

SB

194

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Senate Bill 194

Although the record demonstrates some recent improvements, the Department's imposition of the initial improvement plans, its manner of selection of coaches, and other actions were undertaken with insufficient input from the districts thereby negatively impacting the likelihood of prompt and significant improvement in student achievement.
--Moore vs. The State of Alaska (2009)

In 2008 the Legislature voted to insert intervention guidelines into state statute, partly as a result of the court case in Moore vs. the State Alaska. These guidelines provided the basic framework for school interventions by the Department of Education and Early Development.

Since that time the Department of Education and Early Development has intervened in five school districts. Three of those districts are still in intervention status. This has been a learning time for the Department of Education and Early Development as well as the intervention school districts. One of the things consistently pointed out in the three interim rulings of the Moore case is that there is a disconnect between the hard work of the Department and the real needs of the intervention districts.

SB 194 sets forth a collaborative process that occurs before intervention. It respects the concept of local authority by providing that local groups interact with school boards and the Department. It sets out audit procedures that take into account the economic and social conditions of the district as well as the academic performance of schools within the district. It establishes district superintendent cohorts for mutual support, and includes community leaders, parents, teachers, principals and school board members in the process of improving education in communities.

In many ways, SB 194 is not an "intervention" bill—it is a bill to make interventions unnecessary. The process laid out in the bill—identifying districts, providing extensive audits, setting up local school governance councils, and district superintendent cohorts—is designed to deal with as many problems as possible without having to resort to an intervention.

We urge your support of SB 194.

27-LS1190M
Mischel
2/15/12

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 194(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure in the
2 Department of Education and Early Development; establishing advisory councils for
3 school improvement; and requiring reports to the legislature."

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 * **Section 1.** AS 14.03.123(d) is amended to read:

6 (d) A public school or district that **is designated as a low-performing school**
7 **or district** [RECEIVES A LOW PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION UNDER THIS
8 SECTION] shall prepare and submit to the department a school or district
9 improvement plan, as applicable, **and shall cooperate with the department,** in
10 accordance with **AS 14.03.124 and** regulations adopted by the board. The
11 improvement plan must be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of
12 the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents,
13 parent organizations, students, tribal organizations, local government representatives,
14 and other community groups.

1 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.123(g) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

2 (3) "low-performing" means the bottom three percent in the state for
3 performance based on the accountability measures described in (f)(2) of this section.

4 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.123 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

5 (h) The department shall work with and evaluate a public school or district
6 that receives a low performance designation under (d) of this section to improve the
7 school or district as follows:

8 (1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and
9 experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the
10 quality of education in the school or district;

11 (2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic
12 savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed;

13 (3) direct the local school board to use state and federal funds for
14 critical needs, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early Development;

15 (4) provide incentives to attract and retain high quality teachers and
16 principals;

17 (5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and
18 guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers,
19 principals, and central office staff hired by the district;

20 (6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by
21 the local school board;

22 (7) direct the local school board to identify model curriculum,
23 including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the
24 department; if a new curriculum is required, the department shall provide technical
25 assistance to implement the curriculum;

26 (8) work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan
27 to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in
28 the academic performance audit conducted under (j) of this section;

29 (9) assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide
30 school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner;

31 (10) establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for

1 the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal of the designation of
2 low-performing schools or districts;

3 (11) direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require
4 continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups;

5 (12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of
6 Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as
7 leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local
8 school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when
9 and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored.

10 (i) For two years following a designation of a school or district as low
11 performing, the department shall contract with an external review team to conduct an
12 academic performance audit of the district and each low-performing school in the
13 district to identify the potential reasons for the school's low performance and lack of
14 progress. The review team shall consist of persons who have expertise in
15 comprehensive school and district reform. A review team may not include staff of the
16 school district that is the subject of the audit or staff of the department. The review
17 team shall meet with and report to the department and the superintendent of the
18 district.

19 (j) The audit required under (i) of this section shall be conducted based on
20 criteria developed by the department in the areas of curriculum, assessment,
21 instruction, learning environment, professional development, and leadership and must
22 include an examination of the following:

23 (1) student demographics;

24 (2) mobility patterns;

25 (3) school feeder patterns;

26 (4) strategic allocation of resources;

27 (5) the degree of high standards and expectations for all students;

28 (6) the degree of collaboration and communication;

29 (7) frequency of monitoring of learning and teaching;

30 (8) the degree of family and community involvement;

31 (9) alternative secondary schools best practices; and

1 (10) any unique circumstances or characteristics of the school or
2 district, including substance abuse and other social factors.

3 (k) The department shall make audit findings available to the audited school
4 district and staff, the local community, and the state Board of Education and Early
5 Development.

6 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

7 **Sec. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; revitalization advisory**
8 **council.** (a) For a public school that, after three consecutive years of school
9 improvement efforts under AS 14.03.123(d) and (h) - (k), continues to be a low-
10 performing school, as described in AS 14.03.123, the department, in conjunction with
11 the local school board and the district superintendent, may

12 (1) designate the school as a revitalization school;

13 (2) continue to identify a revitalization school and operate under a
14 school revitalization plan developed by the department and the district until taken off
15 revitalization status;

16 (3) assist the local school board with developing and implementing a
17 revitalization plan as provided under this section;

18 (4) maintain eligibility of the school for available federal and state aid;
19 and

20 (5) establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of
21 the district in which the revitalization school is located and two superintendents of
22 districts in the state that have no schools in revitalization status; the superintendent
23 cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine months after the revitalization
24 designation, report to the revitalization advisory council established under this section.

25 (b) A school that has not been designated as a revitalization school may
26 request the local school board to establish a revitalization advisory council for a school
27 in the district consistent with this section.

28 (c) A local school board that governs a school that has been designated as a
29 revitalization school shall establish a revitalization advisory council for each school
30 designated for revitalization. Except as provided in (e) of this section, a revitalization
31 advisory council for a school shall consist of 13 members appointed by the local

1 school board, as follows:

2 (1) four parents or guardians of students attending the school,
3 nominated by parents or guardians of the school;

4 (2) four community leaders residing within the school district,
5 nominated by the members selected under (1) and (3) of this subsection;

6 (3) two teachers at the school, nominated by teachers at the school;

7 (4) one representative from the department;

8 (5) the principal of the school; and

9 (6) the superintendent of the district or a representative of the
10 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section.

11 (d) For a local school board consisting of more than five members, the board
12 may appoint not more than three of its members to a revitalization advisory council.
13 For a local school board consisting of five or fewer members, the board may appoint
14 not more than two of its members to a revitalization advisory council.

15 (e) If a district has only one operating school, the district may petition the
16 department for a reduction of the revitalization advisory council membership from
17 four parents to two parents, from four community leaders to one community leader,
18 and from two teachers to one teacher.

19 (f) Terms of members of the revitalization advisory council selected under (c)
20 or (e) of this section shall be for two years, and a member may not serve more than
21 two terms on the council. Members of the revitalization advisory council serve without
22 compensation but are entitled to per diem and other expenses authorized for boards
23 and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

24 (g) A revitalization advisory council may, in conjunction with the department
25 and the superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section,

26 (1) analyze school achievement data and school needs related to the
27 improvement plan for the school prepared under AS 14.03.123(d);

28 (2) meet with and review the report of the superintendent cohort
29 established under (a)(5) of this section;

30 (3) participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other
31 administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting the

1 results of the interviews to the superintendent of schools for the school district and to
2 the local school board;

3 (4) assist the principal of the school in making programmatic and
4 operational changes to improve the school's achievement, including adjustments in
5 program, school hours and days of operation, and enrollment goals for the school;

6 (5) work with the school administration to develop and approve a
7 school compact for parents and legal guardians and students that includes an outline of
8 the criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and school membership consistent with
9 the school's goals and academic focus, including means by which parents and school
10 personnel may build a partnership to improve student learning;

11 (6) develop and approve a written parent involvement policy that
12 outlines the role of parents and legal guardians in the school;

13 (7) if intervention by the department is required, the revitalization
14 advisory council shall work with the department and the local school board to develop
15 an intervention plan for the school involving available local, regional, and statewide
16 resources;

17 (8) prepare a revitalization model that takes into account
18 recommendations consistent with the duties in (1) - (7) of this subsection for review
19 and a vote as provided under (j) of this section.

