

# Texas Study of the Comprehensive School Reform Grant Program

## Final Cross-Case Study Report

August 2007

*Prepared for the Texas Education Agency*

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**TEXAS STUDY OF THE  
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM (CSR) GRANT PROGRAM**



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## NATIONAL CONTEXT

SINCE THE 1960S, SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVES HAVE EVOLVED FROM remedial pullout programs aimed at at-risk students (Borman, Wong, Hedges, & D’Agostino, 2001) to systemic approaches to school change (Smith & O’Day, 1991). In the early 1990s, the systemic approach provided a new focus for designing innovative whole-school reform models through “design-based assistance organizations” (Bodilly, 2001).

Results from these efforts guided the establishment of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSR) in the Fiscal Year 1998 Appropriations Act for the U.S. Department of Education, Public Law 105–78. The CSR Program, operating from 1998–2001, emphasized nine required components or strategies for reform and stressed the goal of whole-school change. The reauthorization of Title I as Part F of the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 (NCLB) continued the use of federal funds to support low-performing, high-poverty schools in the implementation of scientifically based programs and strategies aimed at helping students meet state content and academic achievement standards through the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program.

As of fiscal year 2007, the CSR program was considered duplicative of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Title I, Part A supports comprehensive school reform, which is also the purpose of Title I school-wide programs (Title I school-wide project statutory provisions Sec. 1114 of NCLB). Title I, Part A also is designed to help improve low-performing schools, which is the purpose of the state school improvement set-aside in Title I (Sec. 1003 of NCLB). Currently, efforts are being made to redirect CSR program funding to the Title I Grants for Local Educational Agencies to reduce program duplication and administrative burden. Redirecting the CSR funds to Title I will allow troubled schools to carry out comprehensive reform without the extra administrative burden of applying to a separate grant program.<sup>1</sup>

After almost a decade of whole-school reform, national research documents the difficulties of both implementing reforms that are indeed comprehensive

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, please visit the following website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/detail.10000184.2005.html>

(Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005) and building the foundations for CSR sustainability beyond the federal funding period (Taylor, 2005).

### **STATE CONTEXT**

This evaluation focuses on the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) two CSR programs: 1) the Improving Teaching and Learning (ITL)/Texas Title I CSR grant program; and 2) the CSR/Texas High School Initiative (THSI) grant program. Though the ITL program has funded multiple cycles of grantees, this evaluation focuses only on Cycle 3 ITL campuses, in addition to all campuses funded through the THSI program. In 2004, Texas received \$11,818,764 in CSR-designated federal dollars that were distributed to 85 schools through Cycle 3 of the ITL grant program. Awards ranged from \$69,980 to \$150,000 in 2005, from \$50,000 to \$105,000 in 2006, and from \$18,750 to \$39,875 in 2007. The state distributed an additional \$11,965,695 in 2005 to another 83 schools through the THSI grant program. Grant awards ranged from \$70,000 to \$150,000 in 2005, from \$50,000 to \$105,000 in 2006, and from \$22,700 to \$47,670 in 2007.<sup>2</sup> Due to the decision to redirect CSR funds to Title I in 2007, year three awards for grantee schools were greatly reduced from expected amounts and averaged \$39,000 per school.

### **STUDY PURPOSE**

This study represents one component of a larger program evaluation effort conducted by TEA that examines the impact of comprehensive school reform on student achievement. This portion of the evaluation included surveys, case studies, and a cross-case analysis. The goal of this study was to apply a research-based framework to describe the implementation process, including facilitators and barriers, for 10 sites introducing comprehensive school reform under the ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grant programs. Sites were chosen to reflect the two grant programs, geographic diversity, demographic diversity, CSR models, and implementation level. An interim report was published in September 2006 based on a first round of data collection conducted in spring 2006.<sup>3</sup> Final reports (a case study report and a cross-case study report) were developed following a second round of data collection in spring 2007.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation design had two purposes: 1) to enhance and provide corroborating evidence for TEA's quantitative evaluation; and 2) to assess CSR implementation in order to inform current and future program development for

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<sup>2</sup> Source: CSR database, operated by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory and TEA program staff

<sup>3</sup> The interim report is available on the TEA website at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/CampusWide/index.html#csr>



school-wide reform grant programs (e.g., Texas High School Redesign and Restructuring Grant). The work by the Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) at the University of Memphis and the Field-Focused Study of the CSRD Program conducted by COSMOS Corporation for the U.S. Department of Education (2003) guided the evaluation design. The evaluation addressed the following objectives:

- a. Define where schools started and the local context
- b. Define school capacity to implement reform in terms of materials, staff, planning time, and resources
- c. Measure the external support provided by an external Technical Assistance Provider or the school district
- d. Measure internal focus defined as teacher buy-in, integration of model strategies with existing programs, and progress monitoring
- e. Assess pedagogical change, including how closely instructional strategies aligned with model specifications and how widely these changes in teaching were being made
- f. Assess the extent to which schools restructured outcomes to consider intermediate outcomes for students (such as positive affective impacts) and the broader school community, including teachers and staff and parents
- g. Assess the level of implementation and prospects for sustainability

Through investigation of these questions at the interim and final stages of funded activities, the evaluation provided information about how comprehensive school reform impacts schools, including barriers to and catalysts for implementation and the sustainability of reform efforts.

After developing case studies for each of the 10 schools, the evaluators assessed the level of CSR implementation at each site using an instrument that measures strength of implementation in alignment with the research framework:

- ◆ High-level implementing schools were those in the “Implementing” phase
  - Four schools—two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school
- ◆ Middle-level implementing schools were in the “Piloting” stage
  - Three schools—one middle school and two high schools
- ◆ Low-level implementing schools were those in the “Planning” stage and the “Not Implementing” stage
  - Three schools—three high schools

The evaluators then conducted a cross-case analysis that combined site visit and survey data across all 10 sites and provided summaries of each implementation level by research objective.

A summary of findings and recommendations from the cross-case study report is provided below. A full analysis by implementation level and a full description of findings and recommendations may be found in the cross-case study report. Full descriptions of each school with detailed implementation information may be found in the case study report.

### **FINDINGS**

#### ***Intentions for Seeking Funding***

- ***The reasons schools sought funding impacted CSR implementation.***

School intentions in seeking CSR grant funding generally fell into two categories: 1) those supplementing schools budgets without a unifying goal; and 2) those continuing preexisting school programming or using funds to initiate CSR programs because school goals for improvement intersected with grant goals.

#### ***Model Selection and Adoption Process***

- ***Across implementation levels, school staff played a minimal role in the model selection and adoption process, which delayed initial staff buy-in at most schools.***

Several factors complicated the model selection and adoption processes at grantee schools. These included some aspects of the grant application process and school interpretation of staff participation requirements. The CSR literature provides a strong research base for the importance of the adoption process to later implementation and characterizes the implementation process in three ways: informative, inclusive, and legitimate (Aladjem & Borman, 2006). Informative processes provide information about the model to staff. Inclusive processes provide staff with a role in choosing a model. Legitimate processes allow for full unrestrained staff participation in model selection and adoption. Data indicated that staff participation in selection processes at study schools represented, at best, informative inclusion.

#### ***External Progress Measures***

- ***Methods of tracking CSR progress require attention.***

Caution should be used when interpreting some CSR progress indicators, as they can be misleading, particularly when there are no observations from external staff to confirm reports. Generally, responses from low-implementing schools regarding implementation levels on TEA-required progress reports were over-inflated because school staff had a limited understanding of CSR goals. Additionally, data collected across both time periods indicated that schools with low CSR implementation reported similar ratings on school climate measures to schools with higher CSR implementation. In these cases, improvements in school climate may have been more related to having access to funding than successful use of funds in grant-intended ways. Also, research documents that schools engaged in school reform may report low levels of school climate due to the number and extent of changes occurring

as a consequence of CSR implementation. Alternatively, improvements might not have been related to grant funding at all.

### ***Model Choice***

- ***Addressing the comprehensive design requirement of CSR did not depend on CSR model choice.***

The comprehensive design component of CSR requires that programs include all students in all grade levels; address all subject areas; and impact instruction, school organization and governance, staffing, professional development, and parental involvement. As demonstrated by the schools in this study sample, choosing a model that was designed to be comprehensive was not enough to ensure comprehensive implementation. In fact, only one of the high-implementing schools chose a model designed for school-wide implementation, while all three low-implementing schools chose CSR models that were explicitly aligned with CSR goals. Overall, high-implementing schools chose models that were well aligned with school needs, developed coherent and comprehensive plans, and dedicated leadership for school-wide change.

### ***Leadership***

- ***A person or group of people was responsible for leading CSR efforts at high-implementing schools.***

High-implementing schools in the study benefited from having a strong CSR advocate who provided a defined and widespread message or vision to guide CSR implementation. This leadership was provided at either the district level or through a committed cadre of teachers or strong principal at the school level to promote CSR implementation.

### ***District Agency***

- ***Active district support led to potential sustainability.***

It was imperative in high-implementing schools that the district was actively involved, supportive, and proactive in expanding programming begun under CSR. In three of the four high-implementing schools, the district used the CSR school as a pilot site for district-wide adoption of the program. The district also usually supplemented the funding gap created by the decrease in CSR funding in the final year of the grant. These districts developed plans for systematically expanding a cohesive program. The districts also protected schools from additional competing initiatives and agendas. Perhaps most importantly, these demonstrations of district support indicated to school staff that their efforts had been successful and valuable.

### ***Clear Goals and Protection From Competing Priorities***

- ***High-implementing schools provided staff with a clear plan for CSR.***

Internal focus and the creation of a program that was “on message,” especially in terms of CSR integration with existing school programs, were critical for high-implementing schools. Teachers in these schools demonstrated a consistent understanding of the goals of their school’s CSR model. These

schools were also very clear and careful about not bringing in competing, unrelated programs or treating CSR as an add-on program.

### ***Capacity***

- ***High-implementing schools viewed the CSR grant as a vehicle for building infrastructure and capacity that could be sustained beyond the grant funding period.***

High-implementing schools used the CSR grant to build social capital and capacity by creating professional learning communities with a collective focus and shared values and norms. These schools increased capacity by either delivering well-defined and focused training school wide or training a cadre of teachers and then providing a systematic, monitored, and product-oriented process for redelivery of training.

### ***Pedagogy and Collaboration***

- ***Through extensive training and support, teachers in high-implementing schools were able to use CSR-related teaching strategies in classrooms.***

Considering that instructional change takes longer to achieve and occurs later in the implementation phase of school reform, it was noteworthy that teachers at high-implementing schools were applying CSR-related teaching strategies in classrooms to some extent. Achieving pedagogical change involved ongoing support in terms of formal and informal collaboration between teachers and external assistance providers and proved to be time intensive. Dedicated planning time was oriented around staff collaboration on key pedagogical approaches.

### ***Internal Progress Monitoring***

- ***High-implementing schools instituted formative monitoring across a variety of intermediate outcomes.***

At high-implementing schools, staff comments about model impacts demonstrated an understanding of progress and were evidence that the schools had provided tools and time for analysis and reflection around intermediate outcomes. Where schools did systematically review intermediate outcomes, such as ninth-grade retention rates for example, staff saw more immediate results from their efforts and were more enthusiastic about the prospects of continuing in the direction begun under CSR. Where TAKS was the only measure of success, staff were unsure about the success of their efforts because student achievement had yet to be impacted.

### ***Maintaining Model Strategies and Provider Relationships***

- ***High-implementing schools exhibited the potential to maintain model strategies and formal relationships with external Technical Assistance Providers.***

Data suggested that the four high-implementing schools in the study would independently retain formal TAP services or would maintain formal strategies and provider services through district-wide expansion of programs piloted at these sites. Two middle-implementing schools were likely to maintain some of the strategies adopted during CSR that had become part of school routine, but they were not likely to have the resources to maintain formal TAP services. Data indicated that one low-implementing site could continue to refer to itself as a CSR model school but that this likely would be in name only since little success towards implementing reform strategies occurred during the grant period. The other schools (one middle-implementing and two low-implementing) were likely to drop all ties associated with CSR models, including strategies, so that a year after the grant ends, there might be little evidence that CSR occurred. Accordingly, these schools made little progress during the grant period.

### ***Sustainability***

- ***High-implementing schools developed plans for continuing programs and activities initiated with CSR grant funds beyond the grant program.***

High-implementing schools had clear plans for continuing CSR programming. Either district support had already been committed or a strong infrastructure had been created through staff training. In either scenario, the continuation of school efforts was not dependent on grant funding. Building a strong school culture around reform efforts was also instrumental to ensuring sustainability. At one high-implementing campus that had used the same model for six years, the school's identity was built around it, and teachers were hired to teach there based on their acceptance of the model's philosophy.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations are presented in terms of the entity most likely responsible for recommended changes. The first three target the grant application and administration process of the state agency. The remaining nine are implementation considerations directed to districts and schools but that could also be encouraged by the state agency.

### ***State Grant Administration and Monitoring***

- ***Continue to educate applicants about the intent and goals of grants and expand the review of grant applications to include alignment with other grant awards and ongoing programming.***

While recognizing that the state has limited capacity to oversee the grant application process at individual sites, TEA should investigate the feasibility of providing mandatory pre-application grant development assistance workshops or information to ensure that grantees understand the goals of

the grant program. The educational service centers may be one avenue for providing pre-grant education. Applications from schools should also contain information about current school programs and be reviewed for plans to align programming, including evidence of similar goals, systemic implementation activities, management capacity, and alignment of proposed budget expenditures with implementation plans.

- **Continue to refine the grant application process and include additional guidelines, technical assistance, or planning grants to ensure grant applicants meet program expectations concerning model selection processes.**

At the grant award and administration level, TEA should continue to refine future application processes to include more explicit guidelines defining legitimate staff participation (for example, including a staff vote) and/or provide mandatory technical assistance for applicants. Schools appear to require education and support in how to include staff in this process. Providing technical assistance prior to grant award or providing web-based tools that guide model selection processes could be considered. Additionally, Requests for Applications (RFA) timelines should be guided by considerations such as allowing sufficient time for needs assessment and inclusion of the majority of staff in selection and adoption of reform models. Small planning grants and the use of educational service centers are other possibilities for facilitating this process.

- **Continue to review approaches to monitoring CSR progress.**

Continue and expand the use of progress reports using a format that includes multiple data points from multiple sources (district managers, principals, grant coordinators, and Technical Assistance Providers). This format allows information to be triangulated and provides a school-level measure of information consistency and coordination. Further, using reporting formats consistent with grant goals, research, and similar grant programs allows for comparison across years and programs. Identifying appropriate intermediate outcomes for reporting would also support formative evaluation purposes and state assessments of the status of reform efforts at grantee sites. For example, collecting the number of days and staff participating in CSR-related professional development activities would provide information about the extent of staff participation and investment in training. Providing monitoring and follow-up support for grant implementation could help schools refine local implementation activities, though the size of the state might prohibit such support.

### ***District and School Implementation***

- **Align model choices with local context and needs with clear plans for comprehensive implementation. Model choices and CSR plans**

**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, to provide district-wide support for school change, and to protect schools from competing initiatives.

- **Define and disseminate clearly articulated goals for the CSR program.**

Districts and schools should use program advocates to emphasize the goals of the reform. Staff members need to understand what is asked of them and how CSR supports existing school efforts. Taking time to define this message will help integrate CSR with other programs and eliminate confusion, especially if staff participation in initial model selection and adoption is limited.

- **Build school capacity and social capital through focused campus-wide training that promotes professional learning communities and the capacity for redelivery.**

Using resources to provide a focused campus-wide professional development effort ensures all teachers are trained, builds CSR understanding, and promotes collaboration around CSR efforts. Mechanisms for providing local

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 staff 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, first, the expectation of implementation, then, ongoing support, collaboration, and time. This commitment must come from instructional leaders if CSR efforts 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.**

Defining intermediate outcomes demonstrates an understanding of the cycle of CSR and the time needed to achieve summative outcomes such as improved student achievement. A systematic process for monitoring progress around intermediate outcomes provides clarity, guidance, and focus and communicates the school's commitment to accomplishing the goals of CSR. This process also encourages optimism about growth. State support in encouraging identification of intermediate goals may be an avenue to investigate.

- **Promote district-wide adoption and expansion of successfully piloted strategies and relationships.**

Continuing model strategies with formal support from TAPs ensures new teachers will be provided necessary training and support; the efforts invested during CSR are not abandoned; and the school and district have a mission, commitment, and focus for growth. While schools may not always need formal model support to maintain strategies, especially once a model has become institutionalized, maintaining this support during piloting and early implementation has been shown to be linked to stronger and longer implementation.

- **Plan for sustaining CSR efforts beyond grant funding.**

Finding and securing resources either through reallocation of local district funds or through new grant opportunities to maintain programming begun under CSR is essential and indicates to staff that the school is committed to school reform—that CSR is not just a passing fad. Sustaining CSR efforts also relates to building capacity and school culture around CSR goals and strategies.



## **CONCLUSION**

Most of the case study sites faced some obstacles common to schools serving high-poverty student populations. Success of reform efforts depended primarily on factors external to model choice, such as identification of a program advocate, district support, investment in teacher training, ability to retain teachers, and the match between grant goals and school goals. When these factors were combined, some schools were able to overcome contextual challenges. Consistent with prior research (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005), study findings suggest the significance of advocates or agents (e.g., principal, district, teacher groups) and increased social capital in overcoming contextual barriers (e.g., socio-economic status, Limited English Proficiency, size). Positive school-wide change can occur across a variety of environments if advocates for change are actively engaged in the process.







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## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

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### BACKGROUND

THE TOPIC OF SCHOOL REFORM HAS attracted considerable attention and funding from a range of stakeholders that include the federal government, state governments, philanthropists, local schools, and the general public (Quint, 2006), yet the process for implementing successful reform largely remains a mystery. Since the 1960s, school reform efforts have evolved from remedial pullout programs aimed at at-risk students (Borman, Wong, Hedges, & D'Agostino, 2001) to systemic approaches to school change (Smith & O'Day, 1991). The systemic approach provided a new focus for the reform movement, specifically represented by the New American Schools (NAS) Corporation. Funded in 1991, NAS created an environment for designing innovative whole-school reform models through "design-based assistance organizations" (DBAO) (Bodilly, 2001).

### NATIONAL CONTEXT

Results from these efforts guided the establishment of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRDP) in the Fiscal Year 1998 Appropriations Act for the U.S. Department of Education, Public Law 105-78. The legislation endorsed school improvement through a school-wide approach. In establishing the CSRDP Program, the government recognized the potential for the use of proven, research-based models for comprehensive school change at low-performing, high-poverty schools. Building upon and leveraging ongoing efforts to connect higher standards with school improvement

at the state and local level through Title I and other major reform initiatives, this program served to expand the quality and breadth of school-wide reform efforts.

The CSRDP Program, operating from 1998–2001, emphasized nine required components or strategies for reform and stressed the goal of whole-school change. The reauthorization of Title I as Part F of the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 (NCLB) continued the use of federal funds to support low-performing, high-poverty schools in the implementation of scientifically based programs and strategies aimed at helping students meet state content and academic achievement standards through the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) Program.

The federal endorsement of the CSR approach is due to the empirical evidence indicating that adoption of CSR models positively impacts student achievement. National research shows that the average student attending a school implementing CSR performed better than 55% of the students attending comparable schools not implementing CSR (Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2003). Through this and other empirical work, two additional required components (support for school staff and use of scientifically based research) were added to the strategies framework of essential and common components shared by effective CSR models. NCLB defines CSR models as those with 11 specific components that, if fully integrated and implemented, represent a comprehensive and scientifically based ap-

proach to school reform. Table 1.1 explains these 11 CSR model components.

Whereas previous educational reforms allowed segmented activities directed at a variety of targets—which resulted in a piece-

meal approach to improving student performance—CSR has resulted in the development of a variety of comprehensive change models designed to promote whole-school reform. The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) maintains a list of models

**Table 1.1. Comprehensive School Reform Components**

**1. Effective, research-based methods and strategies:** The CSR program will employ innovative strategies and proven methods for student learning, teaching, and school management that are based on reliable research and effective practices, and have been replicated successfully in schools with diverse characteristics.

**2. Comprehensive design with aligned components:** The CSR program will integrate a comprehensive design for effective school functioning, including instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management, that: (1) aligns the school's curriculum, technology, and professional development into a school-wide reform plan designed to enable all students—including children from low-income families, children with limited English proficiency, and children with disabilities—to meet challenging state content and performance standards; and (2) addresses needs identified through a school needs assessment. Programs should address all core subject areas, instruction, school organization, use of time, staff, and available resources, and must include all grade levels at the campus.

**3. Professional development:** The CSR program will provide high-quality continuous professional development and training for teachers and staff. Program-based professional development should be implemented with high-quality assistance and concrete tools, strategies, and materials related to the central focus of the campus reform program. Professional development activities must be directly tied to improving teaching and learning and student achievement.

**4. Measurable goals and benchmarks:** The CSR program will have measurable goals for student performance tied to the state's challenging content standards (TEKS) and student performance standards (TAKS), as well as benchmarks for meeting these goals. Comprehensive school reform gives a campus and its community a shared vision and a common focus on goals. Goals form the framework for the campus reform efforts, so it is imperative that faculty, students, parents, and the community are focused on a set of defined goals developed by the whole group.

**5. Support within the school:** The CSR program will be supported by school faculty, administrators, and staff. Campuses must receive the support and approval of the faculty and staff, site-based decision-making committee, campus and district administration, the district board of trustees, parents, and the community. The higher the level of support and approval, the more likely that the reform efforts will be effective and lasting.

**6. Support for teachers and principals:** A CSR program provides support for teachers, principals, administrators, and other school staff by creating shared leadership and a broad base of responsibility for reform efforts. The program encourages teamwork and the celebration of accomplishments. These and other means of support are part of the school's comprehensive design.

**Table 1.1. Comprehensive School Reform Components (continued)**

<p><b>7. Parental and community involvement:</b> The CSR program will provide for the meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing school improvement activities. Parents and community members are to be involved in all aspects of the planning, application, and implementation of the comprehensive reform program.</p> <p><b>8. External technical support and assistance:</b> The CSR program will utilize high-quality external support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity (which may be a university) with experience or expertise in school-wide reform and improvement.</p> <p><b>9. Evaluation strategies:</b> The CSR program will include a plan for the evaluation of the implementation of school reforms and student results achieved.</p> <p><b>10. Coordination of resources:</b> The CSR program will identify how other resources (federal, state, local, and private) available to the school will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain school reform.</p> <p><b>11. Strategies that improve academic achievement:</b> The program must meet one of the following requirements: (1) the program has been found, through scientifically based research, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students; or (2) the program shows strong evidence that it will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating children.</p>
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Source. TEA RFP 701-06-001

and their program descriptions that meet the CSR standard of scientifically based reform in “The Catalog of School Reform Models.”<sup>4</sup> The American Institutes for Research (AIR) also conducted a review of the most commonly implemented models and provided a rating of model quality and effectiveness (2005). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of local education entities to determine which model will work best in their unique contexts. Further, schools often must design local programs that are more comprehensive than a prescribed model in order to meet the requirements of CSR, as some models are only geared towards one subject area or a particular type of instruction rather than incorporating all aspects of the curriculum, school operation, and instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). National research documents the difficulties of both implementing CSR com-

prehensively (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter 2005) and building the foundations for sustainability beyond the federal funding period (Taylor, 2005).

Since 1998 (CSRSD), local schools could receive state-administered supplemental grants of a minimum of \$50,000 per year for three years to implement comprehensive reforms that impacted the whole school. Funding to local educational agencies was intended as seed money for whole-school reforms, which were to be sustained after the three-year grant with school resources.

As of fiscal year 2007, the CSR program was considered duplicative of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Title I, Part A supports comprehensive school reform, which is also the purpose of

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/index.shtml>

Title I school-wide programs (Title I school-wide project statutory provisions Sec. 1114 of NCLB). Title I, Part A also is designed to help improve low-performing schools, which is the purpose of the state school improvement set-aside in Title I (Sec. 1003 of NCLB). Currently, efforts are being made to redirect CSR program funding to the Title I Grants for Local Educational Agencies program to reduce program duplication and administrative burden. Redirecting the CSR funds to Title I will allow troubled schools to carry out comprehensive reform without the extra administrative burden of applying to a separate grant program.<sup>5</sup>

## STATE CONTEXT

Within this larger national context, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) operates two CSR programs: 1) the Improving Teaching and Learning (ITL)/Texas Title I Comprehensive School Reform grant program; and 2) the Comprehensive School Reform/Texas High School Initiative (THSI) grant program. These programs emphasize school-wide improvements through curricular change, sustained professional development, and increased involvement of parents. Both promote school-wide reform aimed at coherently integrating the 11 CSR components at high school campuses to enable all students to meet challenging academic standards.

The state administered three cycles of the ITL grant program with CSR-designated federal funds. The focus of this evaluation is the ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grant programs. A total of 170 schools participated in either ITL Cycle 3 or THSI. In 2004, Texas received \$11,818,764 in CSR-designated federal dollars that were distributed to 85 schools through

Cycle 3 ITL grants. Initial awards were made in August 2004, and the grant period ended in August 2007. Grant awards for ITL Cycle 3 ranged from \$69,980 to \$150,000 in 2005, from \$50,000 to \$105,000 in 2006, and from \$18,750 to \$39,875 in 2007. The state distributed an additional \$11,965,695 in 2005 to another 83 schools through the THSI program. Schools in the THSI program received awards in January 2005 with a grant end date of December 2007. Grant awards for the THSI program ranged from \$70,000 to \$150,000 in 2005, from \$50,000 to \$105,000 in 2006, and from \$22,700 to \$47,670 in 2007.<sup>6</sup> Because these grants were initiated late in the federal CSR funding cycle, after it was determined that funding should be redirected to Title I, year three awards to ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grantees were greatly reduced from expected amounts. However, a stipulation of the year three award was that schools were required to maintain external technical assistance services.

