* [ED458215]. Retrieved August 15, 2008, from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/000019b/80/19/5b/8b.pdf

This digest describes a program used by two New Jersey educators to help teachers improve instruction through a deeper understanding of state standards and test specifications. Understanding how standards-based tests are constructed is the first step in being able to use them to guide and improve instruction. The authors recommend, as the route to understanding, a three-part process of delineation, alignment, and

calibration for developing an understanding of state assessments and using that understanding to improve instruction. Delineation is the process of identifying all aspects or dimensions of a particular subject domain. It involves using state documents that describe the assessment to analyze its characteristics and components. Examples are given from the New Jersey standards and test specification manuals.

Wisconsin Center for Education Research. (2007, February). *The roles and practices of student services staff as data-driven instructional leaders*.

Retrieved August 13, 2008, from

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/000019b/80/28/09/d8.pdf

This paper explores the ways in which school leaders are turning to student services staff as local experts in data analysis and use to meet the demands of high-stakes accountability. The authors collected data, as part of a five-year National Science Foundation-funded study on how school leaders create data-driven systems to improve instruction. They found that while schools already had significant capacity to design curriculum-level interventions to address the needs of groups of students, leaders in these schools turned to special education practices and professionals to provide the in-house expertise necessary to create a variety of student-level interventions. This paper provides a picture of the increased role that student services staff have had in developing and maintaining program and student-level support programs. Specifically, it investigates two central issues: (1) the practices of student services staff provide a precedent for student-level intervention design; and (2) student services staff play new roles as data savvy instructional leaders.

Quality Indicator 4: Positive School Culture Focused on Achievement

Education Trust. (2005, November). *Gaining traction, gaining ground: How some high schools accelerate learning for struggling students*. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/6226B581-83C3-4447-9CE7-31C5694B9EF6/0/GainingTractionGainingGround.pdf>

This report is the result of a study into the practices of public high schools that serve high concentrations of either low-income or minority children and

that have a strong track record of accelerating learning for students who enter high school below grade level. This study compared and contrasted the practices of these high-impact schools with similar high schools that have only an average impact on student performance. The study examined seven public high schools. Four were “high-impact” that is, they produced unusually large growth among students who entered significantly behind. The study compared these high-impact schools with three average-impact schools with similar demographics. By looking at both sets of schools, the researchers hoped to find out what the high-impact schools did differently than the average-impact schools. Upon analyzing the data, the authors found that the high-impact schools have many characteristics in common with average-impact schools. Each practice described may not be evident at every high-impact school or every average-impact school, but the study found that high-impact schools shared a common range of practices, as did average-impact schools.

Koth, C. W., Bradshaw, C. P., & Leaf, P. J. (2008). A multilevel study of predictors of student perceptions of school climate: The effect of classroom-level factors. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 100*(1), 96-104.

A positive school climate is an important component of successful and effective schools, and thus is often an aim of schoolwide initiatives. Climate has traditionally been conceptualized as a school-level factor and is often assumed to be related to other school-level factors (e.g., school size). This study examined variations in perceptions of climate based on individual-, classroom-, and school-level factors to determine the influence of predictors at multiple levels. Data came from 2,468 fifth grade students from 37 public elementary schools. Two aspects of students' perception of school climate, order and discipline, and achievement motivation were examined. Multilevel analyses in hierarchical linear modeling indicate that individual-level factors (race and sex) accounted for the largest proportion of variance in perceptions of school climate. School-level factors (e.g., school size and faculty turnover) and several classroom-level factors (e.g., characteristics of the teacher, class size, and the concentration of students with behavior problems) were also significant predictors of perceptions of climate. These findings suggest that characteristics of the classroom environment are important to consider when aiming to improve school climate.

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. (2006). *Proactive culturally responsive discipline*. Retrieved August 13, 2008, from http://www.nccrest.org/Exemplars/exemplar_culturally_responsive_discipline.pdf?v_document_name=culturally%20responsive%20discipline

The ways that schools intervene with students' challenging behavior have been historically "reactive, exclusionary, and ineffective" according to researchers. Traditional reactive discipline interventions include detention, suspension, and expulsion—all of which punish students by excluding them from school and limiting opportunity to receive positive support for behavior change. Furthermore, punitive and reactive disciplinary measures have been linked to the increased severity and incidence of the target behaviors. This exemplar considers how one urban middle school in Phoenix, Arizona, incorporates proactive discipline into the everyday practices of the school community. The result is a safe, positive school climate, leading to a reduction of student discipline problems. In turn, a disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education due to social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties was prevented.

Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. (1992) *Schoolwide and classroom discipline*. Retrieved August 7, 2008, from <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5/cu9.html>

This report offers a synthesis of findings from research studies that have identified effective classroom and school-level disciplinary practices. The studies are research documents that reveal relationships between disciplinary practices and student behavioral outcomes. The strategies applied in the research to combat discipline issues included a variety of classroom management practices, policy structure, specific programs (e.g., Assertive Discipline, Positive Approach to Discipline), counseling programs, the teaching of prosocial behavior, behavioral reinforcement practices, training in classroom management, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, corporal punishment, and suspension. The report also includes a list of guidelines that school personnel can follow in order to improve the quality of discipline in their schools and classrooms.

Pollack, I., & Sundermann, C. (2001). Creating safe schools: A comprehensive approach. *Juvenile Justice Journal*, 8(1). Retrieved August 15, 2008, from http://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojjdp/jjjournal_2001_6/jj2.html

This report describes the benefits of developing comprehensive school safety plans that are integrated into the overall school improvement process. Engaging students in the school's safety plan in the early grades and reinforcing the plan throughout their education is an effective way to enhance school safety. Comprehensive school safety plans can aid in improving other areas of schooling such as academics, student discipline, school climate, staff morale, and use of resources. The report lists 10 elements of providing schools with the foundation needed to ensure a safe learning environment. Used along with a strategic planning process to help design and implement the school safety plan, they will allow schools to go beyond creating a mere crisis response plan.

Sugai, G., Horner, R. H., Dunlap, G., Hieneman, M., Nelson, C. M.; Scott, T., Liaupsin, C., Sailor, W., Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull III, H. R., Wickham, D., Wilcox, B., & Ruef, M. (2000). Applying positive behavior support and functional behavioral assessment in schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 2(3), 131-144.

Positive behavior support (PBS) and functional behavioral assessment (FBA) are two significant concepts of the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The purposes of this article are to describe the context in which PBS and FBA are needed, and definitions and features of PBS and FBA. An important message is that positive behavioral interventions and supports involve the whole school, and successful implementation emphasizes the identification, adoption, and sustained use of effective policies, systems, data-based decision making, and effective practices. Systems-level challenges also are discussed.

Wentzel, K. R. (2002). Are effective teachers like good parents? Teaching styles and student adjustment in early adolescence. *Child Development*, 73(1), 287–301.

This study examines the utility of parent socialization models for understanding teachers' influence on student adjustment in middle school.

Teachers were assessed with respect to their modeling of motivation and to parenting dimensions of control, maturity demands, democratic communication, and nurturance. Student adjustment was defined in terms of social and academic goals and interest in class, classroom behavior, and academic performance. Based on information from 452 sixth grade students from two suburban middle schools, results of multiple regressions indicated that teaching dimensions explained significant amounts of variance in student motivation, social behavior, and achievement. High expectations (maturity demands) were a consistent positive predictor of students' goals and interests, and negative feedback (lack of nurturance) was the most consistent negative predictor of academic performance and social behavior. The role of motivation in mediating relations between teaching dimensions and social behavior and academic achievement also was examined; evidence for mediation was not found. Relations of teaching dimensions to student outcomes were the same for African American and European American students, and for boys and girls. The implications of parent socialization models for understanding effective teaching are discussed.

Quality Indicator 5: Effective School Leadership

Alliance for Excellent Education. (2004). *Profiles in leadership: Innovative approaches to transforming the American high school*. Retrieved August 14, 2008, from <http://www.all4ed.org/files/ProfilesInLeadership.pdf>

This collection of essays is written by some of America's foremost education innovators, including former Virginia Governor Mark Warner, former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley, and Melinda French Gates. It presents perspectives from a range of influential educators, foundation executives, and public officials.

IES National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. (2008, May). *Turning around chronically low-performing schools IES practice guide*. Retrieved August 12, 2008, from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf

The goal of this practice guide is to formulate specific and coherent evidence-based recommendations for use by educators addressing a multifaceted challenge that lacks developed or evaluated packaged approaches. The challenge is turning around low-performing schools. The guide provides practical, clear information on critical topics related to school turnarounds and is based on the best available evidence as judged by the review team.

Leech, D., & Fulton, C. R. (2008). Faculty perceptions of shared decision making and the principal's *leadership* behaviors in secondary schools in a large urban district. *Education*, 128(4), 630-644.