20 (h) A revitalization advisory council may

21 (1) review the annual draft prepared under AS 14.03.120(a) detailing
22 the goals described in the education plan and provide advice to the principal of the
23 school before submitting the report to the superintendent of schools;

24 (2) assist the principal of the school in developing a revitalization plan
25 before the plan is submitted to the superintendent of schools and cooperate with the
26 department in developing a revitalization plan;

27 (3) assist the principal of the school in developing, conducting, and
28 reporting the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues
29 related to the school climate and conditions; and

30 (4) provide advice to the principal of the school on any other major
31 policy matters affecting the school, except on any matters relating to a collective

1 bargaining agreement between the exclusive bargaining unit for teachers.

2 (i) A local school board, in conjunction with the department, shall provide
3 appropriate training and instruction to members of the revitalization advisory council
4 to aid them in the execution of their duties.

5 (j) Not later than 30 days after a revitalization advisory council informs the
6 local school board of the completion of a revitalization model under (g) of this section,
7 the local school board shall hold a public hearing to discuss the revitalization model
8 and shall, at the next regularly scheduled meeting, conduct a vote to accept the model
9 recommended by the revitalization advisory council, select an alternative model, or
10 maintain the current school status, as follows:

11 (1) if the local school board selects an alternative model, not later than
12 10 days after the vote of the local school board, the local school board shall meet with
13 the revitalization advisory council to discuss an agreement on the local school board's
14 alternative revitalization model;

15 (2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the
16 last meeting between the local school board and the revitalization advisory council, the
17 local school board shall report to the department the reasons for rejecting the
18 revitalization model developed by the revitalization advisory council;

19 (3) if the final decision of the local school board is to adopt all or part
20 of the revitalization model, the local school board shall implement the approved model
21 during the subsequent school year in conformance with state statutes and regulations
22 and the provisions specified in federal regulations and guidelines for schools subject to
23 corrective action under 20 U.S.C. 6316(b)(7) (Elementary and Secondary Education
24 Act of 1965), as amended, or other applicable federal laws or regulations.

25 (k) Within two years after a local school board votes on a revitalization model,
26 the department shall, within available appropriations, monitor the schools that have
27 been designated as revitalization schools for demonstrable progress, applying the
28 following indicators:

- 29 (1) the revitalization model adopted by the school;
30 (2) the number and type of disciplinary incidents;
31 (3) the number of truants;

- 1 (4) the dropout rate;
- 2 (5) the student attendance rate;
- 3 (6) the average scale scores on the statewide secondary school
- 4 graduation qualifying examination;
- 5 (7) for high schools, the number and percentage of students completing
- 6 advanced placement coursework;
- 7 (8) the teacher retention rate; and
- 8 (9) the existence and size of the parent-teacher organization for the
- 9 school.

10 (f) On or before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the department shall report

11 to the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education

12 (1) the number of local school boards that have implemented a

13 revitalization model;

14 (2) a comparison of the school status after local school boards have

15 initiated a revitalization model and the school status after local school boards have

16 rejected a revitalization model; and

17 (3) whether parental involvement has increased at schools with

18 revitalization advisory councils.

19 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to

20 read:

21 SCHOOL REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE. (a) On or

22 before January 1, 2014, the Department of Education and Early Development shall report to

23 the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education on

24 (1) the monitoring conducted under AS 14.03.124(k), added by sec. 4 of this

25 Act;

26 (2) recommendations relating to changes in the revitalization options available

27 to schools, including whether revitalization advisory councils may continue to recommend

28 revitalization;

29 (3) comparison of the revitalization models adopted; and

30 (4) the level of progress of schools adopting each revitalization model in

31 relation to the indicators described in AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act.

1 (b) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Education and Early
2 Development shall evaluate the revitalization advisory councils established under
3 AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act, for compliance with that section. On or before
4 October 1, 2019, the department shall report to the standing committees with jurisdiction over
5 education on the evaluation conducted under this subsection. The report must also include
6 recommendations on whether to continue to authorize revitalization advisory councils to
7 recommend revitalization models.

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MEMORANDUM

February 13, 2012

SUBJECT: Sectional Summary (SB 194 (Work Order No. 27-LS1190\B))

TO: Senator Joe Thomas
Co-Chair of the Senate Education Committee
Attn: Murray Richmond

FROM: Jean M. Mischel
Legislative Counsel 

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

Section 1. Amends accountability procedure for low-performing schools and districts to require cooperation with the Department of Education and Early Development and compliance with sec. 4 of the bill providing for revitalization efforts.

Section 2. Defines "low performing" for purposes of school accountability measures.

Section 3. Adds departmental duties, including auditing and coaching, and amends procedures for low-performing schools and districts.

Section 4. Creates a new designation as "revitalization" for consistently low-performing schools and districts and describes revitalization procedures and standards. Establishes advisory councils to develop models for, and conduct reviews of revitalization effort for a school or district. Requires biennial reporting to the legislature.

Section 5. Requires first report to the legislature by January 1, 2014, on monitoring and effects of revitalization efforts provided for in the bill.

JMM:ljw
12-123.ljw

**STATE INTERVENTIONS IN
LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS AND
SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

August 2002

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	11
I. State Policies and Experiences with Interventions in Low-Performing Schools and School Districts	12
II. Research on the Impact of State Interventions on Low-Performing Schools And School Districts	19
III. Policy Recommendations and State Practitioner Advice	30
Appendix A: State Policies on Interventions in Low-Performing Schools and School Districts	38
Appendix B: State Narratives	49
Appendix C: Maps	68
Endnotes	70

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State policymakers are increasingly focusing their attention on holding schools and school districts accountable for the performance of their students. One mechanism for ensuring such accountability is state intervention in low-performing schools and school districts. As states create and implement interventions, they seek clarity and understanding about what is known, and what is unknown, about them. This report attempts to provide such clarity and understanding.

State Policies and Experiences with Interventions in Low-Performing Schools and School Districts

Based upon our research, 33 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing schools, while 30 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing school districts. These state policies cover a wide variety of interventions, including the following:

- Written warnings
- Technical assistance
- Additional funding
- Improvement plans by schools and school districts
- Improvement plans by another entity
- Placement on probation
- Removal of accreditation
- Withholding of funding
- Reconstitution
- Closure
- Reorganization
- Takeover.

Additionally, as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a federally imposed intervention policy requires school districts to allow students in certain low-performing schools to transfer to higher-performing schools in the school district. It also requires school districts to provide transportation for the transferring students to the higher-performing schools.

The development of state interventions in low-performing schools and school districts is a work in progress. To identify the policy challenges and opportunities for states developing their own interventions, we interviewed practitioners in 11 states with intervention experiences. These states are California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas and West Virginia.

Based upon our research:

- Each of the 11 states provides technical assistance to low-performing schools and/or school districts, although only some of them have enacted policies that require them to do so.
- Although the correlation between additional funding and increased achievement remains unclear, most of the 11 states believe there is some benefit to providing extra resources to troubled schools and school districts. In fact, many of them provide additional funding to low-performing schools and/or school districts, although only some of them have enacted policies that require them to do so.
- Each of the 11 states requires some form of improvement planning for low-performing schools and school districts, though the process for creating and implementing such plans varies.
- Each of the 11 states imposes sanctions on consistently low-performing schools and school districts. Such sanctions take many forms, including written warnings, probation, reconstitution, closure and takeover.