## STUDY PURPOSE

This study represents one component of a larger program evaluation effort conducted by TEA that examines the impact of comprehensive school reform on student achievement. The goal of this study was to apply a research-based framework to describe the implementation process, including facilitators and barriers, at 10 sites introducing comprehensive school reform under the ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grant programs. An interim report was published in September 2006 based on a first round of data collection conducted in spring 2006.<sup>7</sup> Final reports (a case study report and a cross-case study report) were developed following a second round of data collection in spring 2007.

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<sup>5</sup> For more information, please visit the following website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/detail.10000184.2005.html>

<sup>6</sup> Source: CSR database, operated by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory and TEA program staff

<sup>7</sup> The interim report is available on the TEA website at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/CampusWide/index.html#hsrr>

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A meta-analysis conducted by Borman et al. (2003) examined the association between CSR and student achievement across 232 CSR studies of effectiveness. The meta-analysis did not conclusively identify which CSR components explain the effectiveness of CSR. The researchers concluded that the impact of CSR may be due to context-specific differences in implementation. They further contended that impacts observed may not be related to the CSR model itself and/or whether the model requires specific components, such as parental involvement and ongoing staff development. The meta-analysis revealed that implementation obstacles, such as turnover in leadership or minimal staff buy-in, may contribute to differences in the effectiveness of CSR as well as the stage and length of implementation. Alternatively, schools may be successful with CSR due to factors beyond the scope of CSR, such as having a unified staff or a school culture accepting of CSR changes.

A case study approach to this evaluation provides insight into program- and school-specific differences in implementation. Some of the issues for investigation addressed in this report focus on specific unmeasured factors, such as assessment of local context and history, that contribute to local decisions about model selection and implementation.

Research conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (2003) concludes that due to the complexity of school reform, it could take five to six years for strategies to impact student performance. These findings point to a need for evaluations to study intermediate points where change may be observed, as well as the process of whole-school reform. A broad base of research using diverse methodologies indicates that successful comprehensive school reforms include change in particular areas, namely: school capacity, external support, internal focus, pedagogical change, and

restructuring outcomes (Nunnery, Ross, Bol, & Sterbinsky, 2005). The evaluation objectives are built around this model. These five measurable constructs form the basis of this evaluation, as observable change in these areas may be related to long-term student achievement outcomes in the future.

### ***School Capacity***

School capacity refers to the infrastructure needed by schools to implement and maintain a restructuring effort. Infrastructure implies access to appropriate materials; sufficient staffing and planning time; and adequate fiscal resources to support staff, materials, and technical assistance (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000).

### ***External Support***

External support indicates the quality and amount of assistance provided by agents outside of the school, including support provided through design-based assistance organizations (DBAO) as well as support provided by the district. Research on DBAO support focuses mainly on the importance of professional development for helping teachers understand and implement the instructional practices promoted by reform models (Bodilly, 2001). Additionally, recent research suggests that integrating district support in reform efforts is imperative to successful implementation and sustainability of a CSR model at the school level (Borman, Carter, Aladjem, & LeFloch, 2004).

### ***Internal Focus***

Internal focus refers to the degree to which the essence of reform efforts has become embedded in the daily practices of school staff. The research identifies several factors that are essential to focus, including teacher buy-in and support for reform efforts, alignment of reform with existing mandates, integration of reform with existing school programs or efforts, and formal attention to monitoring the

progress of reform efforts (Rowan, Camburn, & Barnes, 2004).

### ***Pedagogical Change***

Pedagogical change refers to the degree to which instructional practices align with the goals of the chosen reform strategy. While different reform models advocate a variety of instructional approaches, some CSR models tend to share a reduced emphasis on workbooks, worksheets, and individual work and an increased focus on technology, cooperative learning, and project-based work (Stringfield, Ross, & Smith, 1996).

### ***Restructuring Outcomes***

Restructuring outcomes goes beyond just student achievement. This construct includes other areas CSR efforts are intended to impact, such as teacher support and parental involvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Particularly beneficial in early implementation is a focus on intermediate outcomes so that schools can measure progress prior to impacting student achievement since this process may take years.

### ***Sustainability of Comprehensive Reforms***

Finally, assessments of the success of CSR implementation must take into account the comprehensiveness of efforts implemented at the campus and the likelihood that these efforts will be sustained. National research suggests that comprehensive approaches addressing all aspects of school operations, including instruction, governance, and parental/community involvement, for example, are difficult to implement and that many implementation efforts are only partially successful (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005). Further, Taylor (2005) describes characteristics of sustained practice after CSR grant funding ends that are related to continued relationships with

CSR model Technical Assistance Providers and implementation of model strategies.

### **EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation design had two purposes: 1) to enhance and provide corroborating evidence for TEA's quantitative evaluation of program impacts; and 2) to assess CSR implementation to inform current and future program development for school-wide reform (e.g., Texas High School Redesign and Restructuring Grant). Work by the Center for Research in Educational Policy (CREP) at the University of Memphis and the Field-Focused Study of the CSR Program conducted by COSMOS Corporation for the U.S. Department of Education (2003) guided the evaluation design. The evaluation was based on the following questions:

1. What was the local context and starting point of schools?
2. What was the capacity for supporting comprehensive school reform, as measured by
  - a. materials?
  - b. staffing?
  - c. planning time?
  - d. fiscal resources?
3. What was the level of external support provided, as measured by
  - a. external assistance?
  - b. district assistance?
4. What was the level of internal focus on reform efforts, as measured by
  - a. staff buy-in?
  - b. alignment and integration of strategies?
  - c. progress monitoring?
5. What was the level of pedagogical change, as measured by
  - a. instruction aligned with model specifications?



6. Were outcomes restructured, as measured by
  - a. student achievement?
  - b. staff involvement?
  - c. parental involvement?
7. What were barriers and facilitators to implementing comprehensive school reform?

Through investigation of these questions at the interim and final stages of funded activities, the evaluation can inform how comprehensive school reform impacts schools, including promising practices, barriers, catalysts, school climate, and the sustainability of reform efforts.

The next section details the evaluation tasks. The primary tasks of the evaluation were to conduct surveys of participants and Technical Assistance Providers, provide survey data to TEA for use in student performance analysis, conduct site visits, and produce in-depth case studies and a cross-case analysis of implementation at a selection of sites. The discussion of each task includes a description of participants, instruments, and analysis approaches.

## METHODS

Data collection involved two major components, surveys and site visits. These activities occurred during spring 2006 and again in spring 2007. The surveys were distributed to all Cycle 3 ITL and THSI CSR campuses in the state. Site visits were conducted at 10 campuses selected to reflect both the ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grant programs, in terms of geographic and demographic diversity, model type, and implementation stage.

### Survey

The purpose of the survey was to collect information aligned with the research

questions, particularly the five constructs of successful CSR implementation in order to enhance the quantitative analysis. These constructs were capacity, support, focus, pedagogy, and restructuring of outcomes. Additionally, the survey collected information about school climate and facilitators and barriers to CSR implementation. The survey instrument was a combination of existing reliable and valid instruments created by CREP and designed specifically for evaluating CSR implementation. These instruments have been used in hundreds of CSR evaluations across the nation (Ross, McDonald, & Bol, 2005).

### SURVEY SAMPLE

All administrators and professional staff at all grantee sites, as well as the external Technical Assistance Providers identified by grantee schools, were surveyed during spring 2006 and spring 2007.<sup>8</sup> Online questionnaires were administered.

### SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

#### Staff Surveys

Staff perceptions of the comprehensive school reform process are one of the key sources of data in assessing CSR programs (Ross & Alberg, 1999). However, instruments used to measure staff perceptions are often inconsistent and not specific to comprehensive school reform (Nunnery, Ross, & Sterbinsky, 2003). Thus, this evaluation used instruments designed specifically for evaluating perceptions of comprehensive school reform with tested reliability and validity.

The first instrument used was the Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Questionnaire (CSRTQ) (Ross & Alberg, 1999). (See Appendix A for protocol.) It is designed and reported to measure the five constructs un-

<sup>8</sup> Technical Assistance Providers work with the schools to implement CSR models and should have a solid understanding of the model and implementation processes.

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derlying comprehensive school reform (external support, school capacity, internal focus, pedagogical change, and outcomes) through 28 items. Respondents use a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” An additional response category, “Don’t Know,” was also included. School-level results were compared to national norms for both elementary and secondary schools (Ross et al., 2005). Construct validation and scale reliability coefficients can be found in Nunnery et al. (2003). (See Appendix B for scale description.)

The second instrument measures school climate using the School Climate Inventory (SCI) (Butler & Alberg, 1989). (See Appendix A for protocol.) The SCI consists of seven dimensions, or scales, logically and empirically linked with the five constructs associated with successful comprehensive school reform efforts. The seven dimensions of the instrument are order, leadership, environment, involvement, instruction, expectations, and collaboration. Each scale contains seven items, with 49 statements comprising the inventory. Participants respond using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree.” Each scale yields a mean ranging from 1 to 5 with higher scores being more positive. An additional response category, “Don’t Know,” was also included. School-level results were compared to national norms for both elementary and secondary schools (Ross et al., 2005). Scale descriptions and current internal reliability coefficients can be accessed at <http://crep.memphis.edu/web/instruments/sci.php>. (See Appendix B for scale description.)

Additional questions were added to the survey to solicit demographic information as well as program-specific information, such as facilitators and barriers to implementation. These questions were then used to create a principal survey and professional staff survey.

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### *Technical Assistance Provider Surveys*

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The purpose of this survey was to assess stages of implementation, implementation fidelity, and barriers to implementation at grantee schools. To judge the level of implementation, providers were asked to rate the school’s implementation of various CSR components on a 5-point scale, representing levels from “Not Implementing” to “Fulfilling.” (See Appendix A for protocol.) The scale was adapted from Bodilly (1998). Implementation fidelity was assessed based on the provider’s evaluation of compliance with strategy components at the schools implementing the model as well as judgments about the schools’ understanding of the model. Finally, providers were asked to assess observed barriers to the schools’ efforts to implement reform strategies.

### *SURVEY ADMINISTRATION*

Once approved by TEA, surveys were programmed for online administration. The evaluators compiled a list of grantee schools and providers. Each school designated a local survey contact who worked with the evaluators in the administration of school staff surveys. The evaluators communicated with each survey contact about data collection schedules. With the assistance of the local survey contacts, the evaluators distributed information about the surveys, the URLs (electronic addresses) for accessing the online questionnaires, and step-by-step instructions to all identified respondents. The evaluators provided an e-mail address for technical assistance for respondents who might need help in accessing and submitting the questionnaire. The evaluators also monitored the response rates on a weekly basis and worked with the local survey contacts to remind staff to complete the surveys. The principal survey was online March 1–April 24, 2006, and March 1–April 16, 2007. The professional staff survey was online March 7–April 24, 2006, and March 7–April 30, 2007.

For the Technical Assistance Provider surveys, the evaluators worked directly with the school-identified providers in the administration of surveys. The survey was online April 3–May 15, 2006, and March 15–May 7, 2007.

### Site Visits

The purpose of the site visits was to collect information aligned with the five constructs of successful CSR implementation and information on promising practices, school climate, barriers to implementation, and early indicators of success. To achieve these ends, evaluators used a combination of conceptually linked instruments to provide an in-depth, coherent, and comprehensive profile of the implementation process.

#### SITE SELECTION PROCESS

Sites were selected using a stratified proportional selection process. The goal was to select 10 campuses that would be reflective of CSR campuses across the state in terms of representing both ITL and THSI grant programs (see Table 1.2), geographic diversity, demographic diversity, CSR models, and implementation levels (see Table 1.3). The first selection stage included non-charter schools and divided campuses by grant type, either ITL or THSI. The next stages considered school grade level and region of the state based on Regional Education Service Center affiliation. Campuses were then categorized based on the economically disadvantaged status of the region as calculated by the regional average percentage of students participating in the free-and-reduced-price lunch program. Finally, data from progress reports com-

pleted by grantees indicating model choice and implementation level were included to select schools with a range of models and implementation levels achieved. Based on these characteristics, three schools from each regional area were randomly selected for a preliminary selection list. In consultation with TEA staff, 10 sites were chosen for case studies. One charter campus also was included. Overview information on the sites selected for visits is included in Table 1.4.

#### SITE VISIT PROTOCOLS

##### Interviews and Focus Groups

The interview and focus group instruments were adapted from instruments developed by CREP and used for evaluating CSR implementation across the nation. The protocols were aligned with the evaluation objectives designed to measure a school's capacity, external support, internal focus, pedagogical change, and restructuring of outcomes associated with CSR efforts. Additional questions were added regarding implementation level as well as barriers and facilitators to the process.

##### Classroom Observations

Observations were included because school reform models target instructional practices for change, and it is necessary for evaluators to be able to measure if change is occurring in this context, especially since instruction directly links to student achievement (Sterbinsky & Ross, 2003). The *School Observation Measure* (SOM) (Ross, Smith, & Alberg, 1998) validly and reliably measures pedagogical

**Table 1.2. Grant Type For Non-Charter Schools**

Classification	Categories	Number of Schools
Grant type	THSI	70
	ITL	79

Source. RFL and SEDL databases

**Table 1.3. Percent of Schools From Each Grant Type Across Various Categories**

Classification	Categories	Percent of schools from ITL grant in each category	Percent of schools from THSI grant in each category
School level**	Elementary	43	0
	Middle/Junior high	35	0
	High	18	100
Geographic location	South (Regions 1, 2, 3, 20)	28	29
	Central (Regions 6, 12, 13)	13	24
	North (Regions 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17)	20	13
	East (Regions 4, 5, 7, 8)	34	27
	West (Regions 15, 18, 19)*	5	8
Economically disadvantaged	South (Regions 1, 2, 3, 20)	91	78
	Central (Regions 6, 12, 13)	56	54
	North (Regions 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17)	69	51
	East (Regions 4, 5, 7, 8)	76	60

Source. RFL and SEDL databases

Note. THSI N= 70; ITL N= 79

\* In consultation with TEA, the West region was dropped because comparatively so few grantee schools were located in that area.

\*\* Other school levels not included in table were K-8 and Grade 9 only. Additionally, only non-charter schools are represented in the table.

alignment with CSR models and corroborates teacher self-reports of instructional change (Nunnery et al., 2005).

The SOM measures the extent to which a variety of CSR-aligned classroom practices are used at the *whole-school* level rather than only at the classroom level. It consists of 24 target practices and two summary items. The factors are organized into six categories: instructional orientation, classroom organization, instructional strategies, student activities, technology use, and assessment. The summary items measure academically focused class time and student attention/interest/fo-

cus. Instrument reliability and validity may be found in Sterbinsky and Ross (2003).

### CONDUCTING SITE VISITS

The evaluation field staff consisted of a total of 10 evaluators. Two-member evaluation teams, including a lead educational specialist and a methods specialist, conducted two-day visits to each school. School visits occurred during spring 2006 and spring 2007. Site visit activities included interviews, focus groups, document collection, and classroom observations designed to inform the research questions. The lead educational specialist conducted the interviews and teacher focus

**Table 1.4. Campus Background Information For Sites Visited (2005–06)**

School*	Grant Type**	CSR Model	Total Students	African American	Hispanic	White	Other	Economically Disadvantaged	Mobility (2004–05)	Campus Rating***	TAKS Met Standard All Grades Tested		
											All Tests	Reading	Math
School 1 ES	ITL	AVID	1,370	0%	98%	1%	1%	90%	21%	AA	53%	76%	58%
School 2 MS	ITL	Co-nect	460	4%	91%	5%	0%	95%	20%	AU	60%	79%	81%
School 3 HS	THSI	International Center for Leadership in Education	1,401	19%	69%	10%	2%	62%	25%	AA	31%	72%	43%
School 4 ES	ITL	Accelerated Learning	878	6%	65%	29%	0%	55%	21%	RE	72%	85%	85%
School 5 HS	ITL	Accelerated Schools	260	54%	37%	8%	2%	92%	78%	AA	17%	74%	19%
School 6 MS	ITL	AVID	1,390	26%	72%	1%	1%	86%	24%	AA	39%	66%	44%
School 7 HS	THSI	Princeton Review	2,403	61%	38%	1%	1%	80%	24%	AA	35%	78%	48%
School 8 HS	ITL	High Schools That Work	1,825	3%	95%	1%	1%	92%	28%	AA	43%	76%	57%
School 9 HS	THSI	Accelerated Schools	480	9%	52%	39%	0%	46%	14%	AU	36%	81%	43%
School 10 HS	THSI	Co-nect	703	1%	84%	16%	1%	83%	14%	AA	51%	88%	56%

Source: RFL and SEDL databases and Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)

\*ES=Elementary School; MS=Middle School; HS=High School

\*\*ITL=Improving Teaching and Learning; THSI=Texas High School Initiative

\*\*\*AA=Academically Acceptable; AU=Academically Unacceptable; RE=Recognized

<i>Component</i>	<i>Measure</i>		<i>Score</i>
<b>3. Professional Development:</b>			
3.1 Strong content focus	<u>yes</u>	no	1
3.2 Evidence of collective participation of groups of teachers from the same school	<u>yes</u>	no	1
3.3 Evidence of some PD taking place in the teacher’s classroom, e.g., mentoring	yes	<u>no</u>	0
3.4 Explicit guidance to align PD with standards, curriculum, or assessment tools	<u>yes</u>	no	1

Source. U.S. Department of Education, 2003b

group (described below), and the methods specialist conducted all observations and the student and parent/community focus groups (described below). Surveys were also conducted outside of the site visits as part of the larger evaluation (see Table 1.5).

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*Interviews and Focus Groups*

For each data collection period, interviews were conducted with principals and CSR coordinators. Evaluators also randomly selected four teachers for interviews at each site. In addition, a teacher focus group was conducted with a randomly selected group of six teachers. Random selection of teachers was necessary to capture how embedded the CSR strategies were across the campus. Two additional focus groups included parents/community members and students. Evaluators relied on campus staff to help select participants in these focus groups. Evaluators requested that students be selected from high, average, and low student performance ranges to provide a variety of perspectives on services the schools offered. Additionally, in elementary schools, evaluators requested students in upper grades. Evaluators requested that selected parent and community members reflect a variety of levels of school involvement. It should be noted that these requirements were not always met. Typically, it was the evaluators’ impression that students who participated in focus groups overrepresented high-perform-

ing students, and parents typically overrepresented strongly involved parents.

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*Observations*

Based on the SOM protocol, 16 to 20 observations were conducted over a two-day period in spring 2006 and again in spring 2007. The observer examined classroom events and recorded activities descriptively. At the end of observations, the evaluator summarized the frequency with which each strategy was observed both within and across classrooms using a 5-point rubric ranging from “Not Observed” to “Extensively Observed.” Evaluators also used the 5-point rubric to rate the observed levels of the two summary items measuring focus and engagement. (See Appendix A for protocol.)

To ensure inter-rater reliability and data integrity, site visit team members were trained in instrument use and scoring by CREP staff and the RFL evaluation project manager.

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*Document Collection*

Evaluators collected documentation from schools across data collection periods to assess the intended outcomes of reform strategies in their local contexts, with special attention to compliance with the CSR component emphasizing sustainability. Documents included a campus improvement

**Table 1.5. 2007 Data Collection: Number of Participants or Events**

School	Interview	Focus Group			Observation	Survey	
		Teacher	Parent/ Community	Student		Professional staff (response rate)	Technical assistance provider
School 1	6	5	5	7	20	64 (50%)	0
School 2	6	4	8	9	19	36 (95%)	1
School 3	8	5	9	9	18	53 (48%)	1
School 4	6	6	5	8	20	57 (79%)	1
School 5	5	6	8	5	16	13 (62%)	1
School 6	6	5	None	None	20	31 (28%)	0
School 7	7	3	1	8	18	122 (80%)	1
School 8	6	6	3	10	19	89 (64%)	1
School 9	6	6	2	6	19	30 (58%)	1
School 10	6	6	None	None	20	35 (53%)	1
Total	62	52	41	62	189	530	8

plan and/or a comprehensive school reform plan. These were reviewed for a needs assessment; benchmarks of student performance indicators; reference to financial resources to support and sustain reform efforts; reference to strategic use of financial resources; and discussion of specific curricula, assessment tools, and professional development. The breadth of the plan in terms of covering all school operations and CSR components also was reviewed. Other documentation included grant applications, grant amendments, and progress reports to TEA.

### **Survey Data Analysis**

Following the completion of each round of data collection, the survey database was cleaned, quality assured, and provided to TEA for inclusion in the evaluation of the impacts of CSR on student achievement. Survey data for the 10 case study sites were analyzed to supplement site visit findings. For the final report, the survey data were used to measure change between data collection periods. Response rates from the schools were generally

quite low and highly variable from school to school for spring 2006 data collection. Response rates were higher for spring 2007 data collection with only one school having less than 50% of the staff participate. Because of the variability in response rates in 2006, however, caution is advised when making comparisons between years (Babbie, 1997). Follow-up to detect non-random differences between respondents and non-respondents was beyond the scope of this evaluation.

For all survey constructs, 95% confidence intervals were constructed around the mean, and are displayed in all figures. Confidence interval calculations rely on the size of the sample and the variability of responses; therefore they provide more information than just the mean response. The interval indicated on the figure conveys with 95% confidence where the true mean would fall if the whole population had responded. Additionally, a one-way analysis of variance for unbalanced designs was performed to look for differences across implementation level group means

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as a whole for each construct. If there was a statistically significant difference across means then the Tukey-Kramer multiple comparison method was used to look for specific differences between pairs of implementation levels. The F-values and p-values are reported in footnotes.

For the Comprehensive School Reform Teacher Questionnaire (CSRTQ), missing data ranged from 0% to 3% per question for spring 2006 and from 1% to 4% per question for spring 2007 data collection. Those responding “Don’t Know” ranged from 4% per question to 19% per question for spring 2006 and from 4% to 14% per question for spring 2007 data collection. Responses to individual questions were reported using an adjusted frequency where “Don’t Know” and missing responses were eliminated from calculations. Reported percentages reflect those choosing a value on the Likert scale. (See Appendix C for school responses to individual questions.) This approach represents a proportion of the total number of survey respondents but is reflective of all responses providing an actual Likert-scale rating. Eliminating “Don’t Know” and missing data from calculations minimizes any potential distortion in interpretations caused by including missing data (Rea & Parker, 1997).

To create summary statistics for the survey scales across both years of data, missing and “Don’t Know” responses were assigned the school mode on individual questions. These imputations were used only to create a complete dataset for the construction of scales. This approach meant that questions across the scales had the same number of usable responses. Single imputations were a reasonable choice in this case because the rate of missing information was below 20% (Schenker, Reghunathan, Chiu, Makue,

Zhang, & Cohen, 2004). Additionally, the number of respondents at the school level was judged too low to use multiple imputation (Rubin & Schenker, 1986) based on predicting “Don’t Know” responses from prior responses. Descriptive statistics were also calculated without missing and “Don’t Know” responses. There were no significant or practical differences between the two approaches.

For the School Climate Inventory (SCI), missing data ranged from 0% to 3% per question for spring 2006 and from 1% to 4% per question for spring 2007 data collection. Those responding “Don’t Know” ranged from 1% to 12% per question for spring 2006 and from 0% to 10% per question for spring 2007 data collection. The same procedures used for constructing and reporting the CSRTQ were used for the SCI. Summary statistics of survey data were then included in the individual case studies.

### **Site Visit Data Analysis**

The site visit data analysis involved multiple steps beginning prior to site entry. Once sites were identified as case study sites, they were screened. The screening protocol provided preliminary information and data confirmation to be used in the case study profile, such as choice of model, award amount, and award date. Across data collection periods, after completion of each site visit activity, team members wrote an analytic memo for the event completing as much information as possible and supporting each item with evidence in the form of descriptions or quotes to support preliminary findings. (See Appendix A for protocol.) Teams debriefed each evening of the site visit to corroborate information from analytic memos and identify areas needing further investigation.

After the site visit, analytic memos of interviews and focus groups and results from



observation data were combined by one member of the site visit team to produce a conceptual memo. Evaluators then used the memos to analyze the data from the interviews, focus groups, and observations using coding aligned with evaluation objectives and emerging themes.

Evaluators then used site visit information to assess the strength of CSR implementation with an overall strength of implementation scale (U.S. Department of Education, 2003b). (See Appendix A for protocol.) The scale addresses all 11 CSR components by breaking each component into sections that focus on measurable standards. For example, the professional development component is broken into four sections: strong content focus; evidence of collective participation of groups of teachers; evidence of some training taking place in teacher's classroom; and explicit guidance to align training with standards, curriculum, or assessment tools. Where appropriate, each of these sections is then marked yes or no and given one point for "yes" and zero points for "no." Thus, if a school provides CSR-related professional development with a strong content focus, it would receive a score of "1" for item 3.1. An excerpt from the scale is shown.

Summing the scores across the components produced an overall implementation score for each school that corresponded with one of five CSR implementation levels (Bodilly, 1998):

**1–Not Implementing.** No evidence of the strategy.

**2–Planning.** The school is planning to or preparing to implement.

**3–Piloting.** The strategy is being partially implemented with only a small group of teachers or students involved.

**4–Implementing.** The majority of teachers are implementing the strategy, and the strategy is more fully developed in accordance with descriptions of the model design.

**5–Fulfilling.** The strategy is evident across the school and is fully developed in accordance with the design team's descriptions and signs of "institutionalization" are evident.

