Texas Study of the Comprehensive School Reform

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Final Cross-Case Study eport

August 2007

Resources for Learning

Executive Summary

should balance model philosophies and strategies with both CSR components and school mission, challenges, and practices.

Schools and districts should understand that matching model choice to the context of the school removes some obstacles to implementation and can lead to greater commitment to successful implementation. Further, evidence from this study indicates that no matter what type of model is chosen, comprehensive and philosophical, or targeted, schools must invest additional planning, leadership, and resources in order to integrate the model into the school context and implement it across all school components. Comprehensive models aimed at a philosophical shift in school operations require concerted efforts from leadership and staff to create, change, or refine the school's educational mission and practices. The model alone will not achieve this. Targeted models that were not designed to be comprehensive require significant supplements to serve as catalysts for school-wide change.

- Establish a dedicated CSR advocate charged with leading reform efforts.

Schools and districts, with the support of the state agency, should identify leaders for reform efforts. The advocate can be an individual or a group at the district level or at the campus level. The charge to this person or group is to promote and support CSR efforts by disseminating the goals of comprehensive school reform, promoting a consistent and ongoing focus on CSR, and protecting staff from competing initiatives.

- Develop strategies to promote coherent, stable, and scalable reform plans at the district level.

Districts need to develop strategies to promote consistent and coherent reform plans that sustain an overall district mission, /7 972s Mnd s f.(r)-9(a)-30(l)-25(l d)-19(i)-71ct-7

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redelivery of training also help to build capacity in the long term and ensure sustainability, especially when schools are able to retain a critical mass of sta so that investments in capacity building are not lost.

- Expect and support classroom application of model instructional strategies.

Classroom application should be part of the goals disseminated by district or school advocates and TAPs. Achieving instructional change requires, •rst, the expectation of implementation, then, ongoing support, collaboration, and time. is commitment must come from instructional leaders if CSR e orts are ultimately to impact student achievement. Teachers implementing CSR model-promoted strategies in their daily practice need intensive support either from external assistance providers or the district, concrete product examples, and, most importantly, dedicated time to collaborate with their colleagues.

- Monitor progress through both intermediate and summative outcomes.

De•ning intermediate outcomes demonstrates an understanding of the cycle of CSR and the time needed to achieve summative outcomes such as im proved student achievement. A systematic process for monitoring progress around intermediate outcomes provides clarity, guidance, and focus and com municates the school's commitment to accomplishing the goals of CSR. is process also encourages optimism about growth. State support in encourag ing identi•cation of intermediate goals may be an avenue to investigate.

- Promote district-wide adoption and expansion of successfully piloted strategies and rel2(g)-17 pT5(e d)-1(e)--11(m)-0a3fulDe• ns7(•)11s7(•)11s7(•)195

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