- Several of the 11 states provide written warnings to low-performing schools and/or school districts, although only some of them have enacted policies that require them to do so.
- Most of the 11 states place low-performing schools and/or school districts on probation.
- While most of the 11 states have enacted policies that allow them to reconstitute and/or close low-performing schools, only two (Maryland and New York) have taken such drastic steps.
- While several of the 11 states have enacted policies that allow them to take over low-performing schools, only one state (Maryland) has actually implemented this policy.
- Each of the 11 states has enacted policies that allow the state to take over a low-performing school district. There have been takeovers of school districts in 10 of the 11 states studied.

A Review of the Research on the Impact of State Interventions on Low-Performing Schools and School Districts

The research about the impact of state interventions on low-performing schools and school districts is just beginning to emerge, especially as these interventions impact school and district operations and student achievement. There are two reasons for the current shortage of definitive research on state interventions. The first reason is the relative infancy of most state interventions. The second reason is that many interventions are implemented in combination with other interventions, and therefore the research seldom examines the impact of a single intervention.

What little research does exist suggests that interventions shouldn't be expected to equally affect low-performing schools and school districts. One of the main reasons is that many schools or districts simply do not have the resources to implement changes. From the body of research about schools' and districts' abilities to implement reforms, often referred to as "local capacity," it is clear that local context plays a critical role in how well interventions take root in schools and districts.¹

With these issues in mind, the following research findings are particularly relevant for states creating and refining interventions for low-performing schools and school districts:

- Kentucky and North Carolina provide two notable examples of state-provided technical assistance, and early research on these efforts shows a positive impact on student achievement.
- At this point, research does not show a clear impact on instruction or achievement from providing additional funding to low-performing schools and school districts, primarily for two reasons. First, such provision is relatively new, and the research is just beginning to emerge. Second, additional funding is generally provided in combination with other interventions, so it is impossible to link improvement directly and solely to the influence of additional funds. Still, early research on California's Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program shows promising results from providing additional funding to low-performing schools.
- The evidence linking mandated improvement plans for low-performing schools and school districts to increases in achievement is mixed. Some schools and school districts increase achievement, while others do not.
- Although little systematic evidence about the effects of reconstitutions on student achievement exists, anecdotal information suggests that reconstitutions may improve school order, stability and community involvement.
- There is limited research on the effects of takeovers of school districts. For the most part, they seem to be yielding more improvements in central-office financial and management practices than in classroom instructional practices. In some cases, takeovers have produced negative effects, including deficits and labor strife, and in most cases, the results in terms of student achievement have been mixed at best. The bottom line is that takeovers, for the most part, have yet to produce dramatic and consistent increases in student performance, as is necessary in many of the school districts that are taken over. Two promising takeovers are Logan County Public Schools in West Virginia and the Chicago Public Schools in Illinois.

- Because the federal government’s policy that requires school districts to allow students in low-performing schools to transfer to higher performing schools is new, there is no evidence about its impact. There is evidence, though, about the impact of other school choice policies. According to this research, the attempts of magnet schools, open enrollment programs and charter schools to provide disadvantaged students with greater educational options have produced mixed results. In addition, the impact of these policies on student achievement is undecided.
- Research does not provide strong conclusions about the effects of various state interventions on school and school district operations and on student achievement, largely because local responses to state interventions vary widely. Given the interplay of the different factors that contribute to this variation, researchers note that low-performing schools and school districts may have increased or reduced motivation to make changes, depending on their circumstances and ability to implement reforms.²

Policy Recommendations and State Practitioner Advice

Based on our review of state policies and experiences as well as our review of the research, it appears that state interventions designed to assess and maximize existing abilities in low-performing schools and districts and to exert appropriate pressure for change may be the most likely to improve school and district operations and raise student achievement. Within the context of this observation, we offer the following recommendations:

- For the greatest impact on school and school district performance, states should target technical assistance to the individual needs of schools and school districts.
- States should develop a pool of technical-assistance providers for low-performing schools and districts, and a pool of supplemental-services providers for students in low-performing schools.
- State intervention policies for school and school district improvement plans should focus on improving student achievement, setting realistic improvement goals and requiring regular monitoring of school and district progress.

- If states create and implement takeover policies, they should ensure that takeover efforts focus on: establishing clear performance goals and measures, especially concerning academics; creating and implementing improvement strategies specific to the problems in the school or school district in question, particularly regarding improved instruction; defining the conditions under which the state will return control of the school or school district to local officials; and, when possible, partnering with local officials in the improvement effort.
- In creating and refining state intervention policies for low-performing schools and school districts, states should take into account the requirements and implications of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, particularly as they relate to providing assistance to low-performing schools.

As we gathered information for this report, a number of accountability officials from states with established intervention programs offered several recommendations, including the following:

- Technical assistance should be in-depth and targeted to the individual needs of schools and school districts. Allowing improvement teams or technical experts to assist a school on a daily basis – like in Kentucky and Connecticut – for a lengthy period of time allows the intervention process to grow and respond to a school’s unique needs.
- Professional development is an essential part of the intervention process. For example, establishing leadership academies for principals and mentoring programs for teachers may provide school staff with rigorous training in new forms of instruction, curriculum development, data analysis and school improvement plans. Also, building strong relationships with the principals of low-performing schools is especially beneficial to the intervention process.
- As part of the intervention process, states should focus on specific changes that directly affect the teaching and learning experiences in classrooms. For example, in a few states, such as North Carolina, interventions included targeted class-size reductions, which helped to raise student achievement.

- Some states believe in a tough approach to low-performing schools. In particular, Maryland, New York and Texas find that threatening schools with reconstitution or closure spurs improvement. Other states, like Connecticut and Massachusetts, find that technical assistance, fact-finding and funding give a school the time and support it needs to increase student achievement. While these approaches are not mutually exclusive, some states place more emphasis on one approach, while other states place more emphasis on the other approach.
- Although it is too early to tell, state accountability officials in California think that their use of outside evaluators will yield positive results and facilitate school achievement. According to these officials, using more of a free-market model in providing technical assistance to low-performing schools -- which forces outside providers to compete for the chance to provide such assistance -- will ensure the highest quality of service to these schools.
- Adequate funding for interventions is perhaps the most important factor of all. Even the best-designed set of interventions will fail if they are not adequately funded. Many of the lowest-performing schools need the greatest number of resources to improve, and states must take these needs into account when designing and funding interventions.

INTRODUCTION

State policymakers are increasingly focusing their attention on holding schools and school districts accountable for the performance of their students. One mechanism for ensuring such accountability is state intervention in low-performing schools and school districts. As states create and implement interventions, they seek clarity and understanding about what is known, and what is unknown, about them. This report attempts to provide such clarity and understanding.

The first section of this report provides a general overview of state policies on interventions in low-performing schools and school districts. It also provides a more detailed examination of the state intervention policies and experiences in 11 states. The second section of the report discusses the emerging research about the impact of state interventions on low-performing schools and school districts.

The third, and final, section of this report offers five recommendations based on the experiences of the 11 states studied, as well as on the emerging research reviewed for Washington policymakers to consider as they design intervention policies. It also offers several recommendations from state practitioners whom we interviewed in the course of gathering information for this report.

The report also contains two appendices. The first appendix presents three tables on state policies on interventions in low-performing schools and school districts, and the second presents state narratives for each of the 11 states studied.

I. STATE POLICIES AND EXPERIENCES WITH INTERVENTIONS IN LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Based upon our research, 33 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing schools, while 30 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing school districts.

These state policies cover a wide variety of interventions, including the following:

- **Written warning:** Twelve states have enacted policies requiring the state to provide written warnings to low-performing schools, and nine states have enacted policies requiring written warnings to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state provides a written warning to schools and/or school districts, but is not required to do so by state policy.
- **Technical assistance:** Twenty-six states have enacted policies that require the state or another entity to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools, and 16 states have enacted policies that require the state to provide technical assistance to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state or another entity provides such assistance to schools and/or school districts, but are not required to do so by state policy.
- **Additional funding:** Eleven states have enacted policies that require the state to provide additional funding to low-performing schools, and nine states have enacted policies that require the state to provide additional funding to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state provides such funding to schools and/or school districts, but is not required to do so by state policy.
- **Improvement plans by schools and school districts:** Thirty-one states have enacted policies that require a low-performing school to create and implement an improvement plan, and 23 states have enacted policies that require a low-performing school district to create and implement an improvement plan.
- **Improvement plans by another entity:** Twenty-one states have enacted policies that require another entity, such as the state or a school district, to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school, and 15 states have enacted policies that require

another entity, such as the state, to create an improvement plan for a low-performing school district.