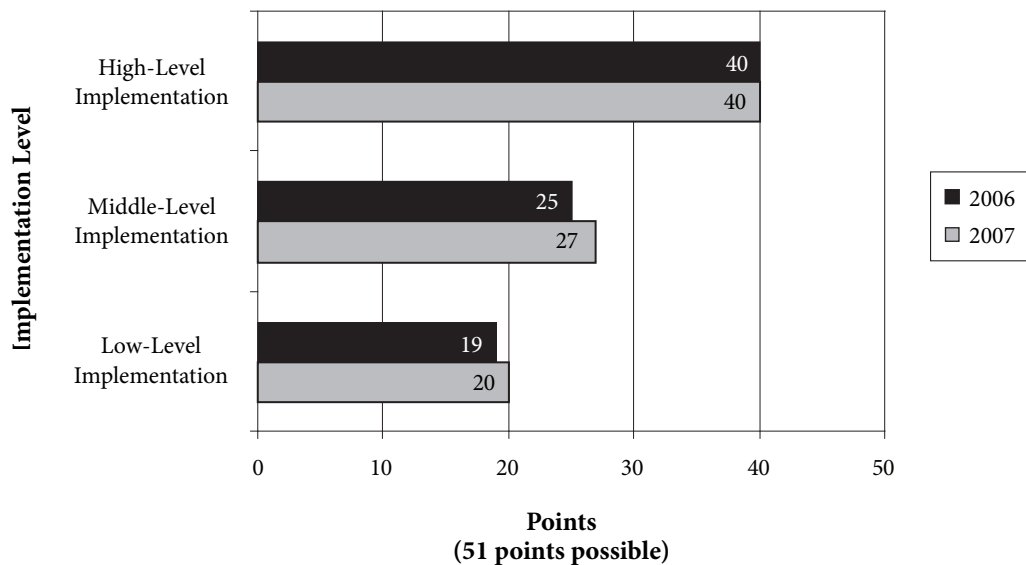
### **Case Studies**

After the first site visit, data collected through site visits were combined and organized into case studies organized according to evaluation objectives. The case studies were member-checked by schools. The 10 schools were then categorized into three implementation-level groups through analysis of site visit data, survey data,<sup>9</sup> and the overall implementation score that assesses the school based on the 11 CSR components. To retain anonymity, schools were grouped by implementation level, alphabetized, and numbered sequentially.

At the time of data collection for the interim report, no schools were at the "Fulfilling" stage. The three implementation levels used to categorize schools included the following:

- High-level implementation category schools in the "Implementing" stage
- Middle-level implementation category schools in the "Piloting" stage
- Low-level implementation category schools in the "Planning" stage and the "Not Implementing" stage

<sup>9</sup> For spring 2006, survey data for one school (School 10) were not included in the calculation of any low-level implementation averages aligned with the evaluation questions because the staff had yet to be trained on model strategies and demonstrated a limited understanding of the 11 CSR components. However, their responses to the survey were the highest of any schools, which conflicted with data collected during the site visit. Together, this information indicated that School 10 was an outlier.

**Figure 1.1. Change in Overall Implementation Score by Group 2006 to 2007**

This information was presented in the interim report. After the second round of data collection in spring 2007, this same process was followed with additions to the case studies focusing on change between the data collection periods. The overall implementation level was then re-assessed. After the second round of data collection in spring 2007, the evaluators determined that, again, no schools were at the “Fulfilling” stage, though one school did move from the middle-implementation group to the high-implementation group. Schools were grouped again by implementation level, sorted alphabetically, and then renumbered.<sup>10</sup> Number order did not reflect implementation level within groups.

### ***Cross-Case Analysis***

The evaluators then conducted a cross-case analysis that combined data across all 10 sites and provided summaries with examples of

each implementation level by research objectives. This analysis was based on the high-, middle-, and low-implementation category designations derived from school scores on the strength of implementation scale.

For the three schools identified for inclusion in the high-level implementation category after the 2006 data collection period, the overall implementation score on the strength of implementation scale averaged 40 points out of a possible 51. The four schools in the middle-level implementation category had a mean of 25 points out of 51, while the three low-level implementation schools averaged 19 out of 51 possible points. It should be noted that due to incomplete data collection during the site visit to School 8, an implementation score was not developed for this school for the interim report. (See Figure 1.1 for mean scores by group.)

<sup>10</sup> Renumbering of schools included the following changes from the interim report: School 7 changed to School 3, School 3 changed to School 4, School 4 changed to School 5, School 5 changed to School 6, and School 6 changed to School 7.

At the time of data collection for the interim report (spring 2006), no school was in the “Fulfilling” stage of implementation. Rather, the high-implementing schools demonstrated evidence through all data collected as of spring 2006 of being in the “Implementing” phase. The majority of teachers at these schools was aware of, supported, and followed the specifications of the model. However, these schools were still developing and were not yet at the level of full implementation or institutionalization. The middle-level implementation group was defined as those schools in the “Piloting” stage wherein the model was being partially implemented, sometimes with only a small group of teachers or students involved. The low-implementing group included those schools that were still in the “Planning” phase of CSR implementation or that demonstrated little evidence of implementing a CSR model. Three schools were labeled as high level, four as middle level, and three were categorized as demonstrating a low level of implementation.

At the time of data collection for the final report to TEA (spring 2007), four schools were identified for inclusion in the high-implementing category. Two of these schools expanded their efforts, demonstrated progress in implementation, and showed evidence or signs of sustainability of CSR programming. A third school maintained its previous, high level of implementation but struggled with competing priorities related to TAKS testing pressures. The fourth high-implementing school experienced staffing and enrollment changes associated with district growth and was rebuilding its CSR program.

The overall implementation score on the strength of implementation scale for these schools again averaged 40 points out of a possible 51. The three schools in the middle-level implementation category had a mean of

27 points out of 51, while the three low-level implementers averaged 20 out of 51 possible points. (See Figure 1.1 for mean scores by group.)

After the second data collection period, the high-implementing schools demonstrated evidence of still being in the “Implementing” phase, and none met the full definition of “Fulfilling” in the sense of a comprehensive reform of the school impacting all 11 CSR components. For example, only a few of the schools had even slightly improved parental involvement levels; school governance was another area that had not been significantly impacted at any of the high-implementing schools. Finally, even the schools that had trained teachers in reform strategies school-wide and implemented other school-wide components still had work to do in terms of ensuring the changes in classroom instruction that would eventually impact student achievement—the final goal of any reform effort.

By spring 2007, all the schools in the middle-level implementation group had progressed in implementation but were still struggling with entrenched challenges. Only at the smallest school, which had under 10 teachers, were all teachers involved in CSR efforts, and at no schools were the majority of teachers implementing reform strategies in the classroom effectively. These schools were still considered to be “Piloting” CSR efforts.

By spring 2007, low-level implementation schools had stalled in CSR implementation for a variety of reasons related to preexisting conditions at the school and lack of a vision or plan for reform efforts. (See Table 1.6 for an overview of implementation levels across both data collection periods.)

From the time of the first data collection period (spring 2006) to the second in spring

**Table 1.6. Implementation Indicators Over Two Data Collection Periods**

<b>School</b>	<b>2006 Implementation Score</b>	<b>2006 Implementation Level</b>	<b>2006 Descriptor</b>	<b>2007 Implementation Score</b>	<b>2007 Implementation Level</b>	<b>2007 Descriptor</b>	<b>Change Category</b>
1	38	High	Implementing	40	High	Implementing	progressed
2	41	High	Implementing	41	High	Implementing	maintained
3	31	Middle	Piloting	40	High	Implementing	progressed
4	40	High	Implementing	40	High	Implementing	rebuilding
5	25	Middle	Piloting	32	Middle	Piloting	progressed
6	21	Middle	Piloting	23	Middle	Piloting	progressed
7	24	Middle	Piloting	26	Middle	Piloting	progressed
8	N/A	Low	Planning	20	Low	Planning	stalled
9	19	Low	Planning	21	Low	Planning	stalled
10	18	Low	Not Implementing	18	Low	Not Implementing	stalled

2007, one school progressed in implementation from the middle- to high-implementing group. The other schools remained in the implementation category assessed after the first data collection period.

It is important to note that survey data for the high-implementing group included in the cross-case analysis included means for the three schools assessed as high implementing in both 2006 and 2007 as well as the one categorized as middle-implementing in 2006 and high-implementing in 2007. The evaluators chose this approach to reflect how schools were actually categorized at the time of data collection in spring 2007. Therefore, high-implementing schools appeared to have had a larger decline than they actually had because the school that moved to the high-implementing category in 2007 had lower ratings across constructs measured by the survey. These lower ratings could be attributed to the fact that it was a large, urban high school as compared to the smaller elementary and middle schools in the high-implementation category.

## REPORT ORGANIZATION

The final report consists of two published documents, a case study report that contains 10 case study chapters, and a final cross-case analysis report. Both reports are organized by school implementation level from high to low and report findings from both data collection periods. Brief descriptions of each school are included at the end of this chapter. (Detailed descriptions are provided in the case study report.) Findings are presented in terms of the research framework—local context, model adoption, and the factors influencing CSR implementation (capacity, external support, internal focus, change in pedagogy, and restructuring outcomes)—and include an overall implementation summary. Throughout the report, schools are referred to by number and the CSR model chosen.

The case study report includes a chapter focused on the research background and methodology followed by 10 chapters that detail each site's implementation process. The cross-case analysis report includes a section on the research background and methodology, a cross-case analysis that groups schools by implementation level and then compares them across evaluation objectives, and a findings and recommendations chapter.

Each case study and the cross-case analysis are organized into three sections:

- Local context
- Model adoption and implementation
- Implementation summary

### *Local Context*

Successful school reform depends on a multitude of factors, including existing circumstances at the campus. Thus, the investigation of local context was designed to provide an overview of starting points for CSR implementation at each case study site. In the case studies, this section opens with basic descriptions of size and location of the campus and community, student demographics, accountability ratings and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) performance history (including data on particular subgroups targeted by reform efforts), and other characteristics of the school and school population. Existing challenges as well as local responses already initiated before award of the CSR grants are also addressed due to their likely influence on reform efforts. Additionally, any changes that might have impacted the progress of CSR implementation between data collection times were recorded.

Data on local context were collected from site visits; school documents such as CSR applications, progress reports, and campus improvement plans; and data from the Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

### ***Model Adoption and Implementation***

Site visit protocols were designed to capture the process used by campuses to identify and select CSR models and the steps of reform implementation. This information is important to determine the level of staff involvement at the earliest stages of implementation as this likely influenced teacher buy-in and support in implementing reform strategies. Case studies include a description of the selection and implementation process and a brief overview of the key components and strategies of the site's selected CSR model. Data on implementation are presented in terms of activities implemented by the time of the first site visit in spring 2006 and additional activities implemented by the time of the second site visit in spring 2007.

CSR implementation was described in terms of change across school capacity, external support, internal focus, pedagogical strategies, and restructuring outcomes.

Data on model adoption and implementation included site visit and survey data, campus improvement plans and other site documents, and model information from the websites of organizations offering CSR technical assistance.

### ***Implementation Summary***

The implementation summary provided an overview of factors influencing CSR implementation at the site and an assessment of the level of CSR implementation at the campus across site visits using a variety of instruments. Based on data from both rounds of data collection, an assessment of sustainability was also provided.

After a brief discussion of key factors influencing CSR implementation, implementation level is discussed based on a range of indicators. First, the school climate is assessed in a

summary of the results of the School Climate Inventory (SCI), which was administered to staff as part of the surveys. The SCI is composed of seven dimensions logically and empirically associated with effective school climates. (See Appendix B for scale description.) Second, progress report data are presented. Third, survey data from the Technical Assistance Providers for each site who assessed site implementation fidelity and implementation level are presented. (See Appendix B for scale description.) Fourth, scores on an instrument designed to measure CSR implementation in terms of the 11 CSR components are presented. Finally, a summary of facilitators and barriers to local implementation are described in the context of assessing the likelihood that CSR efforts at the campus will be sustained. Data for the implementation summaries included staff and Technical Assistance Provider perceptions obtained through site visits, surveys, and progress reports, as well as the evaluator's overall assessment based on all data points.

### **SCHOOL AND MODEL DESCRIPTIONS**

The descriptions below include general information about the size and type of schools selected for case studies, CSR grant program, and CSR model chosen. Generally, for the purposes of this report the term "comprehensive" is used to reference models explicitly or well aligned with the 11 CSR components, and "targeted" is used to refer to those programs that were not designed as school-wide CSR models but rather as programs targeting a small group of students or a specific purpose.

Schools chose a variety of models. Some used nationally recognized and widely implemented CSR models, while others designed local initiatives around targeted programs. Five schools chose CSR models listed in the Cata-

log of School Reform Models developed by NWREL (Accelerated Schools, Co-nect, High Schools That Work). Criteria for inclusion in the catalog includes “evidence of effectiveness in improving student academic achievement; widespread replication, with organizational capacity to continue scaling up; high quality implementation assistance to schools; and comprehensiveness/coherence.”<sup>11</sup> Another model chosen by one school, the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE), though not listed in the catalog, meets most of the criteria listed above, and so, for the purposes of this report, is characterized as “comprehensive.” Accelerated Learning, an approach chosen by another school in the study sample, was used as a guiding conceptual framework for locally designed school-wide reform efforts but is not a model per se. Rather, it is a set of instructional strategies and techniques targeting language learners around which the school designed a campus-wide CSR program. Those models characterized as “targeted” usually operate as programs within a school targeting a select group of students. Schools in the study sample using targeted models implemented Advanced Via Individual Determination or AVID (a college readiness elective program for non-traditional college students) and Princeton Review (a college preparatory program).

### ***Schools With High-Level Implementation***

School 1 is a large middle school campus serving over 1,300 students in grades 6–8. The school is located near the Texas/Mexico border. Almost all of the school’s students (98%) are Hispanic, and 90% are economically disadvantaged. This school is part of the ITL grant program and was awarded funds in August 2004. The school chose AVID as its

CSR model. AVID is a targeted model that is not aligned with all 11 CSR components.

School 2 is located in a large urban district and serves over 450 students in grades preK–5. Almost all students (91%) are Hispanic, and 95% are economically disadvantaged. Fifty-seven percent are English language learners. The school is part of the ITL grant program and was awarded funds in August 2004. Through an earlier federal grant in 2000, the school adopted the comprehensive Co-nect model and used the CSR grant to continue it.

School 3 is a high school in a large urban district. It serves about 1,400 students in grades 9–12. Sixty-nine percent are Hispanic, 19% are African American, and 10% are White. Sixty-two percent are economically disadvantaged. The school is part of the THSI grant program and was awarded grant funds in January 2005. The school adopted the International Center for Leadership in Education’s (ICLE) Rigor/Relevance Framework as its primary CSR model. AVID was the secondary model, and Cooperative Discipline was the tertiary model included in reform efforts.

School 4 is a 4-year-old elementary campus located in a growing central Texas district and serves over 850 students in grades K–5. About two thirds of the students are Hispanic (65%), and 29% are White. Over half (55%) are economically disadvantaged, and 25% are English language learners. The school offers a dual-language immersion program and has become a cluster site for many bilingual children in the area. The school is part of the ITL grant program and was awarded funds in August 2004. This school chose a non-traditional model that did not meet all 11 CSR components. Accelerated Learning focuses on brain-based learning research and language-learning techniques.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/about/Rubric2003.pdf>

### ***Schools With Middle-Level Implementation***

School 5 is the only charter school in the case study group. It is located in a major metropolitan area and targets at-risk youth. Student enrollment in grades 9–12 is approximately 142. Fifty-four percent of students are African American, 37% are Hispanic, and 8% are White. Ninety-two percent are economically disadvantaged. Student mobility is extremely high at 78%. Teacher turnover is also a challenge. The school is part of the ITL grant program and was awarded grant funds in August 2004. The school adopted the comprehensive Accelerated Schools model.

School 6 is a middle school located in a large urban district, serving approximately 1,400 students in grades 7–8. Of those students, 72% are Hispanic, and 26% are African American; 86% are economically disadvantaged. The school is part of the ITL grant program and was awarded grant funds in August 2004. The school adopted AVID as its school reform model. Again, this is a targeted program that does not meet all 11 CSR components.

School 7 is a large high school in a large urban district. It serves about 2,400 students in grades 9–12. Sixty-one percent are African American, and 38% are Hispanic. Eighty percent are economically disadvantaged. The school is part of the THSI grant program and was awarded grant funds in January 2005. The school chose the Princeton Review program as its school reform model. This program was not designed to be a CSR model and is not aligned with all 11 components.

### ***Schools With Low-Level Implementation***

School 8 is located in a large urban district and serves approximately 1,800 students, 95% of whom are Hispanic. Ninety-two percent of the students are economically disadvantaged.

The school is part of the THSI grant program and was awarded grant funds in January 2005. The school adopted High Schools That Work (HSTW) as its CSR model. HSTW is considered to be aligned with the 11 CSR components.

School 9 is a high school serving approximately 500 students in a small community. A little over half (52%) of the student population is Hispanic, and 39% are White. About half (46%) of the student population is economically disadvantaged. The school is part of the THSI grant program and was awarded grant funds in January 2005. The school adopted Accelerated Schools as its CSR model.

School 10 is a small high school located near the Texas/Mexico border in a coastal community. The school serves students in grades 9–12 with an approximate enrollment of 700 students. The majority of students are Hispanic (84%). Eighty-three percent of the students are classified as economically disadvantaged. The school is part of the THSI grant program and was awarded funds in January 2005. The school adopted Co-nect as its CSR model.

It should be noted that three of the four schools classified in the high-level implementation category were elementary schools or middle schools. The other school was a large urban high school. In each case, the schools made an intentional effort to maximize opportunities. Schools in the middle-level implementation category ranged from a small charter high school to a large urban high school. These schools balanced CSR implementation with various challenges. All schools rated in the low-level implementation category were high school campuses that faced challenging issues such as administrative turnover or safety concerns.








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## CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

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RESEARCH EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CSR on student achievement does not conclusively identify the components that explain the effectiveness of CSR (Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2003). The link between CSR and student achievement may be more affected by local implementation processes than by specific model choices or by which components a model does or does not include. Additionally, it may take as many as five years for CSR to impact student outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Therefore, evaluations of CSR efforts need to include intermediate points. Key factors to consider regarding the evaluation of CSR implementation are local context, model selection and adoption processes, school capacity, external support, internal focus, pedagogical change, and restructuring outcomes. Review of these factors will help identify the barriers and facilitators at schools implementing CSR.

The discussion that follows describes how high-, middle-, and low-implementing schools addressed each of these factors. Specific

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***The link between CSR and student achievement may be more affected by local implementation processes than by specific model choices or by which components a model does or does not include.***

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discussion of relevant data at the four schools in the high-level implementation category is provided. For the schools in the middle- and low-implementation categories, summary discussions of findings are provided and supported with examples from individual sites.

### LOCAL CONTEXT

Comprehensive school reform is a complex endeavor, subject to the influence of multiple factors. Implementation issues that contribute to differences in the effectiveness of CSR may involve specific obstacles faced by individual sites, such as turnover in leadership or minimal staff buy-in, as well as the stage and length of implementation. Knowing the context and starting points for reform efforts was critical to understanding the implementation process across schools.

#### *SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

The schools grouped into this category benefited from unique elements of local context that allowed them to maximize the CSR grant opportunity.

- School 1 (AVID) was the best example of a campus with a history of low expectations and low performance using the grant as an opportunity to focus on preparing more students for college. School 1 did benefit, however,

from a historical commitment to AVID at the district level and well-developed support from the district administration.

- School 2 had already been implementing a comprehensive model—Co-nect—since September 2000. The CSR grant was then used to continue and strengthen existing plans.
- While School 3 (ICLE) had a history of low performance and discipline and safety issues, a committed effort at the district level to design and support a coordinated plan for school reform was piloted at the campus and supported by the campus administration.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) was a new school that used the CSR opportunity to focus the school's academic philosophy and approach. Even with significant staff changes during the grant period, the school's committed principal continued to provide extensive training to create a common language and skill set for all teachers across the campus. Given that many on staff were inexperienced, this training was necessary to work effectively with the large number of high-need students on the campus.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

Across the middle group of schools, starting points varied.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools), School 6 (AVID), and School 7 (Princeton Review) shared a common challenge of high turnover and mobility of staff and students.

Administrator or teacher turnover and/or fluctuating student enrollment caused by consolidation of schools or large numbers of transfer students were experienced by these schools.

- In School 6 (AVID), more immediate concerns such as safety took precedence over academics.
- School 7 (Princeton Review) was overcoming a history of low performance and discipline problems that were staples of the school culture.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

These schools, which were stalled in implementing CSR, shared many of the same concerns as the schools in the middle-level implementation category. However, challenges at these schools typically were exacerbated by compounding negative events or more severe individual circumstances, as well as a culture of accepting these situations as the norm.

- Safety was a concern at School 8 (HSTW). This campus was challenged by security concerns and frequent disruptions.
- School 9 (Accelerated Schools) lacked leadership and staff commitment to a shared educational mission.
- School 10 (Co-nect) experienced a complete change in administration at both the campus and district levels that resulted in a lack of continuity in vision and goals for the school.

### **MODEL ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

This section provides a summary of how schools across the implementation levels approached model selection and adoption and implementation efforts, including the role of the district, school leadership, and

staff. Research indicates the ideal adoption process of a CSR model begins with staff assessment of the current needs of the school and research to determine the model that best meets those needs. The staff then expresses support for model adoption through a vote and develops plans for implementing the required CSR components.

### ***Selection and Adoption Processes***

A common finding with few exceptions across all implementation levels was limited staff involvement in model selection and adoption. The application process itself may have limited the extent to which an inclusive approach was possible. While the grant application referred to federal legislation requiring the use of local funds to be “supported by teachers, principals, administrators, school personnel staff, and other professional staff,” it did not specify the support be garnered during the model selection and adoption process, such as with a staff vote.<sup>12</sup>

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***In most cases, the staff’s support for the program had to be generated after the grant was received, causing a delay in implementation.***

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Because school districts are the local education agencies (LEAs) legally eligible to administer state grants, many districts completed applications with little contact with staff at the campuses identified for participation in the grant. As the Request for Applications (RFA) required signatures from a school’s site-based decision-making (SBDM) committee, often these were the only staff involved in making the model decision for a campus. Further, as part of the grant application process, applicants were required to identify chosen models as well as to provide

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***A common finding with few exceptions across all implementation levels was limited staff involvement in model selection and adoption.***

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relatively detailed plans for implementation. Thus, the timeframe involved in selection and development of plans may have precluded the possibility of initiating an ideal selection and adoption process with all staff. For example, the announcement about funding for the THSI program was issued August 6 with voluntary technical assistance provided via Texas Education Telecommunications Network (TETN) in early September and an application due date of October 7. While a two-month turnaround period could have been adequate with early technical assistance, much time could have been lost due to the timing of the grant application period, which occurred at the end the summer and into the beginning of the school year.

As a result of the processes used, staff introduction to the broader topic of comprehensive school reform, as well as to other potential CSR models, was limited. In most cases, the staff’s support for the program had to be generated after the grant was received, causing a delay in implementation.

### ***SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION***

- School 1 created a five-member site team to research and visit similar schools implementing AVID. After the visits, the team was impressed and returned to “sell” the rest of the faculty and staff on the model.
- School 2 used CSR as a continuation of an ongoing program, Co-nect.

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<sup>12</sup> Public Law 107-110, NCLB, Title I, Part F, Sec. 1606. (a) (5).

Though the site-based decision-making committee led the model adoption process in 2000, the faculty did vote.

- School 3 chose a model (ICLE) that provided a framework for approaching school change and then supplemented it with secondary and tertiary models. This school was part of a larger district-wide effort to bring the same programs into multiple schools across the district. Therefore, a local staff vote did not occur.
- At School 4, a bilingual campus, the principal chose as a CSR model an instructional approach focused on language learning, Accelerated Learning. She implemented the instructional philosophy and strategies school wide to involve all staff in the creation of a unified learning environment at a brand new school. She also implemented the program in such a way as to create a school climate that promoted the development of teacher leaders.

It should be noted that only one school with high-level implementation chose a model (Co-nect) identified in the research as specifically designed to be aligned with the 11 CSR components. The others chose targeted or non-traditional models but supplemented them with detailed implementation strategies supported with extensive resources

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***The differences in the impact of selection processes on CSR implementation appeared to have had more to do with the influence of other factors that encouraged staff ownership and buy-in of reforms than on how and which model was chosen.***

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and leadership to extend to school-wide implementation.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

- At School 5 (Accelerated Schools), the principal chose the model after visiting another school implementing the program and learning that it helped staff take responsibility for what happened at the school. The Accelerated Schools model recommends a process to conduct a realistic assessment of where the school is and involve all staff from janitors to principals. However, a component of the model is that the staff vote to adopt the program and that 90% approval is obtained. No staff vote occurred.
- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) chose to implement models that were not designed to be used school wide and that would require significant additional support to expand. In both cases, while there was evidence of plans for limited expansion of the programs, no effort to implement the program throughout the school was demonstrated.

Only one of the schools in the middle-level group chose a model well aligned with the 11 CSR components, Accelerated Schools, but chose the model without the recommended faculty vote. The targeted programs (AVID, Princeton Review) were implemented with smaller groups of staff and students in accordance with their design specifications.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

- The High Schools That Work (HSTW) model was chosen by School

8's faculty to bridge the school's vocational and academic programs.

- At School 9, the district grant coordinator chose Accelerated Schools after visiting a neighboring district that was implementing the program.
- School 10's principal and a district administrator worked with an external consultant to write the grant and identify Co-nect as the CSR model. Staff provided little input.

All three of the low-implementing schools chose models with high levels of alignment with CSR components—HSTW, Accelerated Schools, and Co-nect. However, mitigating factors hindered implementation efforts. In two of the schools (School 8 and School 10), staff had limited knowledge or a misunderstanding of the CSR program, impeding implementation. At School 9, there was a failure to develop and communicate a school-wide vision that included CSR.

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***Schools strengthened and expanded CSR efforts through internal focus and momentum or increased district responsibility.***

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The differences in the impact of selection processes on CSR implementation appeared to have had more to do with the influence of other factors that encouraged staff ownership and buy-in of reforms than on how and which model was chosen. For instance, while many model selection decisions across implementation levels were made at the district level, factors such as a district program advocate or a strong principal at higher implementing schools allowed the model adoption and buy-in processes to progress. At the middle and low levels, where ongoing district support was generally low,

the schools took longer to embrace reforms that were perceived possibly as “mandated.” Across the low-level implementation group, staff members were consistently neglected in the model selection and adoption phase. It was also of note that of the high-implementing campuses, only one selected a model specifically designed to align with the 11 CSR components. Additionally, across the lower implementing schools, all three schools chose models that were well aligned with the 11 CSR components. This contrast underscores the finding of Borman et al. (2003) that local context may be more important than the model selected.