The purpose of this correlational study was to explore the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the leadership behaviors of secondary school principals in a large urban school district and their perceptions of the level of shared decision making practiced in their schools. Leadership behavior was operationalized by the responses to five practices: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. The level of shared decision making was measured by responses in the areas of planning, policy development, curriculum and instruction, student achievement, pupil personnel services, staff development, and budget management. The population for the study was a sample selected from all secondary schools in a large public school system. The sample consisted of 646 participants from 26 schools. The findings should inform the practice of school principals as they create empowering cultures in their schools.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Based on their analysis of 69 studies conducted since 1970 that met their selection criteria and a recent survey of more than 650 building principals, the authors have developed a list of 21 leadership responsibilities that have a significant effect on student achievement. Readers will learn: the specific behaviors associated with the 21 leadership responsibilities; the difference between first-order change and second-order change and the leadership responsibilities that are most important for each; how to work smart by

choosing the right work that improves student achievement; the advantages and disadvantages of comprehensive school reform models for improving student achievement; how to develop a site-specific approach to improving student achievement, using a framework of 11 factors and 39 action steps; and a five-step plan for effective school leadership. Combining rigorous research with practical advice, this book gives school administrators the guidance they need to provide strong leadership for better schools.

MDRC. (2002, April). *Scaling up first things first: Site selection and the planning year*. Retrieved July 29, 2008, from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/000019b/80/1a/78/68.pdf

First Things First is a comprehensive intervention to transform low-performing public schools with high percentages of non-white and at-risk students. It encompasses major changes in school structure, instruction, and accountability and governance. The program model, which is grounded both in research and the best practices of schools serving high-risk youth, was developed by the Institute for Research and Reform in Education and was initially mounted in the Kansas City, Kansas, school system in 1998. New schools were phased in Missouri, Mississippi, and Texas. This report highlights an early stage in the scaling-up effort: Selection of new sites and planning within them for the initiative's implementation.

MDRC. (2007, December). *Instructional leadership, teaching quality, and student achievement: Suggestive evidence from three urban school districts*. Retrieved August 6, 2008 from <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/470/full.pdf>

This study offers evidence that suggests providing instruction-related professional development to school principals can improve teaching and learning in their schools. The study examined a theory of school change articulated by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. The theory was that through leadership training, school principals learn about high-quality instruction and about actions they can take to motivate and support their teachers. Principals then organize professional learning for their teachers and otherwise help teachers improve their classroom practices. With improved instruction, the theory maintained, student

achievement would also improve. To test this theory, the researchers recruited 49 elementary schools in three districts that had been working with the researchers (and therefore receiving some level of professional development) for one to five years at the time the study began. The study focused on elementary schools because the researchers reasoned that the principal's role as an instructional leader would be especially pronounced in these settings. This study suggests that in-service professional development for principals can set in motion positive changes in teaching and learning.

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: Olympia, WA. (2004, October). *Characteristics of improved school districts: Themes from research*. Retrieved August 11, 2008, from <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/pubdocs/DistrictImprovementReport.pdf>

This report distills findings from more 80 (mostly qualitative) research reports conducted in Washington State between 1989 and 2004. The study identified 13 interrelated common themes of districts that have shown significant improvement, and these are presented in four broad categories: (1) effective leadership (themes: focus on the learning of all students, use of dynamic and distributed leadership, and sustained improvement efforts over time); (2) quality teaching and learning (themes: high expectations and accountability for adults, coordinated and aligned curriculum and assessment, coordinated and embedded professional development, and quality classroom instruction); (3) support for systemwide improvement (themes: effective use of data, strategic allocation of resources, and policy and program coherence); and (4) clear and collaborative relationships (themes: professional culture and collaborative relationships, clear understanding of school and district roles and responsibilities, and interpreting and managing the external environment). These 13 themes and 4 categories (and their interconnectedness) are discussed.

Policy Studies Associates, Inc. (2007, October). *Evaluation of New Century High Schools: Profile of an initiative to create and sustain small, successful high schools*. Retrieved August 13, 2008, from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/000019b/80/34/f0/96.pdf

The evaluation of the New Century High Schools (NCHS) initiative examined operations and student outcomes in 75 schools from 2002-2003 through 2005-2006. This report, the final in a series of annual evaluation reports, presents data collected during those years, with a focus on school year 2005-2006. The evaluation used the percent of students in the class of 2006 who graduated on time as its prime indicator of success. The study's central finding was that NCHS schools graduated more students on time than larger New York City schools with comparable students, and more students than New York City high schools generally. NCHS effects were notable with regard to dropout prevention and on-time graduation. Evaluators used both hierarchical multivariate statistical methods and qualitative approaches to identify school features associated with student outcomes. The most important school-level influences on student performance, as measured by credit accrual, was the quality of instructional systems (including measures of the perceived alignment of instruction with Regents standards), agreement on educational focus, the effectiveness of principal leadership, the quality and amount of professional development, teacher influence, and professional collaboration on instruction.

Quality Indicator 6: Parental and Community Engagement

Epstein, J. (2007). Connections count: Improving family and community involvement in secondary schools. *Principal Leadership*, 8(2), 16-22.