- **Placement on probation:** Seventeen states have enacted policies that allow them to place a low-performing school on probation, while fourteen states have enacted policies that allow them to place a low-performing school district on probation.
- **Removal of accreditation:** Fifteen states have enacted policies that allow them to remove a low-performing school's accreditation, while 14 states have enacted policies that allow them to remove a low-performing school district's accreditation.
- **Withholding of funding:** Five states have enacted policies that allow them to withhold funding from a low-performing school, while five states have enacted policies that allow them to withhold funding from a low-performing school district.
- **Reconstitution:** Nineteen states have enacted policies that allow them to reconstitute a low-performing school.
- **Closure:** Ten states have enacted policies that allow them to close a low-performing school.
- **Reorganization:** Ten states have enacted policies that allow them to reorganize a low-performing school district.
- **Takeover:** Seventeen states have enacted policies that allow a takeover of a low-performing school, while 24 states have enacted policies that allow the takeover a low-performing school district.

In addition, as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a federally imposed intervention policy requires school districts to allow students in certain low-performing schools to transfer to higher-performing schools in the school district. Students in low-performing schools that have failed to meet their state's requirements for adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years are allowed to transfer. This policy also requires school districts to provide transportation for the transferring students to the higher-performing schools.

An Examination of Intervention Experiences in 11 States

The development of state interventions in low-performing schools and school districts is a work in progress. To identify the policy challenges and opportunities for states developing their own interventions, we interviewed practitioners in 11 states with intervention experiences. These states are California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas and West Virginia. This section examines these states within the context of the intervention categories of technical assistance, additional funding, improvement planning and sanctions.

Technical Assistance

Each of the 11 states studied provides technical assistance to low-performing schools and/or school districts, although only some of them have enacted policies requiring them to do so. The provision of technical assistance typically begins with a site visit, or visits, to assess the condition of the school or district in question. From these initial visits often come recommendations for improvement, usually in the form of an improvement plan, as well as the implementation of specific actions to raise the performance levels in a school or district, such as curriculum alignment or professional development for staff.

The delivery and duration of technical assistance, however, varies from state to state. In New York, teams of administrators, curriculum specialists, experienced educators, school board members and parents conduct four-day observation visits to assess a troubled school's condition and develop a long-term plan for the school.

In Connecticut, a "critical friend," designated by the state, partners with principals in low-performing schools to assist in the implementation of improvement plans over the course of one school year. North Carolina requires an entire assistance team to spend one full year at its assigned school and provide technical assistance on a daily basis. In Texas,

monitoring teams conduct several one-day site visits to best determine how to help a particular low-performing school.

Through its School Transformation, Assistance and Renewal (STAR) program, Kentucky assigns a distinguished educator to spend up to two years in a school, providing assistance and helping to monitor and implement improvement plans. In Massachusetts, representatives of the state conduct numerous site visits and study the deficiencies of low-performing schools, hoping to resolve the problems that hinder student achievement.

In California, rather than rely on internal resources in the state department of education, the state allows teams of outside evaluators – private consultants, universities, regional educational laboratories or county offices of education – to compete for the chance to assist low-performing schools.

Additional Funding

Although the correlation between additional funding and increased achievement remains unclear, most of the 11 states studied believe there is some benefit to providing extra resources to troubled schools and districts. In fact, many of them provide additional funding to low-performing schools and/or districts, although only some of them have enacted policies requiring them to do so. In most cases, before the state provides such funding, schools or districts must qualify as underachieving or failing, and create improvement plans.

How states provide such funding varies. California allocates \$50,000 to schools that qualify for the state's Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP). For the 2001-02 school year, Massachusetts allocated \$40 million for its Academic Support Services Program and \$5 million for its After School Grant Program, both of which provide additional funding to low-performing schools and school districts.

In New York, extra funding for low-performing schools comes from school districts rather than the state, while Texas does not provide any additional funds to low-performing schools and districts. Although Rhode Island has yet to distribute additional funds to low-performing schools or districts, the State Department of Education made a budget request for \$1 million in funding for low-performing schools in 2003.

How low-performing schools and school districts use additional funds also varies. School districts in Massachusetts use the extra money to extend student-learning time before and after school and on weekends. North Carolina schools use additional funding to purchase instructional materials and bolster professional development programs for staff, and in Connecticut schools may spend extra funds on any activity listed on their school-improvement plans.

Improvement Planning

The creation of improvement plans for low-performing schools and school districts is an important step in the intervention process. In fact, each of the 11 states studied requires some form of improvement planning, though the process for creating and implementing such plans varies. In some states, the school or district in question must create and implement an improvement plan. In others, the state, or another entity, creates an improvement plan for the school or district, which then must implement it.

While the improvement planning process varies from state to state, there are several constants. Essentially, improvement plans are blueprints for increasing the academic health of individual schools or school districts. Also, as stated earlier, states usually require low-performing schools or districts to submit an improvement plan in order to receive additional funding from the state.

In most cases, improvement plans identify academic or systemic deficiencies and lay out an agenda for improvement. More specifically, improvement plans usually address problems of instruction or leadership, encourage the use of data and student tracking

systems, and set measurable outcomes for the school or district to meet. If a school or district does not meet the goals laid out in the improvement plan, it is then usually subject to sanctions.

Sanctions

Each of the 11 states studied imposes sanctions on consistently low-performing schools and/or school districts. Such sanctions take many forms. This section highlights the five sanctions of written warnings, probation, reconstitution, closure and takeover.

Several of the 11 states provide written warnings to low-performing schools and/or districts, although only some of them have enacted policies that require them to do so. Written warnings usually inform such schools and districts of their academic deficiencies and demand a change in the near future if the school or district is to avoid more severe sanctions. Written warnings usually precede other interventions, such as technical assistance, improvement plans and additional sanctions.

Massachusetts and West Virginia provide written warnings to underachieving schools and school districts before further action is taken. New Jersey provides written warnings to low-performing districts only, and not schools. New York provides written warnings to low-performing schools only, and not school districts.

Most of the 11 states studied place low-performing schools and/or school districts on probation. For example, West Virginia places low-performing schools and districts on probation before enacting tougher sanctions. During the probationary period, schools and districts are given a specific period of time to improve or risk further penalties. If improvement is demonstrated over time, the state removes the schools or districts from probationary status. Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Texas also place low-performing schools and/or districts on probation.

While most of the 11 states studied have enacted policies that allow them to reconstitute and/or close low-performing schools, only two states, Maryland and New York, have taken such drastic steps. A reconstitution usually involves creating a new philosophy, developing a new curriculum and hiring new staff at a low-performing school. In 2000, Maryland took over and reconstituted three low-performing schools in the Baltimore City Public School System, and then contracted with Edison Schools Inc. to manage the schools. Since 1990, New York has reconstituted 46 schools as well as closed three schools.

While several of the 11 states studied have enacted policies that allow the state to take over low-performing schools, only one state, Maryland, has actually implemented this policy, as detailed in the previous paragraph.

Each of the 11 states studied has enacted policies allowing the state to take over a low-performing school district. In a state takeover of a school district, either the state legislature, the state board of education or a federal court charges the state department of education or another designated entity, such as a city's mayor, with managing a school district, usually for a certain amount of time, such as five years.

There have been takeovers of school districts in 10 of the 11 states studied. There has been one takeover in Rhode Island; two takeovers in Maryland, New York and Texas; three takeovers in New Jersey; four takeovers in California, Connecticut and West Virginia; and five takeovers in Kentucky.