### ***Capacity***

School capacity refers to the infrastructure needed by schools to implement and maintain a restructuring effort. Infrastructure implies access to appropriate materials; sufficient staffing and planning time; and adequate fiscal resources to support staff, materials, and technical assistance (Datnow & Stringfield, 2000).

### ***SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION***

By spring 2006, data indicated high-implementing schools used the CSR grant to directly support CSR efforts through funding for grant coordinator positions and technical assistance, materials purchases associated with reform efforts, or dedicated time for staff planning and collaboration.

- At School 1 (AVID), funds were used to support a coordinator's position, to hire AVID tutors, and to purchase AVID binders for students.
- School 2 had a long history with project-based learning through the Co-nect model and used the CSR funding to increase the number of grade-specific projects that teachers developed and taught by providing

## Chapter 2

### Cross-Case Analysis

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targeted professional development and dedicated planning time.

- At School 3 (ICLE), CSR funds were used to support two additional teachers to staff a new Ninth-Grade Initiative, an internal evaluator, and a project specialist.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) purchased materials to support goals specific to English as a Second Language (ESL), mathematics, and reading instruction and to support activities to increase parental involvement in academics.

By spring 2007, high-implementing schools had shifted from building core capacity to maintaining and expanding established objectives and piloted programs. This shift was accompanied by a reduction in grant support of campus personnel. Schools strengthened and expanded CSR efforts through internal focus and momentum or increased district responsibility.

- School 1 (AVID) continued staff training to include all grade-level teachers and purchased AVID binders for all students in the school.
- School 2 (Co-nect) transitioned from developing project-based units to refining existing units as well as engaging in small-group trainings, such as book studies.
- School 3 (ICLE) increased capacity by providing intensive and ongoing small-group training. Additionally, the district ensured continued local support of CSR efforts through district-wide adoption of the programs piloted at School 3.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) used much of the final grant year to rebuild a core group of trained staff after a district restructuring.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, schools implementing at the middle level used grant funding in a less targeted way by supplementing local materials and supplies budgets or by supporting training of a limited number of staff without systematic plans for redelivery.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools) purchased consumable supplies and materials not directly related to CSR.
- School 6 (AVID) made large technology purchases without providing related staff training in the integration of the technologies into instruction.
- School 7 (Princeton Review) sent a limited number of staff to expensive trainings that were not replicable and purchased a limited number of expensive materials.

By spring 2007, data suggested that schools in the middle-level category did make progress in capacity building with continued or expanded professional development including small-group or school-wide training or the development of redelivery mechanisms.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools), while still using CSR funds to purchase basic consumable supplies, also maintained weekly staff-wide trainings focused on CSR goals.
- School 6 (AVID) expanded AVID class offerings to include more students, sent more teachers to AVID training, and had plans to continue this expansion.
- School 7 (Princeton Review) also continued to send teachers to training and increased the number of Princeton Review classes offered, with plans to continue these efforts in future years.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, low-level implementing schools used CSR grant funding for isolated purposes unrelated to CSR, such as general technology purchases, curriculum and materials for one subject area, or individualized staff training not related to an overarching goal.

- School 8 (HSTW) purchased books but could not define how they were related to CSR efforts.
- School 9 (Accelerated Schools) used CSR funding to strengthen the science department.
- School 10 (Co-nect) funded individualized, teacher-selected trainings and purchased technology.

By spring 2007, low-implementing schools had made little progress increasing school-wide capacity around CSR goals. These schools continued to focus on narrow, not comprehensive, activities or to use CSR funds to purchase unrelated consumable supplies and technology.

Figure 2.1 presents survey results with confidence intervals to show the range of values within which the true mean is likely to fall. Considering 2006 survey results, high-implementation schools averaged a 3.66 on a 5-point scale for the Capacity construct compared to the averages for schools with middle-level implementation (3.31) and schools with lower implementation (3.41). There was a significant difference across implementation groups,<sup>13</sup> with the high-level implementing group mean significantly higher than the middle-level and low-level group means;<sup>14</sup> however, there was no difference between the middle-level and low-level group means. In 2007 survey results,

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***It should be noted that while CSR grants were decreased during the final year of the program from a range of about \$70,000 to \$150,000 in year one to a range of about \$18,750 to \$47,670 in year three, schools were required to maintain external technical assistance services.***

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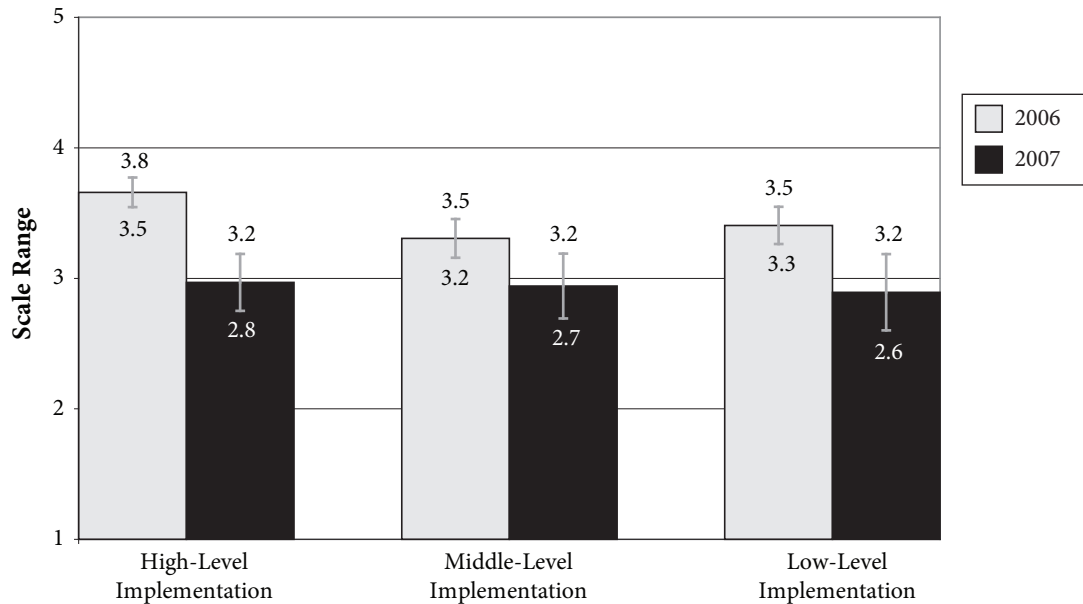
high-implementation schools averaged a 2.97 on a 5-point scale for this construct compared to the averages for schools with middle-level implementation (2.94) and schools with lower implementation (2.89). The high-, middle-, and low-implementing schools did not differ significantly from each other on measures of Capacity for spring 2007.

A general pattern of higher means for the high-implementing group is consistent with research documenting that it may be easier to impact change in elementary schools as well as achieve progress in some construct areas earlier than other areas requiring more time, such as impacting student achievement. Considering that this construct focuses on having resources available to support CSR implementation, it is consistent that perceived capacity declined in relation to the decrease in funding.

Despite the decrease in year three funding, the use of grant funds to support capacity building in the broadest sense occurred in schools with high levels of implementation, where capacity was viewed as infrastructure rather than as a consumable resource. Schools in the high-implementing group used a limited amount of grant money to initially seed funding for CSR-related positions with primary investments in staff-wide professional development that could

<sup>13</sup>  $F(2,400) = 7.58$   $p < .001$ .

<sup>14</sup> Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0005$  &  $p < .0255$ .

**Figure 2.1. Change in Capacity Construct Means by Group 2006 to 2007**

be replicated internally. These schools also purchased materials that could be used school wide. Schools in the other two categories tended to make capacity decisions either in a fragmented way by purchasing materials and supporting personnel not directly related to CSR efforts or in a narrow way by only providing a limited number of staff and students with expensive support.

### ***External Support***

External support indicates the quality and amount of assistance provided by actors outside of the school, including support provided through design-based assistance organizations (DBAO) as well as support provided by the district. Research on DBAO support focuses mainly on the importance of professional development for helping teachers understand and implement the instructional practices promoted by reform models (Bodilly, 2001). Additionally, recent research

suggests that integrating district support in reform efforts is imperative to successful implementation and sustainability of a CSR model at the school level (Borman, Carter, Aladjem, & LeFloch, 2004). It should be noted that while CSR grants were decreased during the final year of the program from a range of about \$70,000 to \$150,000 in year one to a range of about \$18,750 to \$47,670 in year three, schools were required to maintain external technical assistance services.

### ***SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION***

By spring 2006, data indicated that schools with a high level of implementation either received strong support from an external Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) associated with a particular CSR model or strong district support in the cases where reform efforts were linked to a larger district plan.



- School 1 (AVID) received limited direct technical assistance but benefited from strong local redelivery of AVID training and district-provided professional development related to the program.
- At School 2 (Co-nect), the TAP was a former teacher at the school who worked with school staff intensively once a week.
- School 3 (ICLE) had regular contact with an external TAP who provided approximately 130 hours of support across most CSR components.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) did not have a formal external TAP because of model choice; however, because the district provided supplemental support, the school's staff received an intensive program of ongoing professional development that was aligned with the school's goals.

By spring 2007, high-implementing schools maintained a focus on CSR goals through district adoption of school programs implemented through CSR or by continuation of formal technical assistance services.

- School 1 (AVID), School 3 (ICLE), and School 4 (Accelerated Learning) received continued TAP support from the district due to the development of district-level capacity to provide program-related professional development.
- School 2 (Co-nect) maintained formal contact by reducing the amount of support provided by the TAP.
- At School 3 (ICLE), the district also restructured its support to improve alignment and coherence of district-supported programs at the school.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, the level of external support from a TAP or the district varied widely at middle-implementing schools.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools) had weekly TAP training sessions.
- School 6 (AVID) had no contact with an external service provider.
- School 7 (Princeton Review) maintained ongoing contact with the external technical assistance provider.
- District support, beyond assistance with grant administration and budget approval, was low across these schools.

By spring 2007, data suggested that external technical assistance was inconsistent, sporadic, or narrowly focused.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools) continued to receive regular bimonthly visits from the TAP, but the consultant assigned to the school had been changed twice.
- School 6 (AVID) received a one-time training for eight teachers provided by an AVID TAP.
- School 7 (Princeton Review) continued regular and ongoing contact with Princeton Review representatives, but this support was not school wide.
- Districts provided minimal CSR support beyond grant compliance.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, data indicated that schools in the low-implementation group were delayed in accessing technical assistance and/or initiating action based on this assistance.

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### Cross-Case Analysis

While all these schools chose models that provided formal technical assistance, they were unable to capitalize on this opportunity for various reasons. District support was low or non-existent.

- At School 8 (HSTW) and School 10 (Co-nect), there were delays in authorization for use of funds, and contracting with an external TAP was delayed.
- School 9 (Accelerated Schools) received consistent and ongoing professional development from its TAP (500 hours per year), but the school had not developed plans for addressing identified areas of concern.

By spring 2007, schools in this group had not benefited from technical assistance and were stalled in CSR implementation.

- School 8 (HSTW) experienced a change in TAP and was initiating few CSR-related activities. District support had increased but was related to meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements, which sidetracked CSR efforts.
- At School 9 (Accelerated Schools), the assigned TAP had changed three times. With a change in school personnel, the district became more involved in managing and coordinating grant activities.
- School 10 (Co-nect) still had not contacted a TAP or received any training related to Co-nect. The district was supportive with grant logistics.

Survey results for 2006 (Figure 2.2) indicated schools with high levels of implementation averaged a 3.87 on a 5-point

scale for the Support construct. Mid-level implementation schools averaged a 3.59 and low-implementing schools averaged a 3.67. Again, there was a significant difference across groups on the Support construct with the high-implementing schools scoring significantly higher than either of the other groups.<sup>15</sup> There was no difference between the middle-level and low-level group means. The 2007 means did not differ meaningfully from each other across implementation levels, with high-implementing schools averaging 3.19, middle-implementing schools averaging 3.15, and low-implementing schools averaging 3.15.

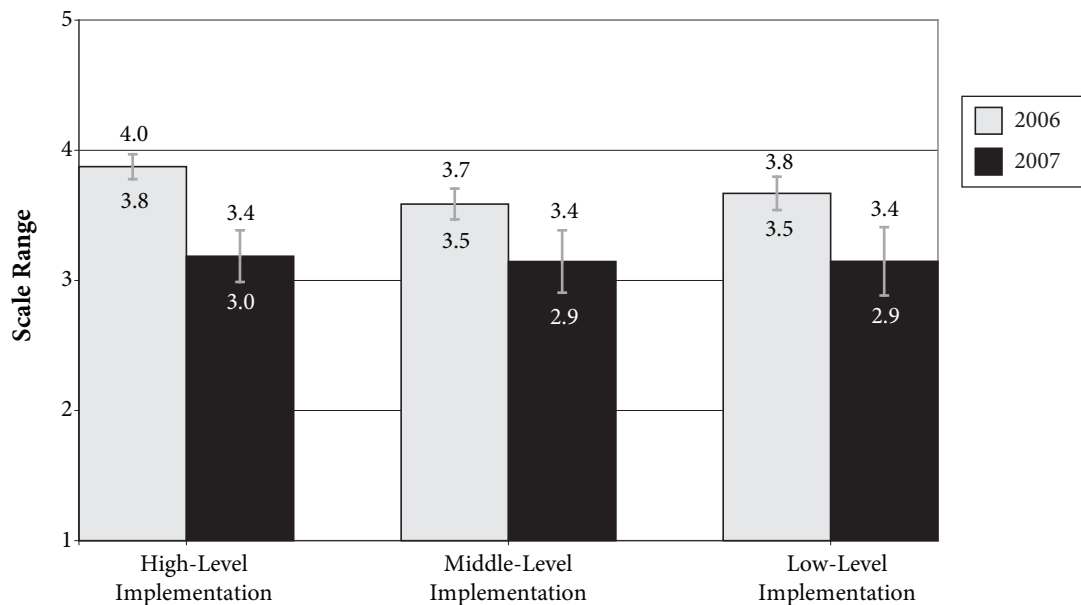
The decrease in Support scores between years (as indicated by the non-overlapping confidence intervals within implementation category) may be associated with two separate external support issues. Schools may have spent considerable resources on external support during the earlier years of the grant and had less demand for intensive training by year three. However, because research indicates that strong CSR-implementing schools maintain TAP relationships, the decrease across years could also be related to the decrease in year three funding. Even though a stipulation of accepting year three funds was to maintain TAP services, this may have occurred at a reduced level.

The amount and type of external training was not related to implementation level. In some cases, middle- and low-implementing schools received significant amounts of formal ongoing technical assistance. High-implementing schools also received consistent and ongoing assistance. However, several key circumstances differentiated high-implementing schools from the others. Training through external providers was connected to a unified vision in high-implementing schools. High-implementing schools also used technical assistance

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<sup>15</sup> Overall ANOVA  $F(2,400) = 7.05$ ,  $p = .001$ . Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0009$  &  $p < .0339$ .

Figure 2.2. Change in Support Construct Means by Group 2006 to 2007



strategically, planning for staff redelivery of training once funding ended. Finally, high-implementing schools uniformly received significant district support beyond grant logistics and compliance. It is of note that strong district support was found across a variety of district types, including large urban districts serving over 80,000 students.

### *Internal Focus*

Internal focus refers to the degree to which the essence of reform efforts has become embedded in the daily practices of school staff. The research identifies several factors as essential to focus, including teacher buy-in and support for reform efforts, alignment of reform with existing mandates, integration of reform with existing school programs or efforts, and formal attention to monitoring the progress of reform efforts (Rowan, Camburn, & Barnes, 2004). As discussed earlier, initial staff involvement in model selection and

adoption across all implementation levels may have been limited by the application process itself. However, local activities to build staff ownership and create a school-wide effort focused on the reform approach had significant impacts on how quickly and extensively implementation efforts could begin.

### *SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, data indicated that schools with high levels of implementation garnered strong staff buy-in through several methods, including strong advocacy by the principal, long-time exposure to the reform effort, protection from competing initiatives, meaningful progress monitoring, and district support of school efforts.

- At School 1 (AVID), staff support increased with strong principal advocacy and after staff saw results with students when they used AVID strategies.

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### Cross-Case Analysis

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- Over time, Co-nect was recognized as part of the school culture by School 2's teachers due to the long history of the program at the school.
- School 3's (ICLE) staff viewed CSR as fragmented programs but were engaged in formal monitoring connected to intermediate outcomes with strong district support.
- At School 4 (Accelerated Learning), the principal garnered staff buy-in by providing adequate instructional resources to support program implementation and including a briefing on model principles in hiring processes.

By spring 2007, high-implementing schools continued to pay attention to increasing teacher support for program efforts.

- School 1 (AVID) provided school-wide AVID trainings and implemented school-wide use of student binders indicating to staff that the program was a priority.
- Despite struggling to balance standardized testing pressures with CSR efforts, School 2 (Co-nect) increased teacher requirements for use of project-based learning in the classroom.
- Staff buy-in at School 3 (ICLE) was enhanced through district-wide adoption of programs, indicating that staff efforts were valued and would be continued. The campus and district also worked to demonstrate alignment of school programs promoting staff understanding and further communicating a strong message of commitment to programming.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) experienced a decrease in teacher

support with staffing changes resulting from district growth and restructuring. However, district-wide adoption of CSR-funded programs piloted at School 4 indicated to staff that the programming would continue.

#### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, schools at the middle level of implementation demonstrated less teacher buy-in for the reform efforts primarily due to high staff turnover or program designs that lacked comprehensive impact.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools) suffered from consistently high teacher turnover and retraining costs.
- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) implemented programs in which only a small number of teachers and students directly participated. Staff perceived programs as isolated and not relevant school wide.

By spring 2007, data indicated these schools had garnered more staff support by expanding programming and training.

- School 5 (Accelerated Schools) staff expressed knowledge of and support for CSR efforts but anticipated teacher turn-over would limit program progress.
- Both School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) expanded CSR programming to include more students and staff. As a result, staff support increased with perceptions that programs would continue.

#### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, two years into grant implementation, teacher support at low-

implementing schools was characterized by staff mistrust or misunderstanding of program goals. Additionally, monitoring progress across these schools was limited to traditional TAKS benchmarking and was not linked to CSR efforts.

- School 8 (HSTW) staff had been through the attempted implementation of many programs with little consistency, alignment, or success. They viewed CSR as one more program.
- Many of School 9's (Accelerated Schools) teachers thought the school's CSR grant was focused on one subject area. While they were open to more comprehensive model training, a lack of leadership to guide this effort resulted in low staff commitment.
- At School 10 (Co-nect), teachers viewed CSR as an infusion of funds to support individual interests and were therefore very supportive.

By spring 2007, data indicated a decrease in staff support for CSR at low-implementing schools.

- School 8 (HSTW) shifted attention to a district priority on programming to meet AYP requirements, and staff indicated little knowledge about HSTW.
- Staff at School 9 (Accelerated Schools) indicated frustration with the lack of progress after three years, and data indicated that a change in leadership late in the grant contributed to staff perceptions that the program might not be continued.
- Only at School 10 (Co-nect) did teachers continue to voice enthusiasm

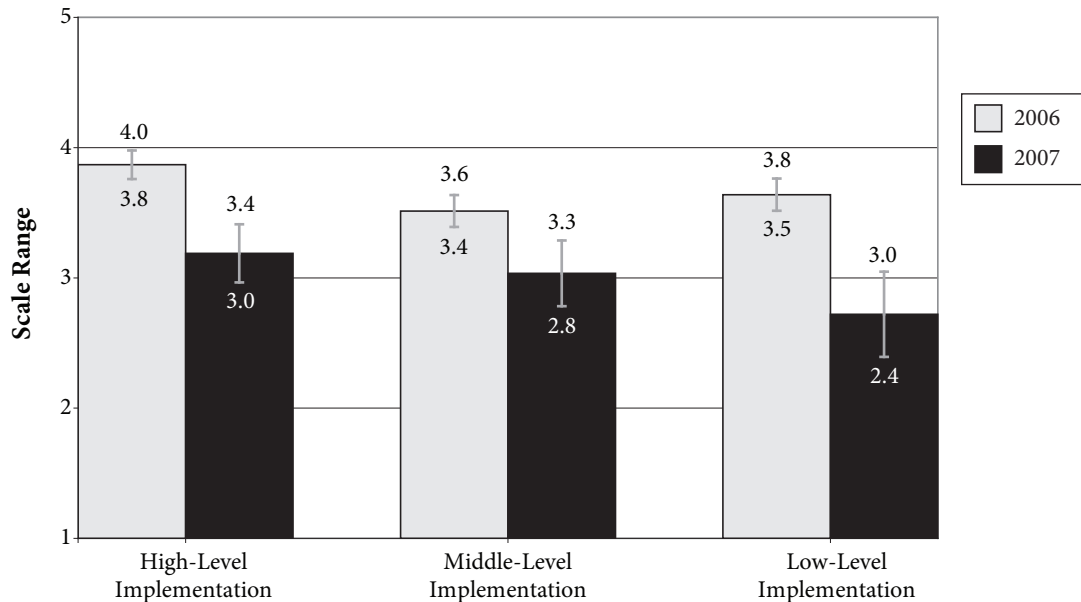
for what they considered to be the school's reform efforts—funding for pursuit of individual professional growth plans.

Considering 2006 survey results, schools with high levels of implementation averaged a 3.87 on a 5-point scale for the Focus construct compared to the means for middle-level implementation schools (3.51) and low-level implementation schools (3.64) (Figure 2.3). The high-level implementing group mean was significantly different from the middle- and low-level group means.<sup>16</sup> In the 2007 survey results, high-implementation schools averaged a 3.19 on a 5-point scale for this construct, whereas schools with middle-level implementation averaged 3.03 and schools with lower implementation averaged 2.72. The high-level implementing group mean was significantly different from the low-level group mean.<sup>17</sup>

The decrease in focus between years (indicated by the non-overlapping confidence intervals within each implementation category) may reflect grant fatigue as resources and time dedicated to these efforts declined with the close of the grant. While focus decreased across years, high-implementing schools did demonstrate a qualitative difference from the other categories. Because resistance to change is often expected—especially in education where so many new programs are regularly implemented—garnering staff-wide support for a new initiative can be challenging. Schools with high-implementation levels used multiple strategies simultaneously to build staff support. These strategies were not as evident at middle- and low-implementing schools. Strong staff support for school change was based on trust that their efforts were appreciated, and continued support

<sup>16</sup>Overall ANOVA  $F(2,400) = 9.60, p < .0001$ . Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0001$  &  $p < .0207$ .

<sup>17</sup>Overall ANOVA  $F(2,529) = 3.06, p = .05$ . Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0371$ .

**Figure 2.3. Change in Focus Construct Means by Group 2006 to 2007**

would be available, allowing staff to invest in future goals. Examples of effective strategies included the following:

- Communicating and demonstrating strong principal support for CSR
- Creating a critical mass of staff members who strongly supported the program and who were able to bring resistant staff along
- Protecting teachers from additional programs that would compete for their attention
- Monitoring and communicating intermediate outcomes as a way to garner staff support through evidence of incremental progress and success
- Demonstrating both district support of staff and continuation of funding through district-wide adoption of school efforts

### *Pedagogy*

This construct refers to the degree to which instructional practices align with the goals of the chosen reform strategy. While different reform models advocate a variety of instructional approaches, many CSR models tend to share a reduced emphasis on workbooks, worksheets, and individual work and more focus on technology, cooperative learning, and project-based work (Stringfield, Ross, & Smith, 1996). Applying instructional strategies learned from professional development in real classroom settings is the first step to impacting achievement; however, there is often a disconnect between training and classroom application.

### *SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, staff members at schools with high levels of implementation more consistently embedded CSR strategies in their

daily practice. More concrete strategies, such as a specific student note-taking technique promoted by AVID, were implemented more widely than strategies involving major conceptual shifts, such as creating rigorous and relevant lessons.

- School 1 (AVID) implemented several model strategies on a small scale, including Cornell Note-Taking and use of student binders for organizing assignments and workload.
- School 2 (Co-nect) implemented requirements for use of project-based learning units for all teachers.
- At School 3 (ICLE), the model promoted student-centered lessons reflecting rigor and relevance; however, most teachers, though conversant about these principles, did not implement this approach in their teaching.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) staff emphasized literacy and language acquisition using a student-centered approach with cooperative and project-based learning techniques.

By spring 2007, high-implementing schools maintained focus on the use of model-promoted instructional strategies by continuing, expanding, or intensifying staff training.

- All School 1 staff were trained in AVID strategies, and school-wide implementation of strategies, including Cornell Note-Taking and use of student binders, was mandated.
- School 2 (Co-nect) implemented project-based learning campus wide, although the lower grade levels were able to complete more projects than higher levels due to less pressure associated with TAKS testing.

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***Pedagogical change is difficult to achieve and typically only occurs after years of implementation.***

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- At School 3 (ICLE), the school worked to create model lessons and implemented a mentor training structure to provide teachers with opportunities to observe the implementation of lessons with a high degree of rigor and relevance.
- New staff received training as part of School 4's effort to rebuild staff's core competency in implementing lessons aligned with Accelerated Learning principles.

#### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, the use of instructional strategies aligned with CSR models at middle-implementing schools was limited.

- Due to the size of the school, smaller classes and multi-grade groupings were possible at School 5 (Accelerated Schools), allowing teachers to shift instruction to include more student-oriented and personalized instruction.
- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) both implemented models that impacted only a limited number of teachers and students; thus, school-wide reforms in pedagogical approaches were less developed.

By spring 2007, even with continued or expanded training, schools showed limited progress in classroom application of model-based strategies.