Educators at all schools levels know that successful students at all ability levels have families who stay informed and involved in their children's education. Yet many middle level and high school teachers report that the only time they contact families is when students are in trouble. This disconnect between knowledge and behavior can be corrected with new approaches that make it possible for every school to organize an excellent partnership program. Research and field work with hundreds of elementary, middle level, and high schools across the country reveal four key components of effective and sustainable programs of family and community involvement: (1) action teams for partnerships; (2) the six types of involvement framework (parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community); (3) Action plans that are linked to goals for student success; and (4) evaluation and ongoing improvement. Middle level and high schools in the network are using the six types of involvement to focus on goals for student success. The framework helps schools identify ways that families and community

partners can be involved without always having to come to meetings at the school building. With these guidelines, schools can create programs that enable all parents to remain engaged with their teens and their schools.

Harry, B., Klinger, J. K., & Hart, J. (2005). African American families under fire: Ethnographic views of family strengths. *Remedial and Special Education, 26*(2), 101-112.

This article focuses on the discrepancy between school personnel's negative stereotyping of African American families and the family information gleaned by ethnographic research. Using findings from a three-year ethnographic study of the special education placement process in a culturally diverse urban school district, the authors describe the general atmosphere of negativity that prevailed among school personnel with regard to African American families living in poverty. The article focuses on the families of three case study students who were referred to special education. Home visits and ethnographic interviews with caregivers revealed family strengths that were neither known nor tapped by school personnel. The authors interpret the findings in terms of the power of cultural capital and the discrepancy between the schools' perceptions of such capital and the capital actually possessed by families.

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. (2008, March). *Building collaboration between schools and parents of English language learners: transcending barriers, creating opportunities*. Retrieved August 13, 2008, from http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/PractitionerBrief_BuildingCollaboration.pdf

This Practitioner Brief is an analysis of research and practice illuminated by several factors that contribute to the paradoxical views of English language learners (ELL) parents and their involvement in their children's schools and education. Each of these factors pertains to having the means and opportunity for viable parent-school collaboration, in relation to school-initiated efforts to build partnerships with parents; language; comprehensible information about U.S. schools and culturally and linguistically diverse families; special concerns related to special education referral and placement; immigrant isolation; and legal status. Considering each of these factors influencing meaningful ELL parent-school collaboration, a number of policy recommendations for schools and districts

emerged. These recommendations were intended to guide school staff to better transcend existing barriers as well as support compliance with one or more of the legally mandated requirements established by No Child Left Behind act.

National Institute for Literacy. (2006). *The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading*. Retrieved August 14, 2008, from http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/pdf/lit_interventions.pdf

This report reviews the scientific literature on parent involvement in the acquisition of literacy from kindergarten to the third grade. It narrowly defines parent involvement in literacy acquisition to include parent-child activities that focus on reading. Meta-analytic procedures were used to analyze the study outcomes. Parent involvement was classified into three categories: (1) school-based involvement, which includes various parental activities and behaviors occurring in their children's school environment; (2) home-school conferencing, which involved communication between the parents and teachers or other school staff regarding children's academic achievement, enjoyment of school, and rate of progress; and (3) home-based involvement, which involves parents actively encouraging children to engage in learning in the home setting and providing learning opportunities for their children.

Sheldon, S. B. (2003). Linking school-family-community partnerships in urban elementary schools to student achievement on state tests. *Urban Review*, 35(2), 149-166.

This study examines the relationship between the quality of school, family, and community partnership programs and student performance on state-mandated achievement tests. Data from 82 elementary schools, located in a large urban area, were collected to explore the relationship between family and community involvement and students' achievement test performance. Analyses show that, controlling for school characteristics, the degree to which schools were working to overcome challenges to family and community involvement predicted higher percentages of students scoring at or above satisfactory on state achievement tests. The findings

suggest that schools' efforts to involve families and the community in students' learning may be a useful approach to help students achieve in school, especially for students in early elementary grades. The findings also illustrate the importance for schools located in large urban areas to address obstacles to family and community involvement.

Stewart, E. B. (2008). Individual and school structural effects on African American high school students' academic achievement. *The High School Journal*, 91(2), 16-34.

This study is based on the ecological theory of human development and incorporates school-level characteristics into an investigation of the factors that influence adolescents' academic achievement. Using regression-based techniques that account for within school clustering of students, the research examines the extent to which individual-level and school structural variables predict academic achievement among a sample of tenth grade African American students. The results suggest that individual-level predictors—such as student effort, parent-child discussion, and associations with positive peers—play a substantial role in increasing student achievement. Further, the results suggest that school climate—in particular the sense of school cohesion felt by students, teachers, and administrators—is important to successful student outcomes. The author suggests that an approach that encompasses individual, family, and school level variables be considered when examining predictors for academic achievement.