II. Research on the Impact of State Interventions on Low-Performing Schools and School Districts

Research into the impact of state interventions on low-performing schools and school districts is just beginning to emerge, especially as these interventions affect school and district operations and student achievement. There are two reasons for the current shortage of definitive research on state interventions. The first reason is the relative infancy of most state interventions. Since many state accountability systems that contain state interventions, such as California's, Connecticut's and Rhode Island's, are only a few years old, there simply has not been enough time to study and understand the impact of state interventions on low-performing schools and districts.

The second reason for the current shortage of definitive research is that many interventions are implemented in combination with other interventions, and therefore the research seldom examines the impact of a single intervention. While there is considerable anecdotal evidence that some interventions have powerful effects, the research does not yet shed consistent light on the efficacy of particular interventions in low-performing schools and districts.

What little research does exist suggests that interventions shouldn't be expected to equally affect low-performing schools and school districts. One of the main reasons is that many schools or schools districts simply do not have the resources to implement changes. From the body of research about schools' and school districts' abilities to implement reforms, often referred to as "local capacity," it is clear that local context plays a critical role in how well interventions take root in schools and districts. According to this research, schools' or districts' varying ability to implement reforms is an important reason why interventions have different results in different places.³

With these issues in mind, this section of the report considers the available research about the state interventions of technical assistance, additional funding, improvement plans, reconstitutions and takeovers, as well as about the federal intervention of school choice.

It also provides a brief summary of the research about schools' and districts' abilities to implement reforms.

Technical Assistance

Kentucky and North Carolina provide two notable examples of state-provided technical assistance, and early research on these efforts shows a positive impact on student achievement.

Kentucky's STAR program sends a distinguished educator to each low-performing school. These individuals spend up to two years at each site, helping to guide lessons and mentor staff. All 53 Kentucky schools that participated in the STAR program's first cycle in 1994 reversed a declining performance trend after two years, and 63% showed student growth beyond the expected rate for the school. In the second STAR cycle, approximately 200 schools participated, with 91% reversing their downward trend after two years.

North Carolina's approach is similar, but uses technical assistance teams rather than distinguished educators. Of the 15 low-performing schools that were assigned such teams in 1997-1998, all of them moved out of the low-performing category, and 13 showed exemplary growth.⁴

One explanation for the success of these approaches lies in their comprehensive nature. Each state carefully screens, selects, trains and provides ongoing support for the technical assistance providers. Each state has also emphasized the goal of building schools' and districts' abilities to identify and solve school- and district-specific problems and to track school and district progress toward achievement goals.

Additional Funding

At this point, research does not show a clear impact on instruction or achievement from providing additional funding to low-performing schools and school districts, primarily for two reasons. First, such provision is relatively new, and the research is just beginning to emerge. Second, additional funding is generally provided in combination with other interventions, so it is impossible to link improvement directly and solely to the influence of additional funds.

Still, early research on California's Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP) shows promising results from providing additional funding to low-performing schools. The II/USP provides additional resources to low-performing schools that choose to participate in the program, but these resources come with strings attached.

Participating schools must draft an action plan in the first year of the program and work to implement the plan in the second and third years. Additional resources are provided to schools – planning grants of \$50,000 in the first year, and \$200 per student in the second and third years -- to be spent as needed. After 24 months, if a school has not met its Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets, it is subject to a series of sanctions that may culminate in a state takeover of the school.

The first cohort of II/USP schools was selected in 1999. Data on the success of this initial cohort is conflicting. According to a 2002 study of the program by Hoover Institution researchers, the II/USP has great potential for raising student achievement *in the types of schools that take the initiative to participate in this type of reform effort*. II/USP schools raised their APIs significantly more in two years than other schools that applied for the program but were not selected, but not more than other schools who were eligible but did not apply. It appears that randomly selecting a low-performing school for the program does not automatically ensure improvement. Only schools that are apt or prepared to apply for such programs can expect to consistently succeed. The identification of factors that play a role in whether schools participate in this type of program, such as ambitious school leadership, is a key step in targeting such interventions to those schools where they will have the greatest chance of succeeding.⁵

Improvement Plans

The evidence linking mandated improvement plans for low-performing schools and school districts to increases in achievement is mixed. Some schools and districts increase achievement, while others do not. One explanation for this variation is that low-performing schools and districts frequently focus on the form of improvement planning, such as holding meetings, rather than on the substance, such as focusing on goals for student achievement, gathering data to examine progress toward those goals, and providing supports and pressures so that teachers meet those goals.

According to Mike Schmoker, an educational consultant who specializes in school improvement, improvement planning often does not address key needs such as strengthening teachers' assessment skills, aligning instruction with assessments, and supporting collaborative professional development for teachers. Instead, they set off a riot of activities that, in worst-case scenarios, distract schools from the problem of improving instruction.⁶

Another potential problem with improvement plans is getting school and district staff to buy into them. If administrators and teachers are not on board with the improvement plan, successful implementation may be extremely difficult.

Reconstitutions

A reconstitution usually involves creating a new philosophy, developing a new curriculum and hiring new staff at a low-performing school. Much of the research evidence about reconstituting low-performing schools comes from large urban school districts. Although little systematic evidence about the effects of reconstitutions on student achievement exists, anecdotal information suggests that reconstitutions may improve school order, stability and community involvement.

A 1992 study of the San Francisco Unified School District's school improvement program initiated in 1983 found improved student achievement in reconstituted schools with high proportions of poor or minority students. But in the schools reconstituted since 1994 in the district, there is little, if any, improvement in scores on standardized tests.⁷ Further, teachers called the reconstitution "degrading" and said that it "sent morale down the tubes."⁸

New York's reconstitution efforts provide a similarly mixed picture. In New York, a reconstitution involves replacing up to 50% of the staff and creating a new instructional approach in a low-performing school. During the 1997-98 school year, only 16 of 86 low-performing schools, or Schools Under Registration Review (SURR) as they are called, met all performance targets, although most SURR schools improved their performance from the prior year in their problem areas.⁹

Takeovers

There is limited research on the effects of takeovers of school districts. For the most part, they seem to be yielding more improvement in central-office financial and management practices than in classroom instructional practices. As evidence, takeovers are credited with the following:

- Eliminating nepotism from a school district's decision-making processes
- Improving a school district's administrative and financial management practices
- Removing the threat of teachers' strikes within a school district
- Upgrading the physical condition of schools within a school district
- Implementing innovative programs within a school district, such as small-schools programs and cooperative arrangements between schools and social service agencies.

In some cases, however, takeovers have produced negative results, such as the \$70 million deficit incurred by state-appointed administrators in Newark, New Jersey, and the

10-day teachers' strike in Detroit, Michigan, which occurred six months after the mayor assumed control of the school district.

Perhaps more important, student achievement still oftentimes falls short of expectations after a takeover. In most cases, academic results are usually mixed at best, with increases in student performance in some areas, such as 4th grade reading, and decreases in student performance in other areas, such as 8th grade mathematics. The bottom line is that takeovers, for the most part, have yet to produce dramatic and consistent increases in student performance, as is necessary in many of the school districts that are taken over.

Still, a recent study by Vanderbilt University and Harvard University researchers produced four broad conclusions regarding the relationship between takeovers and academic performance:

- Takeovers placing mayors in charge of school districts are linked to increases in student achievement at the elementary grades.
- Gains in achievement are especially large for the lowest-performing schools in these school districts, suggesting that takeovers involving mayors include a special focus on these failing schools.
- Takeovers placing mayors in charge of school districts seem less effective for the upper grades, where the cumulative effects of many years of poor schooling are not easily reversible.
- When takeovers placing the state department of education in charge of school districts produce administrative and political turmoil, student achievement suffers. After a period of adjustment, however, these takeovers may also be able to produce positive achievement gains.¹⁰

Further, two promising experiences stand out among the various takeovers of school districts. First, as a result of a takeover of the Logan County, West Virginia, school district, test scores increased, management improved and local support was strengthened. According to the former West Virginia Superintendent of Schools, the takeover

succeeded in Logan County because it kept the school board in place, albeit with reduced powers. State officials felt that the school district's decision-makers needed to be a part of the recovery process, largely so they would know what to do when the school district regained sole control of its operations. Results of the takeover include:

- Performance, attendance and dropout rates improved dramatically.
- Administrative difficulties and budget problems were resolved.
- Personnel policies and practices now comply with the law (e.g., all of the school district's teachers now have valid teacher licenses).