- At School 5 (Accelerated Schools), teacher turnover, student attendance,

and other issues at the school presented challenges in implementing instructional techniques such as project-based learning.

- At School 6 (AVID), with slow campus-wide exposure to model strategies, direct instruction, independent seat work, and low to moderate student engagement remained the norm.
- While School 7 (Princeton Review) trained more teachers and created a formal structure for sharing instructional strategies, teacher turnover coupled with slow school-wide expansion again resulted in limited implementation of model strategies in classroom teaching.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, schools in the low-implementation category either were not implementing a reform model or were in the planning stage of implementation; thus, changes in the classroom were not expected.

- School 8 (HSTW) staff's understanding of model strategies seemed limited to associating HSTW with a vocational focus.
- School 9 (Accelerated Schools) staff did not describe any instructional changes.
- School 10's (Co-nect) staff reported making individual instructional changes but could not describe an association with the school's CSR model and did not indicate participation in project-based learning.

By spring 2007, little progress had been made at low-implementing schools.

- School 8's (HSTW) staff reported that creating more relevant lessons took more time than was available.
- At School 9 (Accelerated Schools), model-promoted strategies such as project-based learning, teacher acting as coach/facilitator, and independent inquiry were rarely mentioned or observed.
- School 10 (Co-nect) continued to use teacher-centered, direct instruction as the prevalent instructional method, though a limited increase in the use of interactive technology was indicated.

Combining the 2006 survey results across campuses for the Pedagogy construct, high-implementing schools averaged a 3.62 on a 5-point scale compared to schools in the middle category scoring an average of 3.26 and schools in the low category rating this construct a mean of 3.18 (Figure 2.4). The high-level implementing group mean was significantly different from the middle- and low-level group means.<sup>18</sup> There was no difference between the middle- and low-level group means. In 2007, high-implementation schools averaged a 3.07 on a 5-point scale for this construct compared to the averages for schools with middle-level implementation (2.81) and schools with lower implementation (2.72). There were no meaningful differences in these average scores for Pedagogy across implementation groups for 2007 data.

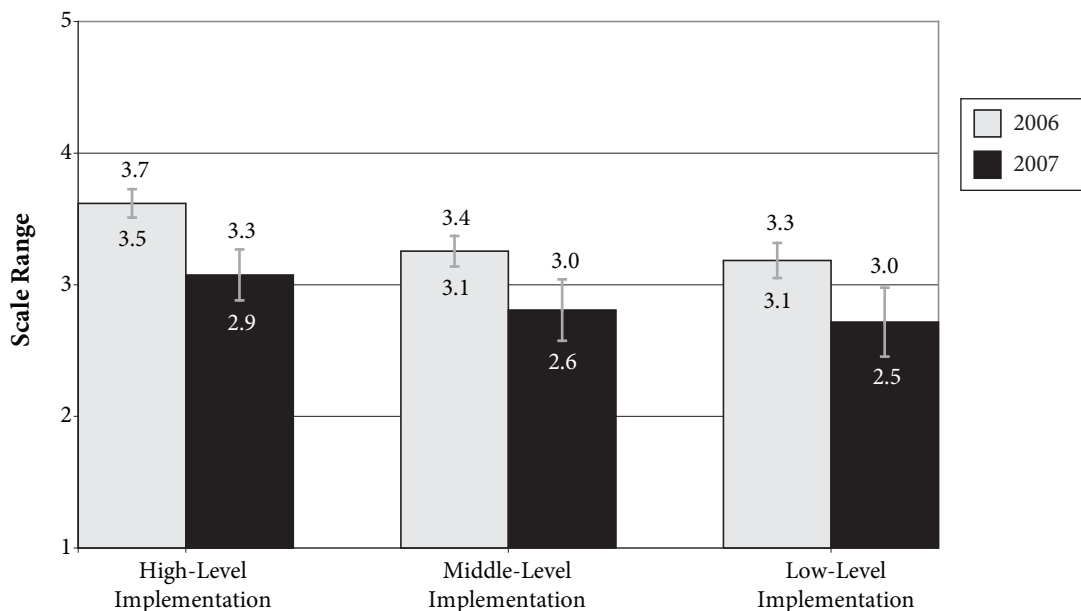
Pedagogical change is difficult to achieve and typically only occurs after years of implementation. This is especially true for models requiring a philosophical shift, such as those based on project-based learning

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<sup>18</sup> Overall ANOVA  $F(2,400) = 15.59, p < .0001$ . Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0001$  &  $p < .0001$ .



Figure 2.4. Change in Pedagogy Construct Means by Group 2006 to 2007



or rigor and relevance, rather than just implementation of a prescribed set of strategies, methods, or techniques. The high-implementing schools were beginning to realize school-wide changes in instructional practices. These were achieved, in some cases, through school-wide training coupled with the expectation (or requirement) that all teachers use model-promoted strategies. In other cases, wider adoption of new strategies occurred through intensive small-group trainings that involved peer coaching and mentoring. For schools in the middle-implementing group, use of instructional strategies increased as the number of trained teachers increased. Not surprisingly, low-implementing schools showed little to no progress in this area.

### ***Restructuring Outcomes***

Because impacts of reform efforts can take years to manifest in student achievement,

a focus on intermediate outcomes is more appropriate. Restructured outcomes include other areas of impact through which progress can be monitored. These include affective student outcomes such as engagement and academic responsibility, teacher-student interactions, shared decision making, teacher collaboration, attention to special needs students, parental involvement in educational activities, and community support (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

### ***SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION***

By spring 2006, staff at high-implementing schools consistently reported improvements in student motivation and engagement as well as staff collaboration and shared decision making related to instructional issues.

- School 1's staff felt that the AVID program promoted increased student responsibility for learning.

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***Because impacts of reform efforts can take years to manifest in student achievement, a focus on intermediate outcomes is more appropriate.***

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- School 2 (Co-nect) demonstrated increased staff collaboration due to the interdisciplinary nature of project-based learning.
- In implementing ICLE's Rigor/Relevance Framework, School 3's staff attributed increased student motivation to lessons that related to the real world.
- Staff at School 4 (Accelerated Learning) indicated that CSR efforts created shared leadership and a broad sense of responsibility for instructional change.

Other outcomes at these sites were less likely. Parental involvement increased marginally across schools, though staff generally did not attribute progress in this area to CSR efforts. This component of school reform, along with the community support component, was a challenge for all the schools in the study, including the high-implementing schools. Finally, staff were hesitant to directly attribute improvement in student achievement to CSR efforts. Even at the highest level of program implementation, most staff members said that it was too early to tell how student achievement was impacted.

By spring 2007, progress on intermediate outcomes for students generally continued to improve, although some sites experienced setbacks.

- At School 1 (AVID), the number of students directly participating in AVID increased; as a result, staff reported more students demonstrated

increased organization, future orientation, and a sense of an AVID group identity.

- School 2 (Co-nect) staff said that while students continued to benefit from CSR efforts, staff morale had decreased after the school received a lower accountability rating.
- School 3 (ICLE) indicated the most gains, especially for students in the Ninth-Grade Initiative who experienced increased engagement and interaction with other students and adults as a result of smaller classes and shared core teachers. The school reported a significant decrease in its ninth-grade retention rate.
- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) was forced to revise expectations in terms of some intermediate outcomes. Due to staffing changes and district restructuring, School 4 concentrated on training new staff and rebuilding momentum while adjusting to a larger than expected student population.

Again in 2007, staff at schools in this group were hesitant to attribute achievement gains to CSR efforts, and parental and community involvement continued to be difficult to impact.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, middle-level implementation schools also reported increased student motivation and engagement and teacher impacts related to CSR. However, in several cases, these gains were limited to a small number of students and staff.

- At School 5 (Accelerated Schools), staff reported a broad increase in both student engagement and teacher

collaboration associated with model implementation.

- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) both indicated increased student motivation and staff enthusiasm among the small number of participants directly involved in the program.

As with the high-implementing campuses, no school in this group reported an increase in parental involvement in educational activities, community support, or student achievement due to CSR efforts.

By spring 2007, data reflected continued improvements in staff and student engagement but no progress in parent/community involvement or student achievement.

- Student engagement at School 5 (Accelerated Schools) continued to improve with reports of improved student-teacher relationships. Staff also indicated they continued to collaborate and engage in shared decision making around instruction.
- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) both expanded program participation and teacher training resulting in direct impacts for a larger group of staff and students.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

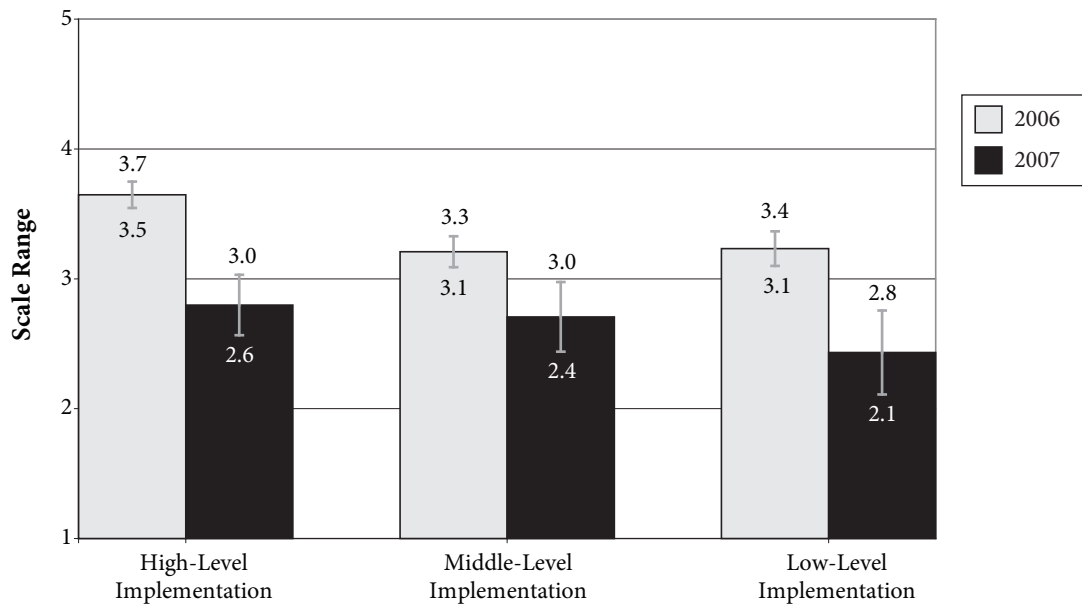
Over the course of grant implementation, CSR efforts appeared to have little or no impact on restructuring outcomes at low-implementing schools. At the end of the three-year grant period, these schools either were not implementing CSR or were still at the planning stage of implementation.

Combining survey results across campuses, in 2006 high-implementation schools averaged a 3.65 on a 5-point scale for the Outcomes construct compared to middle-implementation schools scoring a mean of 3.21 and low-implementation schools rating this construct an average of 3.23 (Figure 2.5). There was a significant difference in the Outcomes construct across implementation levels, with the high-level implementing group mean significantly higher than the middle-level and low-level groups.<sup>19</sup> Results from the 2007 survey administration show that high-implementation schools averaged a 2.80 on a 5-point scale for this construct compared to the averages for schools with middle-level implementation (2.71) and schools with lower implementation (2.43). There were no significant differences between implementation levels. The average Outcomes means did decline from spring 2006 to spring 2007 across all implementation categories.

In line with research indicating that school-wide reform may take as long as five or more years to impact student achievement, most staff at study schools were reluctant to posit an association between CSR efforts and improved student performance. However, anecdotally, staff at many campuses in both the high-implementing and middle-implementing groups attributed improvements related to intermediate goals to CSR. The most frequently cited areas of improvement were student motivation and engagement and staff collaboration. Unfortunately, parental and community involvement were not impacted by CSR efforts, and this was especially true at the secondary level. It should be noted that only one school in the study was able to support systematic monitoring of intermediate outcomes, and this occurred through cooperation with the district.

<sup>19</sup> Overall ANOVA  $F(2,400) = 18.27, p < .0001$ . Tukey-Kramer post hoc comparison,  $p < .0001$  &  $p < .0001$ .

Figure 2.5. Change in Outcomes Construct Means by Group 2006 to 2007



### IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

This section summarizes factors that could describe why CSR efforts succeeded in some schools while other schools made less progress. Included in this summary is a description of the overall school climate across implementation levels, which may provide an indirect measure of CSR impacts.

#### *SCHOOLS WITH HIGH-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, data indicated that each of the three schools originally placed in the high-implementation category had benefited from circumstances that made them ready to capitalize on the opportunities offered through CSR.

- Strong district support and commitment to the CSR approach at School 1 (AVID) allowed the school to create expectations that it could improve the campus, plan

and operationalize strategies to accomplish improvements, and follow through with activities with intention and fidelity. Focusing initially on a small pilot of the AVID program, the school invested in building staff capacity through widespread training with the specific intention of expanding AVID school wide.

- Staff at School 2 (Co-nect) used the grant to continue a reform model begun with an earlier grant that had become part of school culture. With significant investments in the services of an external TAP to help staff create a foundation of project-based lessons, the CSR grant reinforced a critical mass of supporters for the program, providing them the leverage and momentum to develop project-based learning successfully. Through this effort, the school created a foundation

of project-based lessons that would serve as a springboard for future efforts.

- School 3 (ICLE), which was determined to be a middle-level implementing school in spring 2006, had strong district support and relatively extensive staff knowledge and support of CSR efforts but needed to streamline its focus. The school had implemented many programs, some with a similar goal of school-wide change. Staff indicated being pulled in too many directions and being overwhelmed by multiple sets of trainings and requirements.
- School 4's (Accelerated Learning) charismatic principal led CSR efforts by uniting the staff around a cohesive goal and choosing a model that aligned with district curricular programs. This school also focused grant funds on providing school-wide training to build the capacity of staff.

The initial choice of a CSR model and its subsequent match with school needs, culture, and capability impacted implementation for this group of schools.

By spring 2007, all of the original high-level implementing schools and School 3 (ICLE) demonstrated progress or maintained high levels of implementation.

- All School 1 (AVID) staff had been trained in model strategies with almost universal staff support. The principal had issued a directive that staff incorporate AVID principles in all classrooms for all students at all grade levels. Systematic monitoring was also implemented. Over the course of the grant, the school and the district increasingly supplemented CSR grant funding, indicating that

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***In line with research indicating that school-wide reform may take as long as five or more years to impact student achievement, most staff at study schools were reluctant to posit an association between CSR efforts and improved student performance.***

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School 1 was highly likely to continue formal strategies associated with its CSR efforts.

- School 2 (Co-nect) maintained project implementation at a high level but decreased TAP support to an as-needed basis due to the decrease in funding in the final year of the grant. While staff reported tension between balancing the time involved with project-based learning with pressures associated with state testing, especially in the upper grades, there was no indication that the school would weaken its focus on this reform. Due to the longevity of the program at the school, its identification as part of the school culture, and the fact that the TAP previously taught at the campus, School 2's CSR efforts were likely to be sustained.
- By addressing the challenge of integrating multiple ongoing programs at the school, and communicating a unified vision to staff, School 3 (ICLE) made significant implementation progress. Further, expansion efforts of all ongoing initiatives—ICLE training-of-trainer and lesson development activities, further implementation of AVID in all grades levels, and the expansion of the Ninth-Grade Initiative pilot to include the entire grade—are other evidence of

this progress. Strong and creative district support was critical in helping School 3 attain this high level of implementation. Further, sustainability of these efforts was highly likely due to the district adoption of the programs piloted by the school and the steps taken by the school and district to ensure continuity with the retirement of the principal who led reform efforts.

- School 4 (Accelerated Learning) spent resources in the final year of the grant rebuilding due to the number of new staff hired at the school and the number of trained staff who left to take other positions in the district. Despite this setback, the overall success of the CSR effort at School 4 was attributable in large part to the guidance of a dynamic principal who remained committed to the Accelerated Learning philosophy and created a cohesive staff community with a shared educational mission. All data indicated that this school would continue implementing the formal strategies associated with its CSR model, especially since much of the programming included under the Accelerated Learning umbrella was adopted by the district. However, the extent to which some of the other activities funded by CSR would be institutionalized, such as a Newcomer Center and an enrichment specialist for new immigrants, was still unclear.

### *SCHOOLS WITH MIDDLE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

By spring 2006, schools in the middle-level implementation group had run into barriers to implementation of comprehensive programs but had still implemented programs to the “Piloting” stage.

- While School 5 (Accelerated Schools) received significant support from external providers, it was unable to move beyond the initial assessment phase into making plans and taking action to change the school. This delay was likely attributable to high teacher turnover and a very high student mobility rate (78%), which inhibited building a consistent group of supporters among staff and parents.
- School 6 (AVID) and School 7 (Princeton Review) were limited by choosing models that were not designed to be school wide and that required extensive support to transform into a school-wide model. Further, both schools lacked strong leadership from the district, the school administration, or a critical mass of teachers to drive a school-wide expansion effort.

By spring 2007, while all middle-level implementing schools demonstrated progress in implementation, success at a level that could be characterized as school-wide and/or that would be sustained was not indicated.

- Data from School 5 (Accelerated Schools) indicated some fundamental improvements in school organization and governance, staff collaboration and commitment, and student engagement due to CSR efforts. Action plans had been developed to address areas of concern, and, due to the small size of the school, all staff were highly involved in CSR implementation. However, due to chronic staff turnover, a high-needs student population, and an indicated shift in focus in future programming, sustainability was not likely.
- School 6 (AVID) demonstrated progress in expanding the program

to include more students in both grade levels at the school. However, the AVID program at School 6 was still seen largely as an isolated program, and there was no evidence of formal plans for continued program expansion. It appeared likely, however, that the school would continue to offer AVID to a limited number of students on a formal basis through the structure established with the CSR grant.

- School 7 (Princeton Review) expanded teacher training and course offerings associated with its CSR model to include more staff and students, though the program could still not be characterized as school wide. Overall, school plans indicated a commitment by the school leadership to continue the programming begun under the CSR grant. However, without continued grant support or district support, funding for training and expansion could be a yearly issue.

### *SCHOOLS WITH LOW-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION*

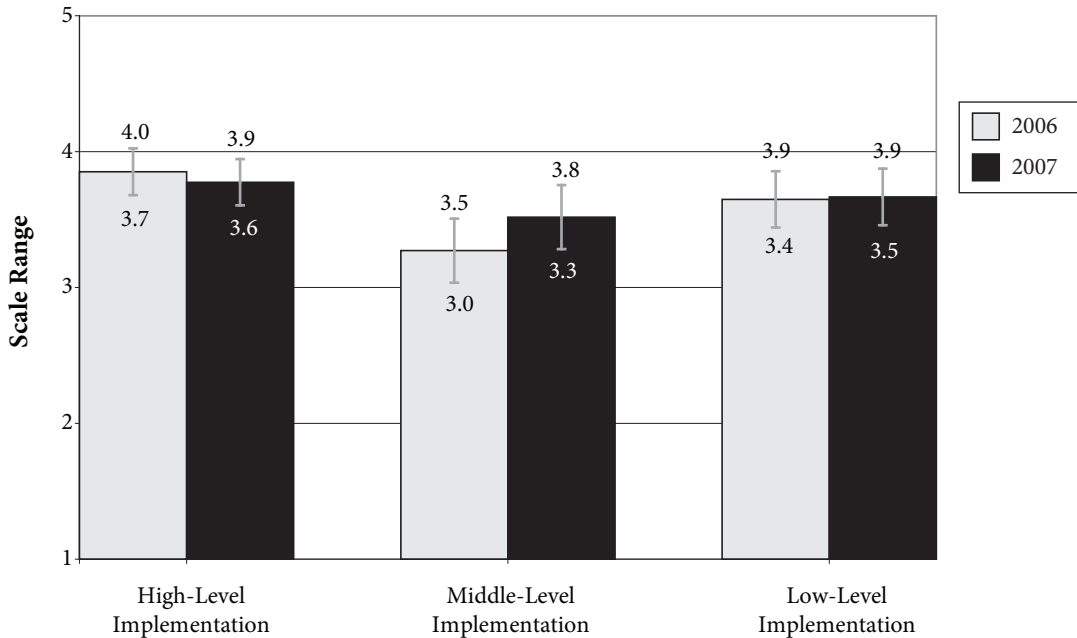
By spring 2006, for those schools with low levels of implementation, CSR efforts were thwarted by a variety of factors, including a lack of leadership for the reform, lack of staff focus, and lack of staff support.

- In the case of School 8 (HSTW), data were incomplete due to disruptions at the campus associated with a city-wide protest on the days of the site visit; however, it appeared that the school was not very far along in implementation. Staff voiced a general knowledge of the grant but knew little else.
- While School 9 (Accelerated Schools) chose a model aligned with CSR goals and had received extensive external support, the administration and staff lacked a level of buy-in and commitment to the program that was commensurate with the amount of time they had invested.
- At School 10 (Co-nect), a change in district and campus administration and the lack of staff inclusion in the initial phases of model adoption left the project orphaned. Consequently, while staff members at the campus were satisfied with what they understood to be the comprehensive school reform program—to pursue individual staff members' continuing education goals—they had yet to receive any training in the model identified on their grant application.

By spring 2007, little progress in CSR implementation was evident at the low-implementing schools.

- Staff focus at School 8 (HSTW) shifted to new district priorities related to AYP goals. Staff reported very limited integration of vocational and academic instruction through HSTW. Overall, implementation did not appear to have progressed much past an awareness level. Though data indicated the school would continue to work on the model through participation in the Texas High School Project, indicators across data points suggested the school did not have a unified vision for improvement or strong commitment to the tenants of HSTW. Further, staff was reluctant to buy into reform efforts, citing a pattern of initiatives being pushed aside as new strategies—usually tied to new funding streams—became a priority.
- A host of changes were reported at School 9 (Accelerated Schools) at the second site visit but were attributable less to grant implementation and

Figure 2.6. Change in School Climate Means by Group 2006 to 2007



more to new policies and procedures established by a new principal. In fact, with the change in leadership, the program at School 9 almost completely stalled out with some staff perceiving it to be “dead in the water.” With two-thirds of grant funding dedicated to building resource capacity in science, School 9’s CSR plan lacked a school-wide design, and the strong leadership that could have expanded and broadened the impact of the grant was not evident. Given all of these factors, it was unlikely School 9 would maintain CSR efforts and formal strategies associated with the model.

- The second round of data collected corroborated the evaluators’ first assessment that School 10 (Co-nect) was not implementing the Co-nect model and was instead using grant funds to support technology

purchases and individualized staff development plans. These activities were loosely described as contributing to the school’s goal to increase students’ college readiness. No sustained activity was expected with the end of the grant.

### ***School Climate***

In 2006, both high- and low-level implementing schools had high school climate scores (3.85 and 3.67, respectively) (see Figure 2.6). These scores were higher than mid-level implementing schools that averaged 3.27. School climate scores for 2007 did not meaningfully change for any of the implementation groups, though the mid-level school’s average increased enough to no longer be meaningfully different from the other two groups of schools.

These results indicate that school climate may be reflective of other aspects of a



school's operations and unrelated to CSR implementation. Additionally, a CSR grant may be viewed as additional money to support interests previously unfunded, which may increase school climate across the board. This was the case, especially with School 10, where, across both data collection periods, the overall school climate average was one of the highest reported while site visit data suggested very little to no implementation was occurring at the school. This high rating may be a result of CSR funds being used to support individual teacher interests and providing for more staff development and materials than were previously available. Alternatively, this rating may be related to other factors not relevant to CSR.







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*FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

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THE GOAL OF THIS REPORT IS TO DESCRIBE CSR IMPLEMENTATION AT A sample of grantee schools. Implementation is described in terms of local context, CSR model adoption, and five constructs that research indicates are related to successful CSR implementation: capacity, external support, internal focus, pedagogy, and restructuring outcomes. These constructs overlap with the 11 CSR components.

One of the primary assumptions of CSR is that in order for it to be sustainable and improve student achievement, it needs to impact multiple school components in a coordinated effort, including school governance, instruction, and parental and community involvement, (Taylor, 2005). Further, efforts need to be sustained for three to five years (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Research also shows that implementation fidelity in schools that have been implementing models for five years or more was higher than at schools implementing for less time (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005). In other words, the longer a school implements a CSR program, the closer implementation comes to model specifications. Accordingly, the *No Child Left Behind Act* specified that three-year CSR grants were intended to initiate programs that were to be continued beyond grant funding; formal planning for sustainability was a grant requirement.

Implementation fidelity and sustainability is a challenge under any circumstances given the complex nature of schools and school funding. Recipients of the state's ITL Cycle 3 and THSI grants initiated CSR programs at the end of the federal CSR cycle when the program was discontinued. Therefore, the amount of funding awarded to each school was reduced from expected amounts in the final year of the grant, which significantly impacted implementation at some grantee campuses.<sup>20</sup>

No schools in this sample were able to implement coordinated efforts impacting all 11 components of CSR. Some successfully implemented programs school-wide; some implemented either piecemeal or small, isolated programs. Even at schools demonstrating the most coordinated efforts, school

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<sup>20</sup> For example, most schools designed their CSR programs around the expectation of receiving similar annual amounts for each of the three years of grant funding; however, grantees received considerably less in the final year. Most reported substantially downsizing efforts or struggling to supplement funding from other sources.

management was rarely impacted beyond some attempts at shared leadership. Similarly, parental involvement activities had limited success at most campuses. These findings are similar to those reported nationally (Taylor, 2005).

This report represents an assessment of progress on CSR implementation after roughly three years of grant funding.<sup>21</sup> Based on the data collected over two time periods, spring 2006 and spring 2007, common points emerged as relevant across schools and may be useful to similar schools engaging in complex school reform efforts. The section below provides a summary of major findings with a synopsis of evidence followed by recommendations associated with each specific finding.

The findings and recommendations for this chapter are presented in terms of the entity most likely responsible for recommended changes. The first three target the grant application and administration process of the state agency. The remaining nine are implementation considerations directed to districts and schools but that could also be encouraged by the state agency.