Second, in 1995, the Illinois legislature shifted control of the Chicago Public Schools to the mayor and charged him with appointing school board members, the school board president and the school district's chief executive officer. According to 1997 and 1998 studies by the University of Chicago, these changes have improved managerial efficiencies within the school district.¹¹ In addition, according to a 1998 study by the Consortium on Chicago School Research, standardized test scores strongly suggest that the 1995 changes, along with earlier reforms such as the 1988 Chicago School Reform Act, have precipitated substantial improvements in achievement in a large number of Chicago public elementary schools.¹²

School Choice

As a result of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a federally imposed intervention policy requires school districts to allow students in low-performing schools to transfer to higher-performing schools in the district. This policy also requires school districts to provide transportation for the transferring students to the higher-performing schools.

At the same time, the No Child Left Behind Act increases federal support for voluntary public school choice programs, such as magnet schools and open enrollment, as well as for charter schools.

Because the federal government's policy that requires school districts to allow students in low-performing schools to transfer to higher performing schools is new, there is no evidence about its impact. There is evidence, though, about the impact of other school choice policies. According to this research, the attempts of magnet schools, open enrollment programs and charter schools to provide disadvantaged students with greater educational options have produced mixed results.

Although designed initially to reduce ethnic segregation and promote a diverse student body, magnet schools primarily attract higher-income students. According to the U.S. Department of Education, although enrollment in magnet schools has tripled in the past decade, low-income students remain underrepresented in most programs.¹³

Such underrepresentation is attributed to the proposition that families with the greatest amount of resources typically have access to information regarding magnet programs that poorer families lack. One researcher found that even knowing of the term "magnet school" depended on a parent's ethnicity and income level.¹⁴

In addition, since academic magnets often apply a high degree of selectivity to the admissions process, high-achieving students are often separated from lower-achieving peers, clustering struggling students in low-performing schools. However, career magnets in places like New York City reduce ethnic and class separation through a lottery system that accepts students randomly.

In open enrollment programs, despite efforts to reach out to low-income and minority children, middle- and upper-class students still constitute the bulk of participants. Similar to parents who choose magnet programs, middle- or upper-income families typically have the time, resources and education levels necessary to investigate open enrollment options. Simply knowing what choices exist and how to apply for them contributes to increased participation in the programs.

For example, a study of the New York City open enrollment program found a lack of publicity and a complex application process limited the effectiveness of the plan in reaching out to low-income families.¹⁵ A study of the Boulder Valley School District's open enrollment system found that high-achieving white students tended to be the ones fleeing low-performing public schools for charter or wealthier neighborhood schools.¹⁶ This is mainly the result of a familiarity with the options and an understanding of how to navigate the system. Minnesota seems to be having the greatest success in involving minority students with its statewide open enrollment plan, with 40% minority student participation.¹⁷

Of the three public school choice programs discussed, charter schools serve the greatest number of minority and low-income children. According to figures from the U.S. Department of Education, charter schools enrolled a larger percentage of students of color than all public schools in the states with charter schools. Charter schools in Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina and Texas actually enroll a much higher percentage of minority students than all public schools in those states. In the states that have charter programs, charter schools also enroll a slightly higher percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.¹⁸ On the flip side, charter schools have served a slightly lower proportion of students with disabilities than all public schools in the states with charter schools.

The impact of school choice programs on student achievement is undecided. Preliminary research suggests that magnet schools, open enrollment programs and charter schools experience varying levels of achievement. But the choice movement is too young to yield any definitive results. More research and evidence are needed before anyone truly understands the real long-term benefits or detriments of public school choice programs' effects on student learning.

Schools' and Districts' Abilities to Implement Reforms

As the above sections illustrate, the research does not provide strong conclusions about the effects of various state interventions on school and district operations and on student achievement, largely because local responses to state interventions vary widely. Factors that contribute to this variation include:

- The particular combination of interventions that are applied to low-performing schools and districts
- The amount of time that low-performing schools and districts are given to raise their performance
- The amount of support provided to low-performing schools and districts, and the perceived relevance of that support to local needs
- Whether the school, district or state initiates the improvement process
- The extent to which local stakeholders buy into any external intervention process.

Given the interplay of these factors, researchers note that low-performing schools and school districts may have increased or reduced motivation to make changes, depending on their circumstances and ability to implement reforms.¹⁹

In 1995, the Center for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) developed a helpful framework that describes where local barriers to improvement may be located. By identifying school and district needs in relation to the barriers in this framework, states may target interventions with a better likelihood of success. This framework contains five key dimensions:

- Vision and leadership, in which district and school leadership and staff share a common purpose. This purpose is focused on (1) improved achievement for all students, (2) curriculum and instruction, and (3) teacher responsibility for student learning. Schools with problems in this area, for instance, might suffer from chronic leadership turnover or a non-achievement-oriented focus for students.

- Collective commitment and cultural norms to realize the vision. The most actively reforming schools in the CPRE study were characterized by a sense of schoolwide responsibility for student learning. In addition, the schools demonstrated a set of cultural norms that stressed ongoing improvement, and they used data to monitor constant progress. Schools that have problems in this area may suffer from high staff turnover, lack of staff cohesion, or norms where “anything goes” in the classroom.
- Knowledge or access to knowledge about specific strategies for improvement, such as targeted, sustained professional development. District and school personnel must be able to access this knowledge to improve student achievement. Schools with problems in this area may lack funds or time for targeted, sustained professional development designed to raise student achievement, or they may be participating in the wrong kind of professional development. They also may lack adequate, timely performance information about their students.
- Organizational structures that support better instruction. These include common planning time for teacher collaboration, extended class schedules, and extended day or year programs. The common denominator is that structures are designed and targeted to support improved student learning. Some problems in this area are obstacles to after-school programs, such as a lack of space, and union agreements that specify the maximum number of hours that teachers may work.
- Adequate resources, including funds, time, personnel and materials.²⁰ Schools with problems in this area may lack adequate funds for professional development, a supply of well-prepared teachers, or appropriate materials.

III. Policy Recommendations and State Practitioner Advice

Based on our review of state policies and experiences as well as a review of the research, it appears that state interventions designed to assess and maximize existing abilities in low-performing schools and districts and to exert appropriate pressure for change may be the most likely to improve school and district operations and to raise student achievement. Within the context of this observation, we offer five recommendations. In addition, we provide the advice of state practitioners whom we interviewed in the course of gathering information for this study.

Policy Recommendations

Recommendation #1: For the greatest impact on school and school district performance, states should target technical assistance to the individual needs of schools and districts.

It does not make sense for a school to buy new textbooks if what it lacks is good leadership. But a one-size-fits-all intervention does just that type of thing. Promising state models for targeted technical assistance include Connecticut, Kentucky and North Carolina. The approaches in these states link technical-assistance providers with local practitioners to assess specific school needs and plan accordingly.

Similarly, the strong-schools accountability model, developed by University of Washington researchers, encourages interventions that are specific to particular site needs. States identify low-performing schools using state test scores, but a deeper examination of those schools takes place in a triage approach. Site visits are conducted to assess particular problems, and information gathered from those site visits is used to create specific school improvement plans.²¹

States must consider the cost implications in a targeted approach to technical assistance, though. Such assistance uses more resources in fewer sites, while providing a greater chance that those sites will substantially improve. States must weigh the relative benefits

of such an approach against the available amount of resources for technical assistance efforts, and should consider the following questions in making resource allocation decisions:

- How many low-performing schools are in the state? How much pressure is there to improve them?
- Where are low-performing schools in relation to the cutoff point for reaching the state's academic standards? Are they relatively close to this point, or are they extremely low-performing?
- Do low-performing schools serve particular populations that may require more intensive interventions?

Recommendation #2: States should develop a pool of technical- assistance providers for low-performing schools and districts, and a pool of supplemental-services providers for low-income students in low-performing schools.

In general, states do not have the resources to provide adequate technical assistance to all of their low-performing schools and districts. Therefore, it is important to ensure that such schools and districts have access to a variety of assistance providers from the public and private sectors.

This issue is particularly relevant in light of certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. As part of this law, the federal government requires certain low-performing schools to offer their low-income students the opportunity to receive instruction from a supplemental-services provider of their choice. Under the law, students in low-performing schools that have failed to meet their state's requirements for AYP for three consecutive years are allowed to obtain such instruction. The law also requires that states approve the supplemental-services providers.

States should coordinate the development of a pool of technical-assistance providers for schools and districts and a pool of supplemental-services providers for students, as well as establish criteria for providers to be included in such pools.

These criteria should be tied to evidence of effectiveness, using the federal government's definition of "scientifically based research" evidence as much as possible. States should also take into account the variety of student, school and school district needs across the state. Because of geographic constraints, states may want to consider the efficacy of technology-based services, particularly for remote rural areas. Finally, the criteria should maintain a focus on improving student achievement.

Recommendation #3: State intervention policies for school and school district improvement plans should focus on improving student achievement, setting realistic improvement goals and requiring regular monitoring of school and district progress.

As mentioned earlier in this report, tying improvement plan requirements directly to the use of student achievement data helps to focus schools and districts directly on student learning. By focusing on improving student achievement, setting realistic improvement goals and requiring regular monitoring of progress toward goals, state policies help to ensure that ongoing improvement becomes part of the culture of schools and districts.

Focusing improvement policies in these ways helps school and district officials target areas where students are having particular problems. Further, improvement policies requiring schools and districts to target professional development to classroom strategies specific to these problem areas provides help to teachers where it is most needed and where improvement will be seen most quickly.

Recommendation #4: If states create and implement takeover policies, they should ensure that takeover efforts focus on: establishing clear performance goals and measures, especially concerning academics; creating and implementing improvement strategies

specific to the problems in the school or school district in question, particularly regarding improved instruction; defining the conditions under which the state will return control of the school or school district to local officials; and, when possible, partnering with local officials in the improvement effort.

Although the research evidence about takeovers is relatively limited, several lessons are emerging from the states' experiences with takeovers. First, it appears that those places that are achieving the greatest success placed a high priority on improving academic performance at the outset of the takeover. While it is important to address financial problems, such as budget deficits, as well as management problems in school districts, officials should tackle these problems in the context of their larger goal of improving student achievement.

Second, takeovers are simply governance changes for the sake of governance changes if they are not connected to the implementation of strategies that directly impact the teaching and learning experience in classrooms. Therefore, after a takeover, officials should study and identify the specific problems in a school or school district, establish clear performance goals and measure and create and implement improvement strategies specific to the problems in the school or school district in question, particularly regarding improved instruction.

Third, many states that have taken over school districts have struggled to return control to local officials. This fact is oftentimes due to states' failing to set clear terms for giving the power over the school district's operations back to the locally elected school board and local superintendent. Also, states are sometimes concerned about the ability of local officials to continue improvement efforts and not revert back to unproductive practices.

Therefore, after studying and identifying the specific problems in a school or school district, states should define the conditions under which the state will return control of the school or school district to local officials. Also, when possible, states should partner with local officials in the improvement effort. Such a partnership should build the knowledge

and skills of these officials so that they know what to do when the school or school district regains sole control of its operations.

Recommendation #5: In creating and refining state intervention policies for low-performing schools and districts, states should take into account the requirements and implications of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, particularly as they relate to providing assistance to low-performing schools.

As states create and refine intervention policies for low-performing schools and districts, they should take into account the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001:

- **State Academic Standards and Student Achievement Standards** (Title 1, Part A, Sec. 1111, Subsection (b)): Requires states to demonstrate that they have adopted challenging academic content and student achievement standards for all children.
- **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** (Title 1, Part A, Sec. 1111, Subsection (b)): Requires states to demonstrate that they have adopted a single statewide accountability system for defining “adequate yearly progress” for all public school students.
- **Annual Student Testing** (Title 1, Part A, Sec. 1111, Subsection b (3,4,5): Beginning in 2005-06, states are required to test all students annually in grades 3-8 in mathematics and reading or language arts, with reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities and students of limited-English proficiency.
- **Participation in Biennial NAEP** (Title 1, Part A, Sec. 1111): States are required to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) every other year in grades 4 and 8 for reading and mathematics, beginning in the 2002-03 school year.
- **State Report Cards** (Title 1, Part A, Sec. 1111): Not later than the beginning of the 2002-03 school year, states and school districts that receive Title I funding must prepare and disseminate annual report cards.

- **Consequences for Low-Performing Schools/School Districts** (Title I, Part A, Sec. 1116): For states and school districts receiving Title I funds, ESEA outlines requirements for setting a timeline and establishing consequences for school and district performance relative to adequate yearly progress. School districts and state departments of education have parallel responsibilities in the intervention process for schools and districts, respectively.
- **School Support and Recognition** (Title I, Part A, Sec. 1117): States are to develop support systems for schools using resources from regional centers and laboratories, as well as other technical-assistance providers. Priority goes to districts with schools subject to corrective action and school improvement policies.

In particular, states should consider the implications of the requirement that the tests and formulas that states use to designate schools as low-performing, or not meeting their state's AYP requirements, are the same for all schools in the state. Only low-performing schools that receive money from the federal Title I program, however, are required to participate in the interventions specified in NCLB, as long as they are consistent with state law.

The pressing implications of this requirement include:

- The number of schools that have been identified as low-performing, and whether or not they receive money from the federal Title I program
- The federal requirements for interventions in those schools
- Federal and state resources for assisting low-performing schools.

For states with large numbers of low-performing schools, one potential problem is the amount of resources necessary to adequately address the problems in these schools. Not only will such a situation dilute resources, but it may also diminish the effects of the various state interventions spread out across a large number of schools. Therefore, states must decide about the trade-offs between focusing resources in a smaller number of schools and diffusing resources across a larger number of schools.

Advice from State Practitioners

As we gathered information for this report, a number of accountability officials from states with established intervention programs offered several recommendations, including the following:

- Technical assistance should be in-depth and targeted to the individual needs of schools and school districts. Allowing improvement teams or technical experts to assist a school on a daily basis – like in Kentucky and Connecticut – for a lengthy period of time allows the intervention process to grow and respond to a school’s unique needs.
- Professional development is an essential part of the intervention process. For example, establishing leadership academies for principals and mentoring programs for teachers may provide school staff with rigorous training in new forms of instruction, curriculum development, data analysis and school improvement plans. Also, building strong relationships with the principals of low-performing schools is especially beneficial to the intervention process.
- As part of the intervention process, states should include specific changes that directly affect the teaching and learning experiences in classrooms. For example, in a few states, such as North Carolina, interventions included targeted class-size reductions, which, according to state officials, helped raise student achievement in these states. The research on class size reduction is mixed, however, and most researchers agree that class reduction is effective only when it is one piece of a larger, teaching quality reform effort.
- Some states believe in a tough approach to low-performing schools. In particular, Maryland, New York and Texas find that threatening schools with reconstitution or closure spurs improvement. Other states, like Connecticut and Massachusetts, find technical assistance, fact-finding and funding give a school the time and support it needs to increase student achievement. While these approaches are not mutually

exclusive, some states place more emphasis on one approach, while other states place more emphasis on the other approach.