### STATE GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND MONITORING

#### *Intentions for Seeking Funding*

► *The reasons schools sought funding impacted CSR implementation.*

School intentions in seeking CSR grant funding generally fell into two categories: 1) those supplementing schools budgets without a unifying goal; and 2) those continuing preexisting school programming or using funds to initiate CSR programs because school goals for improvement intersected with grant goals. National-level research identified similar patterns for schools adopting CSR late in the federal funding cycle (Taylor, 2005).

The ITL and THSI grant programs were invitational grants, meaning TEA selected eligible schools to apply. In responding to the grant opportunity, schools in the first category viewed the CSR grant funding as an avenue for meeting school needs that were not necessarily related to grant goals or focused on comprehensive reforms. Some staff at these schools described patterns of the school or district pursuing whatever new funding streams became available without long-term commitment to programs established through the new initiatives. These schools used CSR grant funds to purchase consumable supplies and services, such as office supplies and individual or fragmented teacher trainings that were unconnected to coherent reform plans. Staff at these schools demonstrated a low level of understanding about CSR because many viewed it as money without an explicit purpose. Staff also tended to be enthusiastic with grant progress because of what the money made available—extra resources and training. These schools applied for other grant funding regardless of whether the grant goals were

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<sup>21</sup> The ITL grant period ended in August 2007; THSI grants end in December 2007.

in line with school goals or existing programs and regardless if grant goals conflicted with existing programming. For example, one school implemented multiple school-wide programs simultaneously, while another campus was abandoning programming begun under CSR to pursue a different focus associated with newly available grant programs.

In other cases, schools or districts used the CSR grant to continue preexisting programs that aligned with CSR goals. In other cases, where schools initiated new programs based on the intersection of school goals and grant goals, evidence suggested the truest application of CSR grant funding. These schools applied for the grant because of interest in the intent of the grant—comprehensive reform. In these schools, initial grant funds were used as seed money to start a program with heavy investments in training. Systematic efforts were made to build capacity over the duration of the grant. Often, the model adoption was part of a larger district effort to pilot new programs. Once proven successful on intermediate outcomes, district adoption and expansion of programming replaced grant seed funding.

***Recommendation. Continue to educate applicants about the intent and goals of grants and expand the review of grant applications to include alignment with other grant awards and ongoing programming.***

While recognizing that the state has limited capacity to oversee the grant application process at individual sites, TEA should investigate the feasibility of providing mandatory pre-application grant development assistance workshops or information to ensure that grantees understand the goals of the grant program. The educational service centers may be one avenue for providing pre-grant education. Applications from schools should also contain information about current school programs and be reviewed for plans to align programming, including evidence of similar goals, systemic implementation activities, management capacity, and alignment of proposed budget expenditures with implementation plans.

### ***Model Selection and Adoption Process***

► ***Across implementation levels, school staff played a minimal role in the model selection and adoption process, which delayed initial staff buy-in at most schools.***

Several factors complicated the model selection and adoption processes at grantee schools. These included some aspects of the grant application process and school interpretation of staff participation requirements. The CSR literature provides a strong research base for the importance of the adoption process to later implementation and characterizes the implementation process in three ways: informative, inclusive, and legitimate (Aladjem & Borman, 2006). Informative processes provide information about the model to staff. Inclusive processes provide staff with a role in choosing a model. Legitimate processes allow for full unrestrained staff participation in model

selection and adoption. This same literature also documents that few schools engage in even informative adoption processes.

Schools in the study sample reflected trends identified in the research, in that staff were not legitimately involved in the model selection and adoption process. While grant applications referred to federal legislation requiring the use of local funds to be “supported by teachers, principals, administrators, school personnel staff, and other professional staff,” it did not specify the support be garnered during the model selection and adoption process.<sup>22</sup> Nor was full staff participation explicitly encouraged through an application process requiring a staff vote on model selection, which would at least ensure staff were aware of school reform efforts at the earliest stages of implementation. Additionally, some other aspects of the application process could have hindered full staff participation in model selection and adoption. The turnaround time was short and signed support was required from the site-based decision-making committee; thus, faculty awareness at the critical early stages was generally low. Model selection decisions made by the principal or district and the site-based decision-making committee represented the extent of staff participation in most cases.

Ensuring legitimate faculty participation goes beyond requiring a faculty vote to allowing adequate time and resources for faculty to have an informed role in deciding which model a school should adopt. While staff participation in model adoption does not ensure strong implementation, it does raise awareness about CSR efforts and represents an important step towards the shared leadership that CSR promotes. Only the high-level implementing schools, and only to a limited extent, involved some faculty in selection processes or informed faculty about model selection prior to grant implementation. Selection at these schools represented, at best, informative inclusion in the adoption process, causing less of a delay in bringing staff into implementation than was evidenced at the middle- and low-implementing schools.

**Recommendation. Continue to refine the grant application process and include additional guidelines, technical assistance, or planning grants to ensure grant applicants meet CSR expectations concerning model selection processes.** At the grant award and administration level, TEA should continue to refine future application processes to include more explicit guidelines defining legitimate staff participation (for example, including a staff vote) and/or provide mandatory technical assistance for applicants. Schools appear to require education and support in how to include staff in this process. Providing technical assistance prior to grant award or providing web-based tools that guide model selection processes could be considered. Additionally, Requests for Applications (RFA) timelines should be guided by considerations such as allowing sufficient time for needs assessment and

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<sup>22</sup> Public Law 107-110, NCLB, Title I, Part F, Sec. 1606. (a) (5).

inclusion of the majority of staff in research and selection of reform models. Small planning grants and use of educational service centers are other possibilities for facilitating this process.

### ***External Progress Measures***

► ***Methods of tracking CSR progress require attention.***

Generally, TEA-required progress reports from low-implementing schools were over-inflated because school staff had a limited understanding of CSR goals. For example, at the first reporting period (after about 6 months), low-implementing schools described their CSR implementation level as “Implementing,” the second highest level. Caution should be used when interpreting these reports, as they can be misleading, particularly when there are no observations from external staff to confirm such reports. TEA does request input from a number of stakeholders involved in grant implementation, including the external Technical Assistance Provider for one grant program.

Additionally, using school climate as an indicator of progress with CSR implementation may also be misleading. Data collected across both time periods indicated that schools with low CSR implementation reported similar ratings on school climate measures to schools with higher CSR implementation. In these cases, improvements in school climate may have been more related to having access to funding than successful use of funds in grant-intended ways. Alternatively, reports on school climate might not have been related to grant funding at all. Also, research documents that schools engaged in school reform may report low levels of school climate due to the number and extent of changes occurring as a consequence of CSR implementation.

***Recommendation. Continue to review approaches to monitoring CSR progress.*** Continue and expand the use of progress reports using a format that includes multiple data points from multiple sources (district managers, principals, grant coordinators, and Technical Assistance Providers). This format allows information to be triangulated and provides a school-level measure of information consistency and coordination. Further, using reporting formats consistent with grant goals, research, and similar grant programs allows for comparison across years and programs. Identifying appropriate intermediate outcomes for reporting would also support formative evaluation purposes and state assessments of the status of reform efforts at grantee sites. For example, collecting the number of days and staff participating in CSR-related professional development activities would provide information about the extent of staff participation and investment in training. Providing monitoring and follow-up support for grant implementation could help schools refine local implementation activities, though the size of the state might prohibit such support.

### DISTRICT AND SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION

#### *Model Choice*

► *Addressing the comprehensive design requirement of CSR did not depend on CSR model choice.*

The CSR literature is replete with accounts highlighting the difficulties in comprehensive implementation of school reforms (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005). The comprehensive design component of CSR requires that programs include all students in all grade levels; address all subject areas; and impact instruction, school organization and governance, staffing, professional development, and parental involvement. As demonstrated by the schools in this study sample, choosing a model that was designed to be comprehensive was not enough to ensure comprehensive implementation. In fact, only one of the high-implementing schools chose a model designed for school-wide implementation, while all three low-implementing schools chose comprehensive CSR models that were explicitly aligned with these CSR goals.

Three of the four high-implementing schools chose models that were not formally recognized as CSR models or aligned with CSR components.<sup>23</sup> Though these schools did not design programs to address all aspects of CSR, they did successfully create explicit and systematic plans for expanding the program parameters to implement school wide and impact all students. In contrast, some of the lower implementing schools confined their efforts to limited models not designed for comprehensive school-wide reform (e.g., AVID, Princeton Review) and had yet to impact more than a small number of staff and students. Alternatively, lower implementing schools that chose CSR-aligned models demonstrated little commitment to real institutional change. Overall, the difference between high- and low-implementing schools was high-implementing schools chose models that were well aligned with school needs, developed coherent and comprehensive plans, and dedicated leadership for school-wide change.

Reflecting the research (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005), evidence from schools in this sample suggested that more targeted prescriptive changes were easier to implement according to design specifications and had higher model fidelity but required planning and resources to expand school wide. For example, having an AVID elective class was easily accomplished. Providing AVID binders school wide and implementing a prescriptive note-taking strategy required more oversight and support. However, extending a targeted model, such as AVID, school wide required fewer resources than a model requiring a philosophical shift, such as ICLE, to provide a more rigorous and relevant curriculum. Larger philosophical shifts with expectations for substantial change in practice occurred more slowly, if at all, and involved more intensive implementation processes, such as mentor/coaching models.

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<sup>23</sup> See Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) Catalog of School Reform Models, <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/catalog/modellist.asp>



If a model does not incorporate a school-wide design, is more philosophical in nature, or requires significant change to existing philosophies or practices, it takes more resources and a much more concerted effort at coordination with other school activities. At low-resource schools already overwhelmed by issues such as safety and security, this level of focused programming could create a barrier to fuller implementation.

It should be noted that while most schools initially proposed to implement comprehensive programs, some components of CSR designs became higher priority over the course of grant implementation. For example, curriculum and professional development activities appeared to receive the most attention at most schools, while school governance and parent and community involvement were the least impacted. In fact, parental involvement activities were the least effectively integrated or the first to drop to a lower priority status in implementation, especially with the decrease in funding in the final year of the grant.

**Recommendation. Align model choices with local context and needs with clear plans for comprehensive implementation. Model choices and CSR plans 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.

### **Leadership**

► ***A person or group of people was responsible for leading CSR efforts at high-implementing schools.***

A CSR advocate or advocates emerged across the high-implementing schools in this sample. These findings reflect national research (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005; Aladjem & Borman, 2006) pointing to the importance of having key agents actively engaged in the process of school change. High-implementing schools in the study benefited from having a strong CSR advocate who provided a defined and widespread message or vision to guide CSR implementation. This leadership was provided at either the district level or through a committed cadre of teachers or strong principal at the school level to promote CSR implementation.

**Recommendation. 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.

### ***District Agency***

► ***Active district support led to potential sustainability.***

It was imperative in high-implementing schools that the district was actively involved, supportive, and proactive in expanding programming begun under CSR. In three of the four high-implementing schools, the district used the CSR school as a pilot site for district-wide adoption of the program. The district also usually supplemented the funding gap created by the decrease in CSR funding in the final year of the grant. Consistent with national research, these districts exhibited prudence by developing a plan for systematically scaling up a cohesive and consistent program, patience by allowing individual schools to pilot efforts with enough support to warrant expansion based on positive outcomes, and restraint by protecting schools from additional competing initiatives or agendas (Taylor, 2005). Perhaps most importantly, these demonstrations of district support indicated to school staff that their efforts had been successful, valuable, and not part of a passing fad. In these sites, the district provided a positive context for experimentation.

**Recommendation. 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, to provide district-wide support for change, and to protect schools from competing initiatives.

### ***Clear Goals and Protection From Competing Priorities***

► ***High-implementing schools provided staff with a clear plan for CSR.***

Internal focus and the creation of a program that was “on message,” especially in terms of CSR integration with existing school programs, were critical for high-implementing schools. Teachers in these schools demonstrated a consistent understanding of the goals of their school’s CSR model. These schools were also very clear and careful about not bringing in competing, unrelated programs or treating CSR as an add-on program.

**Recommendation. Define and disseminate clearly articulated goals for the CSR program.** Districts and schools should use program advocates to emphasize the goals of the reform. Staff members need to understand what is asked of them and how CSR supports existing school efforts. Taking time to define this message will help integrate CSR with other programs and

eliminate confusion, especially if staff participation in initial model selection and adoption is limited.

### **Capacity**

► *High-implementing schools viewed the CSR grant as a vehicle for building infrastructure and capacity that could be sustained beyond the grant funding period.*

High-implementing schools used the CSR grant to build social capital and capacity by creating professional learning communities with a collective focus and shared values and norms (Aladjem & Borman, 2006; Uekawa, Aladjem, & Zhang, 2005). These schools increased capacity by either delivering well-defined and focused training school wide or training a cadre of teachers and then providing a systematic, monitored, and product-oriented process for redelivery of training.

Allowing individual staff interests to drive training, training only a discrete number of teachers without a redelivery plan, or providing training to large numbers of teachers without follow-up are not enough to build capacity for school improvement. Some schools in the sample at the end of three years of grant implementation had less than 10% of staff trained in model strategies. Further, extensive technical assistance without staff buy-in and local leadership does not build capacity as demonstrated by some low-implementing schools that received over 1,500 hours of intensive external support.

Related to the role of training in creating social capital and increasing capacity was a school's ability to buffer against staff turnover. High turnover rates required continuous induction processes diluting efforts to provide sustained and intensive professional development (Taylor, 2005). Low- and middle-implementing schools experienced large turnovers in staff and were forced to divert funding towards retraining.

**Recommendation. Build school capacity and social capital through focused campus-wide training that promotes professional learning communities with shared norms, and the capacity for redelivery.** Using resources to provide a focused campus-wide professional development effort ensures all teachers are trained, builds CSR understanding, and promotes collaboration around CSR efforts. Mechanisms for providing local 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 staff so that investments in capacity building are not lost.

### **Pedagogy and Collaboration**

► *Through extensive training and support, teachers in high-implementing schools were able to use CSR-related teaching strategies in classrooms.*

Considering that instructional change takes longer to achieve and occurs

later in the implementation phase of school reform, it was noteworthy that teachers at high-implementing schools were applying CSR-related teaching strategies in classrooms to some extent. In cases where models were linked to the development of teaching products, such as high quality lessons, more intense professional development was required for classroom application. However, this level of implementation required effective training, time for staff to understand the training, and the expectation of classroom application. Achieving pedagogical change involved ongoing support in terms of formal and informal collaboration between teachers and external assistance providers and proved to be time intensive. Dedicated planning time was oriented around staff collaboration on key pedagogical approaches.

**Recommendation. 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, first, the expectation of implementation, then, ongoing support, collaboration, and time. This commitment must come from instructional leaders if CSR efforts 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.

### ***Internal Progress Monitoring***

► ***High-implementing schools instituted formative monitoring across a variety of intermediate outcomes.***

Success in identifying intermediate outcomes and monitoring progress towards them varied across schools. At high-implementing schools, staff comments about model impacts demonstrated an understanding of progress and were evidence that the schools had provided tools and time for analysis and reflection around intermediate outcomes. At middle- and low-implementing schools, grant leaders often missed an opportunity to build momentum and support for CSR by failing to define intermediate outcomes and provide a systematic process for monitoring them beyond vaguely targeting improved student achievement as measured through benchmarking and TAKS. Where schools did systematically review intermediate outcomes, such as ninth-grade retention rates for example, staff saw more immediate results from their efforts and were more enthusiastic about the prospects of continuing in the direction begun under CSR. Where TAKS was the only measure of success, staff were unsure about the success of their efforts and felt overwhelmed because student achievement had yet to be impacted.

**Recommendation. Monitor progress through both intermediate and summative outcomes.** Defining intermediate outcomes demonstrates an understanding of the cycle of CSR and the time needed to achieve

summative outcomes such as improved student achievement. A systematic process for monitoring progress around intermediate outcomes provides clarity, guidance, and focus and communicates the school's commitment to accomplishing the goals of CSR. This process also encourages optimism about growth. State support in encouraging identification of intermediate goals may be an avenue to investigate.

### ***Maintaining Model Strategies and Provider Relationships***

► ***High-implementing schools exhibited the potential to maintain model strategies and formal relationships with external Technical Assistance Providers.***

High-implementing schools uniformly evidenced plans for continuing programming begun under CSR. Prior research (Taylor, 2005) suggests that sustainability of CSR programs is linked to several post-grant approaches:

- Maintenance of strategies and formal relationships with providers
- Maintenance of strategies but not relationships with providers
- Maintenance of the name of the model without evidence of either strategies or formal relationships with providers
- Discontinuation of all remnants of CSR

Data suggested that the four high-implementing schools in the study would independently retain formal TAP services or maintain formal strategies and provider services through district-wide expansion of programs piloted at these sites. Two middle-implementing schools were likely to maintain some of the strategies adopted during CSR that had become part of school routine, but they were not likely to have the resources to maintain formal TAP services. Data indicated that one low-implementing site could continue to refer to itself as a CSR model school but that this likely would be in name only since little success towards implementing reform strategies occurred during the grant period. The other schools (one middle-implementing and two low-implementing) were likely to drop all ties associated with CSR models, including strategies, so that a year after the grant ends, there might be little evidence that CSR occurred. Accordingly, these schools made little progress during the grant period.

***Recommendation. Promote district-wide adoption and expansion of successfully piloted strategies and relationships.*** Continuing model strategies with formal support from TAPs ensures new teachers will be provided necessary training and support; the efforts invested during CSR are not abandoned; and the school and district have a mission, commitment, and focus for growth. While schools may not always need formal model support to maintain strategies, especially once a model has become institutionalized, maintaining this support during piloting and early implementation has been shown to be linked to stronger and longer implementation.

## ***Sustainability***

- ▶ ***High-implementing schools developed plans for continuing programs and activities initiated with CSR grant funds beyond the grant program.***

High-implementing schools had clear plans for continuing CSR programming. Either district support had already been committed or a strong infrastructure had been created through staff training. In either scenario, the continuation of school efforts was not dependent on grant funding. Building a strong school culture around reform efforts was also instrumental to ensuring sustainability. At one high-implementing campus that had used the same model for six years, the school's identity was built around it, and teachers were hired to teach there based on their acceptance of the model's philosophy.

### ***Recommendation. Plan for sustaining CSR efforts beyond grant funding.***

Finding and securing resources either through reallocation of local district funds or through new grant opportunities to maintain programming begun under CSR is essential and indicates to staff that the school is committed to school reform—that CSR is not just a passing fad. Sustaining CSR efforts also relates to building capacity and school culture around CSR goals and strategies.

## **CONCLUSION**

Most of the case study sites faced some obstacles common to schools serving high poverty student populations. Among these common challenges were a history of failure and low expectations, entrenched dysfunctional culture, safety and security issues, language barriers for students and/or parents, staff resistance to change, high teacher turnover, or multiple uncoordinated programs.

Level of implementation was not dependent on model choice or school demographics. Rather it depended primarily on factors external to model choice, such as identification of a program advocate, district support, investment in teacher training, ability to retain teachers, and the match between grant goals and school goals. When these factors were combined, some schools were able to overcome contextual challenges that too often can stall implementation, including risk factors associated with large urban high schools in large urban districts. Consistent with prior research (Kurki, Aladjem, & Carter, 2005), study findings suggest the significance of advocates or agents (e.g., principal, district, teacher groups) and increased social capital in overcoming contextual barriers (e.g., socio-economic status, Limited English Proficiency, size). Positive school-wide change can occur across a variety of environments if advocates for change are actively engaged in the process.



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# *Appendix A*





## COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM TEACHER/STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

*This questionnaire is part of an evaluation of the Comprehensive School Reform grants the Texas Education Agency awarded to 170 schools, including your school. The Comprehensive School Reform grants promote school-wide improvements through activities such as curriculum changes, sustained professional development, and increased involvement of parents to enable students to meet challenging academic standards.*

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY APRIL 30, 2007!**

1. School Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. District Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. County-District-Campus Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

101. Is your school: (SELECT ONE ONLY)

- |   |                    |   |       |
|---|--------------------|---|-------|
| 1 | Elementary School  | 5 | K-8   |
| 2 | Middle School      | 6 | K-12  |
| 3 | Junior High School | 7 | 7-12  |
| 4 | Senior High School | 8 | Other |

102. Indicate your position at your school. (SELECT ONE ONLY)

- 1 Teacher
- 2 Counselor (SKIP TO Q.105)
- 3 Librarian (SKIP TO Q.105)
- 4 Other: (DESCRIBE) \_\_\_\_\_

103. What grade level(s) do you teach? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

PK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

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*Instrument adapted from:*

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## Appendix A

### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

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104. What content areas do you teach? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)
- 1 Reading/Language Arts
  - 2 Mathematics
  - 3 Science
  - 4 Social Studies
  - 5 Other: (DESCRIBE) \_\_\_\_\_
105. How many years of experience do you have as a school employee (teacher or staff)? (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- 1 5 years or less                      2 6-10 years                      3 11-15 years
  - 4 16-20 years                      5 More than 20 years
106. How many years of experience do you have as an employee at this school? (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- 1 Less than one year                      2 1-5 years                      3 6-10 years
  - 4 11-15 years                      5 More than 15 years
107. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- 1 Bachelor's Degree
  - 2 Master's Degree
  - 3 Law Degree, Doctoral Degree, Other, Please Specify \_\_\_\_\_
108. What is your age group? (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- 1 29 years or younger
  - 2 30-39 years
  - 3 40-49 years
  - 4 50-59 years
  - 5 60 years or older
109. What is your gender?
- 1 Male
  - 2 Female

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## II. COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

*Using a 5-point scale ranging from 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neutral, 4-disagree, to 5-strongly disagree, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following items as they are currently reflected in your school. If you are not sure or do not have the information select the “9-don’t know/not sure” category. If you have no basis on which to respond, leave the item blank.*

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200A-1.</b> I have a thorough understanding of this school's comprehensive school reform (CSR) program.						
<b>200A-2.</b> I have received adequate initial and ongoing professional development/training for CSR program implementation.						
<b>200A-3.</b> Professional development provided by external trainers, model developers, and/or designers has been valuable.						
<b>200A-4.</b> Guidance and support provided by our school's external facilitator, support team, or other state-identified resource personnel have helped our school implement its program.						

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### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200A-5.</b> Teachers are given sufficient planning time to implement our program.						
<b>200A-6.</b> Materials (books and other resources) needed to implement our CSR program are readily available.						
<b>200B-1.</b> Our school has sufficient faculty and staff to fully implement this program.						
<b>200B-2.</b> Because of our CSR program, technological resources have become more available.						
<b>200B-3.</b> Because of our CSR program, I use textbooks, workbooks, and worksheets less than I used to for basic skills or content area instruction.						
<b>200B-4.</b> Our comprehensive school reform program has changed classroom learning activities a great deal.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200B-5.</b> Students in my class spend at least two hours per school day in interdisciplinary or project-based work.						
<b>200B-6.</b> Students in my class spend much of their time working in cooperative learning teams.						
<b>200C-1.</b> Students are using technology more effectively because of our CSR program.						
<b>200C-2.</b> Student achievement has been positively impacted by CSR.						
<b>200C-3.</b> Students in this school are more enthusiastic about learning than they were before we became a CSR school.						
<b>200C-4.</b> Because of CSR, parents are more involved in the educational program of this school.						
<b>200C-5.</b> Community support for our school has increased since comprehensive school reform has been implemented.						

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### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200C-6.</b> Students have higher standards for their own work because of our school's program.						
<b>200D-1.</b> Teachers are more involved in decision making at this school than they were before we implemented comprehensive school reform.						
<b>200D-2.</b> Our program adequately addresses the requirements of students with special needs.						
<b>200D-3.</b> Because of our school's program, teachers in this school spend more time working together to develop curriculum and plan instruction.						
<b>200D-4.</b> Teachers in this school are generally supportive of our CSR program.						
<b>200D-5.</b> Because of CSR, interactions between teachers and students are more positive.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200D-6.</b> The elements of our CSR program are effectively integrated to help us meet school improvement goals.						
<b>200E-1.</b> As a school staff, we regularly review implementation and outcome benchmarks to evaluate our progress.						
<b>200E-2.</b> Our school has a plan for evaluating all components of our comprehensive school reform program.						
<b>200E-3.</b> My school receives effective assistance from external partners (e.g., university, businesses, agencies, etc.).						
<b>200E-4.</b> I am satisfied with the Federal, State, local, and private resources that are being coordinated to support our CSR program.						

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## Appendix A

### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

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229. Think of your experience with your school's comprehensive reform program; which of the following helped facilitate program implementation?  
**(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 229-1 Support from district administration
- 229-2 Support from school administration
- 229-3 Support (buy-in) from teachers
- 229-4 Support from TEA
- 229-5 Adequate human resources
- 229-6 Adequate financial resources
- 229-7 Adequate time
- 229-8 Training/professional development
- 229-9 Technical assistance from ESCs
- 229-10 Technical assistance from LEA-selected provider
- 229-11 Technology
- 229-12 Whole school focus
- 229-13 Reform focus
- 229-14 Curriculum focus
- 229-15 Academic standards
- 229-16 Assessment/use of data
- 229-17 Evaluation of progress
- 229-18 Parent/community involvement
- 229-19 Other **(DESCRIBE)**: \_\_\_\_\_

- 229a. Which three of these do you consider the main facilitators of your school's comprehensive reform program implementation?  
**(RECORD NUMBERS FROM Q.229)**

\_\_\_\_ \_

230. Again, think of your experience with your school's comprehensive reform program; what barriers did you and other teachers or administrators experience in implementing the program? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 230-1 Lack of or insufficient support from district administration
- 230-2 Lack of or insufficient support from school administration
- 230-3 Lack of or insufficient support from teachers
- 230-4 Lack of or insufficient support from TEA
- 230-5 Lack of or insufficient human resources
- 230-6 Lack of or insufficient financial resources
- 230-7 Lack of or insufficient time
- 230-8 Lack of or insufficient training/professional development

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- 230-9 Lack of or insufficient technical assistance from ESCs
- 230-10 Lack of or insufficient technical assistance from LEA-selected provider
- 230-11 Lack of or insufficient technology
- 230-12 Lack of whole school focus
- 230-13 Lack of reform focus
- 230-14 Lack of curriculum focus
- 230-15 Lack of assessment/use of data
- 230-16 Lack of evaluation of progress
- 230-17 Lack of or poor parent/community involvement
- 230-18 Other: **(DESCRIBE):** \_\_\_\_\_

230a. Which three of these are the biggest barriers? **(RECORD NUMBERS FROM Q.230)**

\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix A

### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

### III. SCHOOL CLIMATE

*Using a 5-point scale ranging from 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neutral, 4-disagree, to 5-strongly disagree, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following items as they are currently reflected in your school. If you are not sure or do not have the information select the “9-don’t know/not sure” category. If you have no basis on which to respond, leave the item blank.*

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300A-1.</b> The faculty and staff share a sense of commitment to the school goals.						
<b>300A-2.</b> Low achieving students are given opportunity for success in this school.						
<b>300A-3.</b> School rules and expectations are clearly communicated.						
<b>300A-4.</b> Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies.						
<b>300A-5.</b> Community businesses are active in this school.						
<b>300A-6.</b> Students are encouraged to help others with problems.						
<b>300B-1.</b> Faculty and staff feel that they make important contributions to this school.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300B-2.</b> The administration communicates the belief that all students can learn.						
<b>300B-3.</b> Varied learning environments are provided to accommodate diverse teaching and learning styles.						
<b>300B-4.</b> The school building is neat, bright, clean, and comfortable.						
<b>300B-5.</b> Parents actively support school activities.						
<b>300B-6.</b> Parents are treated courteously when they call or visit the school.						
<b>300C-1.</b> Rules for student behavior are consistently enforced.						
<b>300C-2.</b> School employees and students show respect for each other's individual differences.						
<b>300C-3.</b> Teachers at each grade (course) level design learning activities to support both curriculum and student needs.						

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### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300C-4.</b> Teachers are encouraged to communicate concerns, questions, and constructive ideas.						
<b>300C-5.</b> Students share the responsibility for keeping the school environment attractive and clean.						
<b>300C-6.</b> Parents are invited to serve on school advisory committees.						
<b>300D-1.</b> Parent volunteers are used whenever possible.						
<b>300D-2.</b> The administration encourages teachers to be creative and to try new methods.						
<b>300D-3.</b> Students are held responsible for their actions.						
<b>300D-4.</b> All students in this school are expected to master basic skills at each grade level.						
<b>300D-5.</b> Student discipline is administered fairly and appropriately.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300D-6.</b> Teachers often provide opportunities for students to develop higher-order skills.						
<b>300E-1.</b> Student misbehavior in this school does not interfere with the teaching process.						
<b>300E-2.</b> Students participate in solving school-related problems.						
<b>300E-3.</b> Students participate in classroom activities regardless of their sex, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, or academic ability.						
<b>300E-4.</b> Faculty and staff cooperate a great deal in trying to achieve school goals.						
<b>300E-5.</b> An atmosphere of trust exists among the administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents.						
<b>300E-6.</b> Student tardiness or absence from school is not a major problem.						

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### CSR Teacher/Staff Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300F-1.</b> Teachers are active participants in the decision making at this school.						
<b>300F-2.</b> Information about school activities is communicated to parents on a consistent basis.						
<b>300F-3.</b> Teachers use curriculum guides to ensure that similar subject content is covered within each grade.						
<b>300F-4.</b> The principal (or administration) provides useful feedback on staff performance.						
<b>300F-5.</b> Teachers use appropriate evaluation methods to determine student achievement.						
<b>300F-6.</b> The administration does a good job of protecting instructional time.						
<b>300G-1.</b> Parents are often invited to visit classrooms.						
<b>300G-2.</b> Teachers are proud of this school and its students.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300G-3.</b> This school is a safe place in which to work.						
<b>300G-4.</b> Most problems facing this school can be solved by the principal and faculty.						
<b>300G-5.</b> Pull-out programs do not interfere with basic skills instruction.						
<b>300G-6.</b> The principal is an effective instructional leader.						
<b>300H-1.</b> Teachers have high expectations for all students.						
<b>300H-2.</b> Teachers, administrators, and parents assume joint responsibility for student discipline.						
<b>300H-3.</b> The goals of this school are reviewed and updated regularly.						
<b>300H-4.</b> Student behavior is generally positive in this school.						
<b>300H-5.</b> The principal is highly visible throughout the school.						

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*CSR Teacher/Staff  
Questionnaire*

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300H-6.</b> Teachers use a wide range of teaching materials and media.						
<b>300H-7.</b> People in this school really care about each other.						

350. Please provide any additional comments you may have pertaining to your school's climate:

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***THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE!***

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## COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

*This questionnaire is part of an evaluation of the Comprehensive School Reform grants the Texas Education Agency awarded to 170 schools, including your school. The Comprehensive School Reform grants promote school-wide improvements through activities such as curriculum changes, sustained professional development, and increased involvement of parents to enable students to meet challenging academic standards.*

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY APRIL 16, 2007!**

1. School Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. District Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. County-District-Campus Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

101. Is your school: (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- |   |                    |   |       |
|---|--------------------|---|-------|
| 3 | Elementary School  | 5 | K-8   |
| 4 | Middle School      | 6 | K-12  |
| 3 | Junior High School | 7 | 7-12  |
| 4 | Senior High School | 8 | Other |
102. How many years of experience do you have as a school principal?  
(SELECT ONE ONLY)
- |   |                 |   |                    |   |             |
|---|-----------------|---|--------------------|---|-------------|
| 1 | 5 years or less | 2 | 6-10 years         | 3 | 11-15 years |
| 4 | 16-20 years     | 5 | More than 20 years |   |             |
103. How many years of experience do you have as a principal at this school?  
(SELECT ONE ONLY)
- |   |                    |   |                    |   |            |
|---|--------------------|---|--------------------|---|------------|
| 1 | Less than one year | 2 | 1-5 years          | 3 | 6-10 years |
| 4 | 11-15 years        | 5 | More than 15 years |   |            |
104. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (SELECT ONE ONLY)
- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| 4 | Bachelor's Degree  |  |  |
| 5 | Master's Degree  |  |  |
| 6 | Law Degree, Doctoral Degree, Other, Please Specify _____ |  |  |

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## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

105. What is your age group? (SELECT ONE ONLY)

- 6 29 years or younger
- 7 30-39 years
- 8 40-49 years
- 9 50-59 years
- 10 60 years or older

106. What is your gender?

- 3 Male
- 4 Female

## II. COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

*Using a 5-point scale ranging from 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neutral, 4-disagree, to 5-strongly disagree, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following items as they are currently reflected in your school. If you are not sure or do not have the information select the “9-don’t know/not sure” category. If you have no basis on which to respond, leave the item blank.*

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200A-1</b> I have a thorough understanding of this school's comprehensive school reform (CSR) program.						
<b>200A-2</b> I have received adequate initial and ongoing professional development/training for CSR program implementation.						
<b>200A-3</b> Professional development provided by external trainers, model developers, and/or designers has been valuable.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200A-4</b> Guidance and support provided by our school's external facilitator, support team, or other state-identified resource personnel have helped our school implement its program.						
<b>200A-5</b> Teachers are given sufficient planning time to implement our program.						
<b>200A-6</b> Materials (books and other resources) needed to implement our CSR program are readily available.						
<b>200B-1</b> Our school has sufficient faculty and staff to fully implement this program.						
<b>200B-2</b> Because of our CSR program, technological resources have become more available.						
<b>200B-3</b> Because of our CSR program, teachers use textbooks, workbooks, and worksheets less than they used to for basic skills or content area instruction.						
<b>200B-4</b> Our comprehensive school reform program has changed classroom learning activities a great deal.						

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## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200B-5</b> Students in most classes spend at least two hours per school day in interdisciplinary or project-based work.						
<b>200B-6</b> Students in most classes spend much of their time working in cooperative learning teams.						
<b>200C-1</b> Students are using technology more effectively because of our CSR program.						
<b>200C-2</b> Student achievement has been positively impacted by CSR.						
<b>200C-3</b> Students in this school are more enthusiastic about learning than they were before we became a CSR school.						
<b>200C-4</b> Because of CSR, parents are more involved in the educational program of this school.						
<b>200C-5</b> Community support for our school has increased since comprehensive school reform has been implemented.						
<b>200C-6</b> Students have higher standards for their own work because of our school's program.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200D-1</b> Teachers are more involved in decision making at this school than they were before we implemented comprehensive school reform.						
<b>200D-2</b> Our program adequately addresses the requirements of students with special needs.						
<b>200D-3</b> Because of our school's program, teachers in this school spend more time working together to develop curriculum and plan instruction.						
<b>200D-4</b> Teachers in this school are generally supportive of our CSR program.						
<b>200D-5</b> Because of CSR, interactions between teachers and students are more positive.						
<b>200D-6</b> The elements of our CSR program are effectively integrated to help us meet school improvement goals.						
<b>200E-1</b> As a school staff, we regularly review implementation and outcome benchmarks to evaluate our progress.						

## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>200E-2</b> Our school has a plan for evaluating all components of our comprehensive school reform program.						
<b>200E-3</b> My school receives effective assistance from external partners (e.g., university, businesses, agencies, etc.).						
<b>200E-4</b> I am satisfied with the Federal, State, local, and private resources that are being coordinated to support our CSR program.						

229. Think of your experience with your school's comprehensive reform program; which of the following helped facilitate program implementation?  
(**SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**)

- 229-1 Support from district administration
- 229-2 Support from school administration
- 229-3 Support (buy-in) from teachers
- 229-4 Support from TEA
- 229-5 Adequate human resources
- 229-6 Adequate financial resources
- 229-7 Adequate time resources
- 229-8 Training/professional development
- 229-9 Technical assistance from ESCs
- 229-10 Technical assistance from LEA-selected provider
- 229-11 Technology
- 229-12 Whole school focus
- 229-13 Reform focus
- 229-14 Curriculum focus
- 229-15 Academic standards
- 229-16 Assessment/use of data
- 229-17 Evaluation of progress
- 229-18 Parent/community involvement
- 229-19 Other (**DESCRIBE**): \_\_\_\_\_
- 229- Specified

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229a. Which three of these do you consider the main facilitators of your school's comprehensive reform program implementation? **(RECORD NUMBERS FROM Q.29)**

**229a-1 to 229a-19**      \_\_\_\_\_

230. Again, think of your experience with your school's comprehensive reform program; what barriers did you and other teachers or administrators experience in implementing the program? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1-1 Lack of or insufficient support from district administration
- 1-2 Lack of or insufficient support from school administration
- 1-3 Lack of or insufficient support from teachers
- 1-4 Lack of or insufficient support from TEA
- 230-5 Lack of or insufficient human resources
- 230-6 Lack of or insufficient financial resources
- 230-7 Lack of or insufficient time
- 230-8 Lack of or insufficient training/professional development
- 230-9 Lack of or insufficient technical assistance from ESCs
- 230-10 Lack of or insufficient technical assistance from LEA-selected provider
- 230-11 Lack of or insufficient technology
- 230-12 Lack of whole school focus
- 230-13 Lack of reform focus
- 230-14 Lack of curriculum focus
- 230-15 Lack of assessment/use of data
- 230-16 Lack of evaluation of progress
- 230-17 Lack of or poor parent/community involvement
- 230-18 Other: **(DESCRIBE)**: \_\_\_\_\_
- 230- Specified

30a. Which three of these are the biggest barriers? **(RECORD NUMBERS FROM Q.30)**

**230a-1 to 230a-18**      \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

### III. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Using a 5-point scale ranging from 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neutral, 4-disagree, to 5-strongly disagree, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following items as they are currently reflected in your school. *If you are not sure or do not have the information select the “9-don’t know/not sure” category. If you have no basis on which to respond, leave the item blank.*

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300A-1</b> The faculty and staff share a sense of commitment to the school goals.						
<b>300A-2</b> Low achieving students are given opportunity for success in this school.						
<b>300A-3</b> School rules and expectations are clearly communicated.						
<b>300A-4</b> Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies.						
<b>300A-5</b> Community businesses are active in this school.						
<b>300A-6</b> Students are encouraged to help others with problems.						
<b>300B-1</b> Faculty and staff feel that they make important contributions to this school.						
<b>300B-2</b> The administration communicates the belief that all students can learn.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300B-3</b> Varied learning environments are provided to accommodate diverse teaching and learning styles.						
<b>300B-4</b> The school building is neat, bright, clean, and comfortable.						
<b>300B-5</b> Parents actively support school activities.						
<b>300B-6</b> Parents are treated courteously when they call or visit the school.						
<b>300C-1</b> Rules for student behavior are consistently enforced.						
<b>300C-2</b> School employees and students show respect for each other's individual differences.						
<b>300C-3</b> Teachers at each grade (course) level design learning activities to support both curriculum and student needs.						
<b>300C-4</b> Teachers are encouraged to communicate concerns, questions, and constructive ideas.						
<b>300C-5</b> Students share the responsibility for keeping the school environment attractive and clean.						

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## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300C-6</b> Parents are invited to serve on school advisory committees.						
<b>300D-1</b> Parent volunteers are used whenever possible.						
<b>300D-2</b> The administration encourages teachers to be creative and to try new methods.						
<b>300D-3</b> Students are held responsible for their actions.						
<b>300D-4</b> All students in this school are expected to master basic skills at each grade level.						
<b>300D-5</b> Student discipline is administered fairly and appropriately.						
<b>300D-6</b> The administration encourages teachers to be creative and to try new methods.						
<b>300E-1</b> Student misbehavior in this school does not interfere with the teaching process.						
<b>300E-2</b> Students participate in solving school-related problems.						
<b>300E-3</b> Students participate in classroom activities regardless of their sex, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, or academic ability.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300E-4</b> Faculty and staff cooperate a great deal in trying to achieve school goals.						
<b>300E-5</b> An atmosphere of trust exists among the administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents.						
<b>300E-6</b> Student tardiness or absence from school is not a major problem.						
<b>300F-1</b> Teachers are active participants in the decision making at this school.						
<b>300F-2</b> Information about school activities is communicated to parents on a consistent basis.						
<b>300F-3</b> Teachers use curriculum guides to ensure that similar subject content is covered within each grade.						
<b>300F-4</b> The principal (or administration) provides useful feedback on staff performance.						
<b>300F-5</b> Teachers use appropriate evaluation methods to determine student achievement.						
<b>300F-6</b> The administration does a good job of protecting instructional time.						

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## Appendix A

### CSR Principal Questionnaire

	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300G-1</b> Parents are often invited to visit classrooms.						
<b>300G-2</b> Teachers are proud of this school and its students.						
<b>300G-3</b> This school is a safe place in which to work.						
<b>300G-4</b> Most problems facing this school can be solved by the principal and faculty.						
<b>300G-5</b> Pull-out programs do not interfere with basic skills instruction.						
<b>300G-6</b> The principal is an effective instructional leader.						
<b>300H-1</b> Teachers have high expectations for all students.						
<b>300H-2</b> Teachers, administrators, and parents assume joint responsibility for student discipline.						
<b>300H-3</b> The goals of this school are reviewed and updated regularly.						
<b>300H-4</b> Student behavior is generally positive in this school.						
<b>300H-5</b> The principal is highly visible throughout the school.						

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	1- Strongly Agree	2- Agree	3- Neutral	4- Disagree	5- Strongly Disagree	9- Don't Know/ Not Sure
<b>300H-6</b> Teachers use a wide range of teaching materials and media.						
<b>300H-7</b> People in this school really care about each other.						

350. Please provide any additional comments you may have pertaining to your school's climate:

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**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE!**

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*Appendix A*

*Technical Assistance  
Provider Survey—  
Year 2*

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER – YEAR 2**

1. Please record the name of the school and district to which you have been providing technical assistance for the comprehensive school reform (CSR) grant program:  
Campus Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
District Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** *If you are providing technical assistance to more than one school, please complete a separate questionnaire for each school*

***Please complete the questionnaire by May 7, 2007!***

2. When did you begin providing CSR-related technical assistance to the school (Month/Year)? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2a. Were you the original technical assistance provider on the CSR grant for this school or did you take the position over from another provider?
- 1 Original technical assistance provider  
2 Took over from another provider
3. Approximately how many hours of technical assistance have you provided per year to the school since you started working with this school on implementing the CSR grant? **(INDICATE NUMBER OF HOURS PER YEAR FOR THE SPECIFIC GRANT TYPE)**
- CSR-High School Grant (1/1/07-8/31/07): \_\_\_\_\_
- CSR-Improving Teaching and Learning Grant (8/1/06-8/31/07): \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the primary Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) model or program this school is implementing? **(SELECT ONE ONLY)**
- 1 Accelerated Schools  
2 America's Choice  
3 ATLAS Communities  
4 Coalition of Essential Schools  
5 Community for Learning  
6 Co-nect  
7 Core Knowledge  
8 Different Ways of Knowing  
9 Direct Instruction Model  
10 Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound  
11 First Things First  
12 High Schools That Work  
13 High/Scope Primary Grades Approach to Education

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- 14 Literacy Collaborative
- 15 Middle Start
- 16 Modern Red SchoolHouse
- 17 More Effective Schools
- 18 Onward to Excellence
- 19 Quantum Learning
- 20 QuEST
- 21 School Development Program
- 22 School Renaissance
- 23 Success For All/Roots & Wings
- 24 Talent Development High School with Career Academies
- 25 Talent Development Middle School
- 26 Turning Points
- 27 Urban Learning Center
- 28 Combination of different models
- 29 Other (**PLEASE DESCRIBE**): \_\_\_\_\_

5. Comprehensive School Reform has 11 components, listed below. At what stage of implementation is this school? Please rate each component on a 0 to 4 point scale, where “0 – Not Implementing,” “1 – Planning,” “2 – Piloting,” “3 – Implementing,” and “4 – Fulfilling.”

**0—Not Implementing.** No evidence of the strategy.  
**1—Planning.** The school is planning to or preparing to implement.  
**2—Piloting.** The strategy is being partially implemented with only a small group of teachers or students involved.  
**3—Implementing.** The majority of teachers are implementing the strategy, and the strategy is more fully developed in accordance with descriptions by the team.  
**4—Fulfilling.** The strategy is evident across the school and is fully developed in accordance with the design teams’ descriptions. Signs of “institutionalization” are evident.

- 1 The program uses effective, research-based methods and strategies
- 2 The program uses comprehensive design for effective school functioning that aligns the school’s curriculum, technology, and professional development into a school-wide reform plan
- 3 The program provides continuing professional development to teachers and staff
- 4 The program has measurable goals and benchmarks
- 5 The program has the support of school faculty, administrators, and staff
- 6 The program provides support for teachers and staff through shared leadership and teamwork
- 7 The program provides for parental and community involvement in planning and implementing school improvement activities
- 8 The school utilizes high quality external support and assistance

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## Appendix A

Technical Assistance  
Provider Survey—  
Year 2

- 9 The program includes a plan to evaluate implementation of the school reforms and the results
- 10 The program identifies how federal, state, and local resources will be used to coordinate services to support and sustain school reform
- 11 The program includes strategies to improve student academic achievement
6. Please check whether or not you have assisted the school with each of the following CSR components. (INDICATE YES OR NO FOR EACH COMPONENT)
- |  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Research-based methods and strategies                        | 1   | 2  |
| Comprehensive design   | 1   | 2  |
| Continuing professional development                          | 1   | 2  |
| Measurable goals and benchmarks                              | 1   | 2  |
| Generating school faculty, administrators, and staff support | 1   | 2  |
| Shared leadership and teamwork                               |     | 1  |
- 2
- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Parental and community involvement                     | 1 | 2 |
| External support and assistance                        | 1 | 2 |
| Evaluation of school reform implementation and results | 1 | 2 |
| Coordination of resources to sustain school reform     | 1 | 2 |
| Strategies to improve student academic achievement     | 1 | 2 |
7. How did you gather information from the school and the district on their implementation of the CSR grant? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)
- 1 School visits
- 2 Classroom observations
- 3 Interviews with district administrators
- 4 Interviews with school administrators
- 5 Interviews with teachers and staff
- 6 Interviews with students
- 7 Teacher and staff surveys
- 8 Student surveys
- 9 Compilation and review of assessment data
- 10 Other: (PLEASE DESCRIBE): \_\_\_\_\_

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8. How would you rate board, district administration, school administrator, teacher, and staff support for the CSR program? Use the following scale where “1” refers to “Not at all supportive,” “10” refers “Very supportive,” and “0” refers to “Unsure/Don’t Know (DK).” (SELECT ONE NUMBER FOR EACH)

	Not At All Supportive					Very Supportive					Unsure/ DK
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0
<b>Board</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0
<b>District Administration</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0
<b>School Administrator</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0
<b>Teachers</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0
<b>Staff</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	0

9. Which of the following describe the types of support the district provided to the school in implementing the CSR program? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

- 1 District staff helped the school apply for the grant
- 2 District staff attended staff development associated with the grant
- 3 The district notified all schools about the grant award
- 4 The district web page has updates about grant implementation
- 5 The district supplemented the grant with additional funds
- 6 The superintendent invited the principal to give a presentation to the Board about the grant
- 7 District provided staff to support grant activities
- 8 Don't know/Not sure
- 9 Other (PLEASE DESCRIBE): \_\_\_\_\_

10. Based on your experience with the CSR program at this school, are each of the following resources allocated by the school sufficient for the effective implementation of the grant? (SELECT ONE NUMBER FOR EACH. IF NO RESOURCES WERE ALLOCATED, SELECT “0”)

	Yes	No	Unsure/ Don't Know	Did Not Allocate Resource
Appropriate materials	1	2	3	0
Staffing	1	2	3	0
Planning time	1	2	3	0
Fiscal resources	1	2	3	0

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## Appendix A

### Technical Assistance Provider Survey— Year 2

11. Has the school made any changes at the classroom level as a result of the CSR program?

- 1 Yes  
2 No (**SKIP TO Q.14**)

12. To what extent has the school implemented changes at the classroom level?  
(**SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**)

	No Change	Minor Change	Moderate Change	Significant Change
Teachers are teaching to standards	1	2	3	4
Teachers aligned their instructional practices with the program goals	1	2	3	4
Increased use and integration of technology in instruction	1	2	3	4
Teachers use worksheets and workbooks to a lesser extent	1	2	3	4
Lessons are more interdisciplinary and project-based	1	2	3	4
Teachers cooperate and team teach more often	1	2	3	4
Teachers developed and use authentic assessments	1	2	3	4
Other ( <b>PLEASE DESCRIBE</b> ):	1	2	3	4

13. Have these changes been made by all teachers, at all grade levels, and across all content areas?

	All Teachers		All Grade Levels		All Content Areas	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Teachers are teaching to standards	1	2	1	2	1	2
Teachers aligned their instructional practices with the program goals	1	2	1	2	1	2
Increased use and integration of technology in instruction	1	2	1	2	1	2
Teachers use worksheets and workbooks to a lesser extent	1	2	1	2	1	2
Lessons are more interdisciplinary and project-based	1	2	1	2	1	2
Teachers cooperate and team teach more often	1	2	1	2	1	2
Teachers developed and use authentic assessments	1	2	1	2	1	2
Other	1	2	1	2	1	2

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- 13a. If not all teachers, about what percent of teachers have made these changes? \_\_\_\_\_
- 13b. If not all grade levels, at what grade level(s) have these changes been made: **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

- 13c. If not all content areas: in which content area(s) were changes made? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1 Reading/ English Language Arts
- 2 Mathematics
- 3 Social Studies
- 4 Science
- 5 Other **(PLEASE DESCRIBE)**: \_\_\_\_\_

14. In your judgment, to what extent has the CSR program affected students in each of the following areas? If you don't know, please leave the item blank. **(SELECT ONE NUMBER FOR EACH)**

	Not At All	A Little	Moderate Extent	Great Extent
Students are more interested in learning	1	2	3	4
Students are more motivated	1	2	3	4
Students do their homework more often	1	2	3	4
Students' quality of work has improved	1	2	3	4
Students attend school more regularly	1	2	3	4
Students' conduct has improved: fewer disciplinary problems	1	2	3	4
Students perform better academically on school tests	1	2	3	4
Students perform better on standardized tests	1	2	3	4
Students have more respect for their teachers	1	2	3	4

15. In your judgment, to what extent has the CSR program had an impact on students overall? **(SELECT ONE ONLY)**

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little
- 3 To a moderate extent
- 4 To a great extent

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## Appendix A

Technical Assistance  
Provider Survey—  
Year 2

16. In your judgment, to what extent has the CSR program affected teachers in each of the following areas? If you don't know, please leave the item blank. **(SELECT ONE NUMBER FOR EACH)**

	Not At All	A Little	Moderate Extent	Great Extent
Teachers have become more motivated	1	2	3	4
Teachers show greater enthusiasm in class	1	2	3	4
Teachers work more often in teams	1	2	3	4
Teachers spend more time planning projects with other teachers	1	2	3	4
Teachers feel a great sense of responsibility for implementing the reform program successfully	1	2	3	4
Teachers are very supportive of the school reform effort	1	2	3	4
Other (PLEASE DESCRIBE): _____	1	2	3	4

17. To what extent has the CSR program had an impact on teachers overall **(SELECT ONE ONLY)**

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little
- 3 To a moderate extent
- 4 To a great extent

18. What types of professional development did the school provide to teachers, staff, and administrators in connection with the CSR grant? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1 Whole school training
- 2 Conferences
- 3 Workshops
- 4 Coaching/Mentoring
- 5 Study groups
- 6 Other **(PLEASE DESCRIBE):** \_\_\_\_\_

19. Overall, please assess how helpful this professional development has been to the implementation of the CSR program. Use a 10-point scale ranging from "1 – not at all helpful" to "10 – very helpful." **(SELECT ONE ONLY FOR EACH)**

	Not At All Helpful										Very Helpful
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Staff	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Administrators	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

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20. Has the school provided staff development related to the implementation of the CSR program to new teachers?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Unsure

21. How has the school informed the community about the CSR program it is implementing? (**SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**)

- 1 The principal gave a presentation about the program during Parent Night or at PTO meetings
- 2 The school paper features information and updates about the program and how it will benefit students
- 3 The principal and teachers call on parents and community members to help with program implementation
- 4 The school organized an open house dedicated to the program and invited all parents and community members
- 5 Other (**PLEASE DESCRIBE**): \_\_\_\_\_

22. Which of the following describe the type of parental and community involvement activities offered through the CSR program? (**SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**)

- 1 Home visits
- 2 Parental involvement in decision-making
- 3 Parent education or training
- 4 Parent/community volunteer programs
- 5 Parent involvement in implementing school improvement activities
- 6 Parent involvement in evaluating school improvement activities
- 7 Other (**DESCRIBE**): \_\_\_\_\_

23(1). Please indicate how supportive the community has been of the CSR program this school is implementing? Use a 10-point scale ranging from “1 – not at all supportive” to “10 – very supportive.” (**SELECT ONE ONLY**)

<b>Not At All Supportive</b>	<b>Very Supportive</b>
1	10
2	9
3	8
4	7
5	6
6	5
7	4
8	3
9	2
10	1

23(2). Please indicate how supportive the school has been of you as the technical assistance provider? Use a 10-point scale ranging from “1 – not at all supportive” to “10 – very supportive.” (**SELECT ONE ONLY**)

<b>Not At All Supportive</b>	<b>Very Supportive</b>
1	10
2	9
3	8
4	7
5	6
6	5
7	4
8	3
9	2
10	1

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## Appendix A

Technical Assistance  
Provider Survey—  
Year 2

- 24 (1). To what extent has school management changed to align the school's curriculum, technology, and professional development because of the CSR program? Use a 10-point scale ranging from "1 – not at all" to "10 – to a great extent." (SELECT ONE ONLY)

Not At All										To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

- 24(2). To what extent has leadership been shared with teachers and staff because of the CSR program? Use a 10-point scale ranging from "1 – not at all" to "10 – to a great extent." (SELECT ONE ONLY)

Not At All										To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

- 24(3). To what extent has the school integrated the CSR program with other programs or efforts? Use a 10-point scale ranging from "1 – not at all" to "10 – to a great extent." (SELECT ONE ONLY)

Not At All										To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

- 24(4). To what extent has the school implemented the CSR program as designed? Use a 10-point scale ranging from "1 – not at all" to "10 – to a great extent." (SELECT ONE ONLY)

Not At All										To A Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

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25. To what extent has this school experienced the following difficulties or barriers in implementing the CSR program? (SELECT ONE NUMBER FOR EACH)

	Not At All	A Little	Moderate Extent	Great Extent
Lack of teacher buy-in or support of the program	1	2	3	4
Insufficient staff development	1	2	3	4
Lack of district support	1	2	3	4
Lack of parent and community support	1	2	3	4
Inadequate financial resources	1	2	3	4
Lack of staff time	1	2	3	4
Lack of administrative support	1	2	3	4
Lack of coordination with other programs	1	2	3	4
Teacher, staff, and administrator turnover	1	2	3	4
Other (PLEASE DESCRIBE): _____	1	2	3	4

30. Any other comments you wish to make about the CSR program in this school?

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE!**

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## PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW CSR SITES

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know your time is very valuable. We are here to try to better understand how schools across Texas are using their Comprehensive School Reform grants and the [insert name] program. We visited your school last year. During this time with you, I may ask you about some things you are not familiar with, and that is expected. Please just provide as much information as you can and do not feel like there are right or wrong answers.*

### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Think back to this time last year, how is the implementation of comprehensive school reform going compared to that time?

**Compare and contrast this year with last year. Elicit key activities/milestones/progress.**

- 1a. What elements are the most effective?
- 1b. What elements are the least effective?
- 1c. How closely do you feel the model design is followed, describe?
- 1d. What other programs/grants does your school implement?  
How are these aligned with your school reform model?
- 1e. How do you monitor the progress of the reform?
- 1f. Describe your role in program implementation.
- 1g. How has CSR changed the way you do your job?

2. Think back to this time last year, how would you describe teacher support for the program?

Would you say support for the program is increasing or decreasing?

What evidence is there of support or opposition?

Can you think of specific positive or negative comments made by teachers about the program?

3. Again compared to last year, what additional resources have been needed to support your CSR program?

*(Note: resources include time, space, personnel, and materials in addition to money.)*

Have you been able to reallocate resources at the school level? (Describe)

What resources have you received from the district? From other sources?

## II. CLASSROOM LEVEL CHANGES

Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.

4. What changes have been made at the classroom level?

## Appendix A

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### Principal Interview

5. Specifically, what contributions has the program made in terms of:
- teaching to standards?
  - technology?
  - interdisciplinary and project-based learning?
  - cooperative and team-based approaches?
  - authentic, alternative assessments?
6. Compared to last year, describe the variation in program implementation between classes or grade levels.

**What do you see as major contributors to differences between classes and/or grades?**

7. How does your program accommodate special needs children?

### III. RESULTS

**Again recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

8. How has your CSR program impacted students?
9. Can you describe any differences in student motivation or enthusiasm?  
Student attendance? Conduct?
10. How has the program fostered relationships between students?  
Between students and teachers?
11. What differences in achievement have you seen to date (grades or test scores)?

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12. How has the CSR program impacted teachers?

13. How has the program impacted relationships between teachers?

**Discuss differences  
in teacher collegiality  
and teamwork,  
motivation and  
enthusiasm.**

14. How has the program created shared leadership and a broad base of responsibility for reform efforts?

#### **IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

15. What specific training or support have you received as an administrator in a restructuring school this year?

16. How would you describe faculty training sessions for this program?

17. How have new faculty been brought into the program?

18. How would you characterize the success of CSR-related professional development initiatives?

19. Describe your school's interaction with program developers.

20. Tell me about training and support from the district.

**What kinds of support  
does your district  
provide?**

**How effective has  
the support been?**

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**V. COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

21. How would you describe community support for the program?

**How has the level of parent involvement in the school been impacted?**

**Describe efforts to inform and involve the community.**

**Are parents and other community members more involved in the classroom now than in the past?**

**What is the evidence of increased involvement?**

***Closure:***

Are there any important aspects of program implementation that have not been mentioned today?

Any additional comments you would like to make?



## TEACHER INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP CSR SITES

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/FG: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION:

*Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know your time is very valuable. We are here to try to better understand how schools across Texas are using their Comprehensive School Reform grants and the [insert name] program. We visited your school last year. During this time with you, I may ask you about some things you are not familiar with, and that is expected. Please just provide as much information as you can and do not feel like there are right or wrong answers.*

*This interview/focus group will last 45-60 minutes.*

### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Think back to this time last year, how is the implementation of comprehensive school reform going compared to that time?

**Compare and contrast this year with last year. Elicit key activities/milestones/progress.**

- 1a. What elements are the most effective?
- 1b. What elements are the least effective?
- 1c. How closely do you feel the model design is followed, describe?
- 1d. What other programs/grants does your school implement?  
How are these aligned with your school reform model?
- 1e. How do you monitor the progress of the reform?

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## Appendix A

Teacher Interview/  
Focus Group

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2. Think back to this time last year, how would you describe teacher support for the program?

Would you say support for the program is increasing or decreasing?

What evidence is there of support or opposition?

Can you think of specific positive or negative comments made by teachers about your school's program?

3. Again compared to last year, what additional resources have been needed to support your CSR program?

*(Note: resources include time, space, personnel, and materials in addition to money.)*

Have you been able to reallocate resources at the school level? (Describe)

What resources have you received from the district?  
From other sources?

## II. CLASSROOM LEVEL CHANGES

Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.

4. If I were to visit classrooms, what would I see that would represent your school's redesign?

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5. How is this different from the way classrooms used to be?
  
6. Specifically, what contributions has the program made in terms of:
  - teaching to standards?
  
  - technology?
  
  - interdisciplinary and project-based learning?
  
  - cooperative and team-based approaches?
  
  - authentic, alternative assessments?
  
7. How does your school program address special needs children?

### **III. RESULTS**

**Again recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

8. How is the program impacting students?
  
9. How has the program fostered relationships between students? Between students and teachers?
  
10. Can you describe any differences in student motivation or enthusiasm?  
Student attendance? Conduct?
  
11. Are there differences in achievement (grades or test scores)?
  
12. How has the redesign impacted teachers?

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13. How has the program impacted relationships between teachers?

**Discuss differences in teacher collegiality and teamwork, motivation and enthusiasm.**

14. How has the program created shared leadership and a broad base of responsibility for redesign efforts?

#### **IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

15. How would you describe faculty training sessions for this program this year?

16. How have new faculty been brought into the program?

17. How would you characterize the success of redesign-related professional development initiatives?

18. Describe your school's interaction with program developers.

19. Tell me about training and support from the district.

**What kind of support does your district provide? How effective has the support been?**

#### **V. COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

20. How would you describe community support for your school's restructuring program?

How has the level of parent involvement in the school been impacted by your program?

Describe school efforts to inform and involve the community.

Are parents and other community members more involved in the classroom now than in the past?

What is the evidence of increased involvement?

**Closure:**

Are there any important aspects of redesign implementation that have not been mentioned today?

Any additional comments you would like to make?

## CSR COORDINATOR INTERVIEW CSR SITES

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know your time is very valuable. We are here to try to better understand how schools across Texas are using their Comprehensive School Reform grants and the [insert name] program. We visited your school last year. During this time with you, I may ask you about some things you are not familiar with, and that is expected. Please just provide as much information as you can and do not feel like there are right or wrong answers.*

### I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Think back to this time last year, how is the implementation of comprehensive school reform going compared to that time?

**Compare and contrast this year with last year. Elicit key activities/milestones/progress.**

- 1a. What elements are the most effective?
- 1b. What elements are the least effective?
- 1c. How closely do you feel the model design is followed, describe?
- 1d. What other programs/grants does your school implement?  
How are these aligned with your school reform model?
- 1e. How do you monitor the progress of the reform?
- 1f. Describe your role in program implementation.
- 1g. How has CSR changed the way you do your job?

2. Think back to this time last year, how would you describe teacher support for the program?

Would you say support for the program is increasing or decreasing?

What evidence is there of support or opposition?

Can you think of specific positive or negative comments made by teachers about the program?

3. Again compared to last year, what additional resources have been needed to support your CSR program?

*(Note: resources include time, space, personnel, and materials in addition to money.)*

Have you been able to reallocate resources at the school level? (Describe)

What resources have you received from the district? From other sources?

## II. CLASSROOM LEVEL CHANGES

Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.

4. What changes have been made at the classroom level?

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5. Specifically, what contributions has the program made in terms of:

- teaching to standards?
- technology?
- interdisciplinary and project-based learning?
- cooperative and team-based approaches?
- authentic, alternative assessments?

6. Compared to last year, describe the variation in program implementation between classes or grade levels.

**What do you see as major contributors to differences between classes and/or grades?**

7. How does your program accommodate special needs children?

### **III. RESULTS**

**Again recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

8. How has your CSR program impacted students?

9. Can you describe any differences in student motivation or enthusiasm?  
Student attendance? Conduct?

10. How has the program fostered relationships between students?  
Between students and teachers?



11. What differences in achievement have you seen to date (grades or test scores)?
12. How has the CSR program impacted teachers?
13. How has the program impacted relationships between teachers?

**Discuss differences  
in teacher collegiality  
and teamwork,  
motivation and  
enthusiasm.**

14. How has the program created shared leadership and a broad base of responsibility for reform efforts?

#### **IV. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

15. What specific training or support have you received as an administrator in a restructuring school this year?
16. How would you describe faculty training sessions for this program?
17. How have new faculty been brought into the program?
18. How would you characterize the success of CSR-related professional development initiatives?
19. Describe your school's interaction with program developers.

20. Tell me about training and support from the district.

**What kinds of support does your district provide?**

**How effective has the support been?**

## **V. COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**Recall this time last year and think about any changes you noticed, in terms of the following questions.**

21. How would you describe community support for the program?

**How has the level of parent involvement in the school been impacted?**

**Describe efforts to inform and involve the community.**

**Are parents and other community members more involved in the classroom now than in the past?**

**What is the evidence of increased involvement?**

### ***Closure:***

Are there any important aspects of program implementation that have not been mentioned today?

Any additional comments you would like to make?

## STUDENT FOCUS GROUP CSR SITES

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION:

Introduce selves and project.

State FG will last 45-60 minutes.

1. To start off, let's go around the room and have each of you tell us a bit about yourselves. Start off with what number you are, and then tell us what grade you are in and how long you have been at this school.
2. Tell me about a class you really like this year. What made you like this class? What kind of work did you do in the class? What was the teacher like?
3. Tell me about a class you didn't like this year. How was this class different? What kind of work did you do in the class? What was the teacher like?
4. In thinking about some tests you're going to take in the near future, do you feel prepared for them? Do you think the work you do in class prepares you? What kind of work is the most helpful?

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## *Appendix A*

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### *Student Focus Group*

5. Tell me about a time this year when you or one of your friends was struggling with a class? What did you or your friend do? How did you get help? Did any adults help you?
  
6. If you or one of your friends wants to talk, are there adults you could turn to here at school, this year? If yes, why do you feel like you can talk to them?
  
7. Think about a time this year when a classmate misbehaved. What were the consequences for the student? Do you think the situation was handled fairly? Do you think discipline interferes with learning at this school?
  
8. During the past year, have you ever felt fear or unsafe here? What were the circumstances? Did you talk to an adult? How was the situation addressed?
  
9. Take a moment to think about an issue you are concerned about here at school. What were the circumstances and what have you done to address the issue?
  
10. How are your parents or other family members involved with you as a student? How are they involved with the school?

#### ***Closure:***

Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

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## PARENT/COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP CSR SITES

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION:

Introduce selves and project.

State FG will last 45-60 minutes.

- To start off, let's go around the room and have each of you tell us how long you have had children attend this school?
- Tell us about your relationship with the school?
  - *Prompts: Are you becoming involved at this school?*
  - *Yes – how did you become involved and how has the school responded?*
  - *No – why have you not become more involved?*

### MAIN QUESTIONS:

*Attempt to get the respondents' perceptions of the school's characteristics and changes since about this time last year. PROBE actively to get a clear picture of the change process, including barriers and facilitators. Use the probes in the box below to determine how change was initiated, received, and supported or stymied.*

1. Have there been any important changes that have happened here in the past year?
  - If yes:*
    - a. *Who was involved?*
    - b. *Was there a specific event that started the change?*
    - c. *What make the changes work*
  - If no:*
    - d. *Are there any changes you would like to see?*
    - e. *What would it take to bring that change about?*
2. How do you learn about how your child/children is/are doing at school?
  - a. Has that changed since this time last year?
3. If you can, think of a time this past year when your child was struggling with his or her school work. What did the school do to help your child? How did this work out? Was this different compared to what the school did last year?
4. Think about a time during this last year when you had a concern or a suggestion about the school or about your child's experience here – what did you do? How did the school respond? How was this different compared to last year?

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## Appendix A

Parent/  
Community  
Focus Group

5. Do you think parents and community involvement in decision-making at this school has changed in the last year? Please explain.

*If yes:*

- a. *Please describe how.*
- b. *Can you provide examples?*

*If no:*

- c. *What does involvement look like here?*
- d. *What would improve involvement?*

6. Are you familiar with the [Name of CSR model] program that this school is implementing?

*If yes:*

- a. *How has it impacted the school in the last year?*
- b. *What have been some benefits you've seen in the last year?*
- c. *What have been the disadvantages of the program in the last year?*

### **Closure:**

7. Is there anything else you want to tell us that would help us understand this school?
8. Do you have any questions you want to ask us?

<b>HISTORY</b>	- How is this different from before? - Was this ever tried before?
<b>CRITICAL INCIDENTS</b>	- Were there key events that affected this process?
<b>KEY PLAYERS</b>	- Who started this? - Who was involved? - Who noticed the need for change?
<b>RESPONSE</b>	- How did this change affect you? - How did this change affect the students and the school?
<b>SUPPORT</b>	- What helped make this work? - What was necessary for this to succeed?
<b>BARRIERS</b>	- Was there resistance to change? - What made this difficult?

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**SCHOOL OBSERVATION MEASURE**

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_ SOM # \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use your class-specific notes to reflect upon the extent to which each of the following is present in the school.

**Response categories include:** Not Observed; Rarely; Occasionally; Frequently; Extensively

***Instructional Orientation***

- Direct instruction (lecture)
- Team teaching
- Cooperative/collaborative learning
- Individual tutoring (teacher, peer, aide, adult volunteer)

***Classroom Organization***

- Ability groups
- Multi-age grouping
- Work centers (for individuals or groups)

***Instructional Strategies***

- Higher level instructional feedback (written or verbal) to enhance student learning
- Integration of subject areas (interdisciplinary/thematic units)
- Project-based learning
- Use of higher-level questioning strategies
- Teacher acting as a coach/facilitator
- Parent/community involvement in learning activities

***Student Activities***

- Independent seatwork (self-paced worksheets, individual assignments)
- Experiential, hands-on learning
- Systematic individual instruction (differential assignments geared to individual needs)
- Sustained writing/composition (self-selected or teacher-generated topics)
- Sustained reading
- Independent inquiry/research on the part of students
- Student discussion

***Technology Use***

- Computer for instructional delivery (e.g. CAI, drill and practice)
- Technology as learning tool or resource (e.g. Internet research, spreadsheet or database creation, multi-media, CD Rom, Laser disk)

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## Appendix A

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School  
Observation  
Measure

### **Assessment**

Performance assessment strategies  
Student self-assessment (portfolios, individual record books)

### **Summary Items**

High academically focused class time  
High level of student attention/interest/engagement

### **RUBRIC FOR SOM SCORING**

- (0) **Not Observed:** Strategy was never observed.
- (1) **Rarely:** Observed in only one or two classes. Receives isolated use and/or little time in classes. Clearly not a prevalent/emphasized component of teaching and learning across classes.
- (2) **Occasionally:** Observed in some classes. Receives minimal or modest time or emphasis in classes. Not a prevalent/emphasized component of teaching and learning across classes.
- (3) **Frequently:** Observed in many but not all classes. Receives substantive time or emphasis in classes. A prevalent component of teaching and learning across classes.
- (4) **Extensively:** Observed in most or all classes. Receives substantive time and/or emphasis in classes. A highly prevalent component of teaching and learning across classes.

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## 51-POINT INSTRUMENT FOR ASSESSING STRENGTH OF CSR IMPLEMENTATION

Component	Measure	Score*
<b>1. Research-Based Method or Strategy</b>		
1.1 Implementation Score (adjusted Bodilly Scale from TA):	4 3 2 1 0	0-4
1.2 Percentage of classrooms using that should have been using (SOM):	-----%	0.0-1.0
1.3 Fidelity rating by TA (high, medium, low, defined as follows):		
<i>high:</i> developer/consultant considers school to be among the best seen	High	3
<i>medium:</i> developer/consultant considers school to be using method in acceptable manner	Medium	2
<i>low:</i> developer/consultant has major complaints about school's use of method	Low	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 1</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>2. Comprehensive Design:</b>		
2.1 Existence of written design or plan: name it and give its date	yes                  no	1
Name: _____		
Date: _____		
2.2 Contents of plan (yes/no to each item):		
2.2.1 Inclusion of needs assessment or other performance data	yes                  no	1
2.2.2 Reference to specific financial resources	yes                  no	1
2.2.3 Indication of strategic use of financial resources	yes                  no	1
2.2.4 Statement of quantitative performance goals	yes                  no	1
2.2.5 Discussion of specific curricula	yes                  no	1
2.2.6 Discussion of assessment tools	yes                  no	1
2.2.7 Discussion of professional development	yes                  no	1
2.3 Breadth of plan in covering all school operations (including, implicitly, all other CSR components) (high, medium, low, defined as follow):		
<i>high:</i> covers all CSR components (whether implicitly or explicitly)	high	3
<i>medium:</i> covers four or six components, but not all	medium	2
<i>low:</i> covers one to three components only (also name them)	low	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 2</b>		<b>11</b>

\* yes=1 and no=0

(Continued)

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## Appendix A

### CSR 51-Point Implementation Scale

Component	Measure	Score*
<b>3. Professional Development:</b>		
3.1 Strong content focus:	yes      no	1
3.2 Range of PD days required or taken by average teacher per year:	7+    4-6    1-3	7+ =3 4 - 6 =2 1 - 3 =1
3.3 Evidence that preceding estimate excludes traditional teacher set-up (in the fall) and teacher clean-up (in the spring) days	yes      no	Make part of 3.2 total
3.4 Evidence of collective participation of groups of teachers from the same school	yes      no	1
3.5 Evidence of some PD taking place in the teacher's classroom- e.g., mentoring	yes      no	1
3.6 Explicit guidance to align PD with standards, curriculum, or assessment tools	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 3</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>4. Measurable Goals and Benchmarks:</b>		
4.1 Number of academic subjects covered:	No.: _____	4+ =3 2 - 3 =2 0 - 1 =1
4.2 Number of grades covered and total no. of grades in the school:	No.: ___ No.: ___	0.0-1.0 (%)
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 4</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>5. Support within the school:</b>		
5.1 Existence of formal faculty votes on reform or research-based method	yes      no	1
5.2 Formal faculty vote(s) on reform or research based method show 75% support	yes      no	1
5.3 Interviewees voice strong support or enthusiasm	yes      no	1
5.4 Two or more interviewees voice dissent or indicate lack of use	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 5</b>		<b>4</b>

\* yes=1 and no=0

(Continued)

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Component	Measure	Score*
<b>6. Support for Teachers and Principals:</b>		
6.1 Evidence of shared leadership	yes      no	1
6.2 Evidence of teamwork outside of departments or grade levels	yes      no	1
6.3 Positive acknowledgement of staff accomplishments	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 6</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>7. Parent and Community Involvement</b>		
7.1 Emergence of new forms of parent involvement during CSR years:	yes      no	
7.1.1 Special parent events	yes      no	
7.1.2 Programs or opportunities for parents in instructional roles	yes      no	3 – 4 =1
7.1.3 Parent advisory or other committees	yes      no	0 – 2 =0
7.2 Level of parental involvement (high, medium, or low, as defined as follows):		
<i>high:</i> you’ve observed parents in the school and interviewees voice strong or satisfactory level or parental involvement in school activities	high	2
<i>medium:</i> school get traditional level of parental involvement (e.g., 10% attendance)	medium	1
<i>low:</i> no evidence of parental involvement beyond a handful of parents and interviewees voice low levels of participation	low	0
7.3 Evidence of at least one community organization and one school/community event or program	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 7</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>8. External Technical Support and Assistance</b>		
8.1 Developer support and assistance (high, medium, or low, defined as follows):		
<i>high:</i> all CSR years	high	3
<i>medium:</i> at least two years	medium	2
<i>low:</i> one or none of these years	low	1
8.2 Other external (but non-district) support and assistance	yes      no	1
<i>yes:</i> evidence for a specific source and function on two or more occasions		
<i>no:</i> no such evidence (evidence can be documentation, interviewee mentions, or direct observation)		
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 8</b>		<b>4</b>

\* yes=1 and no=0

(Continued)

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## Appendix A

### CSR 51-Point Implementation Scale

Component	Measure	Score*
<b>9. Evaluation Strategies:</b>		
9.1 Existence of a written evaluation plan	yes      no	1
9.2 Evidence of written evaluation findings (could even be a memo)	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 9</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>10. Coordination of Resources</b>		
10.1 Evidence of some coordination of funds from different external (e.g., federal) sources	yes      no	1
10.2 Evidence of some coordination of external and local funds (i.e. core building)	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 10</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>11. Strategies that Improve Academic Achievement</b>		
11.1 Evidence the program has been found through scientifically-based research, to significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students	yes      no	1
11.2 The program shows strong evidence that it will significantly improve the academic achievement of participating students	yes      no	1
<b>Total Possible Score for Component 11</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>

\* yes=1 and no=0

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# *Appendix B*



## SCALE DESCRIPTIONS

### COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

This instrument is designed and reported to measure the five constructs underlying comprehensive school reform: external support, school capacity, internal focus, pedagogical change, and outcomes through 28 items. Below are scale descriptions and the Cronbach's alpha for each scale.

Scale	Description	Internal Reliability
<b>Support</b>	The extent to which school receives effective professional development and support to implement its CSR program.	$\alpha = .82$
<b>Capacity/Resources</b>	The extent to which planning time materials, technology, and faculty are available at the school.	$\alpha = .70$
<b>Pedagogy</b>	The extent to which classroom practices, materials, and technology use have changed at the school.	$\alpha = .75$
<b>Outcome</b>	The extent to which positive student, faculty, and parent/community outcomes have occurred as a result of CSR.	$\alpha = .90$
<b>Focus</b>	The extent to which elements of the school's educational program are integrated, evaluated, and supported by school stakeholders.	$\alpha = .83$

### SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

This survey consists of seven dimensions logically and empirically associated with effective school organizational climates. The inventory contains 49 items, with seven items comprising each scale. Below are scale descriptions and the Cronbach's alpha for each scale.

Scale	Description	Internal Reliability
<b>Order</b>	The extent to which the environment is ordered and appropriate student behaviors are present.	$\alpha = .84$
<b>Leadership</b>	The extent to which the administration provides instructional leadership.	$\alpha = .83$
<b>Environment</b>	The extent to which positive learning environments exist.	$\alpha = .81$
<b>Involvement</b>	The extent to which parents and the community are involved in the school.	$\alpha = .76$
<b>Instruction</b>	The extent to which the instructional program is well developed and implemented.	$\alpha = .75$
<b>Expectations</b>	The extent to which students are expected to learn and be responsible.	$\alpha = .73$
<b>Collaboration</b>	The extent to which the administration, faculty, and students cooperate and participate in problem solving.	$\alpha = .74$

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