- Although it is too early to tell, state accountability officials in California think that their use of outside evaluators will yield positive results and facilitate school achievement. According to these officials, using more of a free-market model in providing technical assistance to low-performing schools -- which forces outside providers to compete for the chance to provide such assistance -- will ensure the highest quality of service to these schools.
- Adequate funding for interventions is perhaps the most important factor of all. Even the best-designed set of interventions will fail if they are not adequately funded. How much a school or a district needs will vary from state to state and situation to situation. The needs of individual schools and districts are often very different, as are the levels of funding required for improvement. Often – but certainly not always – the best measure is that schools that perform the lowest, or fail to improve after the first year, need extra resources. Many of the lowest-performing schools need the greatest number of resources to improve, and states must take these needs into account when designing and funding interventions.

Appendix A: State Policies on Interventions in Low-Performing Schools and School Districts

Overview of State Policies on Interventions in Low-Performing Schools and School Districts

According to our research, 33 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing schools, while 30 states have enacted policies that allow them to intervene in low-performing school districts.

<u>State</u>	<u>Has the State Enacted Policies that Allow the State to Intervene in Schools on the Basis of Performance?</u>	<u>Has the State Enacted Policies that Allow the State to Intervene in School Districts on the Basis of Performance?</u>
Alabama	Yes	Yes
Alaska	Yes	No
Arizona	Yes	No
Arkansas	Yes	Yes
California	Yes	Yes
Colorado	Yes	Yes
Connecticut	Yes	Yes
Delaware	Yes	Yes
Florida	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	No
Hawaii	No	No
Idaho	No	No
Illinois	Yes	Yes
Indiana	Yes	Yes
Iowa	No	Yes
Kansas	Yes	Yes
Kentucky	Yes	Yes
Louisiana	Yes	No
Maine	No	No
Maryland	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	Yes

<u>State</u>	<u>Has the State Enacted Policies that Allow the State to Intervene in Schools on the Basis of Performance?</u>	<u>Has the State Enacted Policies that Allow the State to Intervene in School Districts on the Basis of Performance?</u>
Michigan	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	No	No
Mississippi	No	Yes
Missouri	Yes	Yes
Montana	No	No
Nebraska	No	No
Nevada	Yes	No
New Hampshire	No	No
New Jersey	No	Yes
New Mexico	Yes	Yes
New York	Yes	Yes
North Carolina	Yes	Yes
North Dakota	No	No
Ohio	No	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	Yes
Oregon	Yes	No
Pennsylvania	No	Yes
Rhode Island	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes
South Dakota	No	No
Tennessee	Yes	Yes
Texas	Yes	Yes
Utah	No	No
Vermont	Yes	No
Virginia	Yes	No
Washington	No	No
West Virginia	Yes	Yes
Wisconsin	No	No
Wyoming	Yes	Yes

State Policies for Interventions in Low-Performing Schools

The following chart addresses the following questions concerning interventions in schools based on performance:

1. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state to provide written warnings to low-performing schools?
2. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state or another entity to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools?
3. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state to provide additional funding to low-performing schools?
4. Has the state enacted a policy that requires low-performing schools to create and implement improvement plans?
5. Has the state enacted a policy that requires another entity, such as the state or a school district, to create improvement plans for low-performing schools?
6. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to place low-performing schools on probation?
7. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to remove a low-performing school's accreditation?
8. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to withhold funding from low-performing schools?
9. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to reconstitute low-performing schools?
10. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to close low-performing schools?
11. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to take over low-performing schools?

<u>State</u>	<u>1. Written Warning?</u>	<u>2. Technical Assistance?</u>	<u>3. More Funding?</u>	<u>4. Plan by School?</u>	<u>5. Plan by Other Entity?</u>	<u>6. Place on Probation?</u>	<u>7. Remove Accreditation?</u>	<u>8. Withhold Funding?</u>	<u>9. Reconstitute School?</u>	<u>10. Close School?</u>	<u>11. Take Over School?</u>
Alabama	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Alaska	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

<u>State</u>	<u>1.Written Warning?</u>	<u>2.Technical Assistance?</u>	<u>3.More Funding?</u>	<u>4.Plan by School?</u>	<u>5.Plan by Other Entity?</u>	<u>6.Place on Probation?</u>	<u>7.Remove Accreditation?</u>	<u>8.Withhold Funding?</u>	<u>9.Reconstitute School?</u>	<u>10.Close School?</u>	<u>11.Take Over School?</u>
Arizona	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
California	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colorado	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Connecticut	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Delaware	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Florida	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Georgia	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Illinois ¹²	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Indiana	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Kansas	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Kentucky	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Louisiana	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Maryland	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Michigan	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Minnesota	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Missouri	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Nevada	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
New Mexico	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
New York ¹³	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
North Carolina	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Oklahoma	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oregon	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Rhode Island	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Tennessee	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Texas	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vermont	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

<u>State</u>	<u>1.Written Warning?</u>	<u>2.Technical Assistance?</u>	<u>3.More Funding?</u>	<u>4.Plan by School?</u>	<u>5.Plan by Other Entity?</u>	<u>6.Place on Probation?</u>	<u>7.Remove Accreditation?</u>	<u>8.Withhold Funding?</u>	<u>9.Reconstitute School?</u>	<u>10.Close School?</u>	<u>11.Take Over School?</u>
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Wyoming	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No

According to our research:

1. 12 states have enacted policies that require the state to provide written warnings to low-performing schools. In several other states, the state provides a written warning to schools, but is not required to do so by state policy.
2. 26 states have enacted policies that require the state or another entity to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools. In several other states, the state or another entity provides such assistance to schools, but are not required to do so by state policy.
3. 11 states have enacted policies that require the state to provide additional funding to low-performing schools. In several other states, the state provides such funding to schools, but is not required to do so by state policy.
4. 31 states have enacted policies that require low-performing schools to create and implement an improvement plan.
5. 21 states have enacted policies that require another entity, such as the state or a school district, to create an improvement plan for low-performing schools.
6. 17 states have enacted policies that allow the state to place low-performing schools on probation.
7. 15 states have enacted policies that allow the state to remove a low-performing school's accreditation.
8. 5 states have enacted policies that allow the state to withhold funding from low-performing schools.
9. 19 states have enacted policies that allow the state to reconstitute low-performing schools.
10. 10 states have enacted policies that allow the state to close low-performing schools.
11. 17 states have enacted policies that allow the state to take over low-performing schools.

State Policies for Interventions in Low-Performing School Districts

The following chart addresses the following questions concerning interventions in school districts based on performance:

1. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state to provide written warnings to low-performing school districts?
2. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state or another entity to provide technical assistance to low-performing school districts?
3. Has the state enacted a policy that requires the state to provide additional funding to low-performing school districts?
4. Has the state enacted a policy that requires low-performing school districts to create and implement improvement plans?
5. Has the state enacted a policy that requires another entity, such as the state, to create improvement plans for low-performing school districts?
6. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to place low-performing school districts on probation?
7. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to remove a low-performing school district's accreditation?
8. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to withhold funding from low-performing school districts?
9. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to reorganize low-performing school districts?
10. Has the state enacted a policy that allows the state to take over low-performing school districts?

<u>State</u>	<u>1.Written Warning?</u>	<u>2.Technical Assistance?</u>	<u>3.More Funding?</u>	<u>4.Plan by School District?</u>	<u>5.Plan by Other Entity?</u>	<u>6.Place on Probation?</u>	<u>7.Removal of Accreditation?</u>	<u>8.Withhold Funding?</u>	<u>9.Reorganize School District?</u>	<u>10.Take Over School District?</u>
Alabama	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
California	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes

State	<u>1. Written</u> Warning?	<u>2. Technical</u> Assistance?	<u>3. More</u> Funding?	<u>4. Plan by</u> School District?	<u>5. Plan by</u> Other Entity?	<u>6. Place on</u> Probation?	<u>7. Removal of</u> Accreditation?	<u>8. Withhold</u> Funding?	<u>9. Reorganize</u> School District?	<u>10. Take Over School</u> District?
Colorado	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Connecticut	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Delaware	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Florida	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Illinois	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indiana	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Iowa	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kansas	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Kentucky	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Maryland	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Massachusetts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Michigan	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Mississippi	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Missouri	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
New Jersey	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
New Mexico	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
New York ⁹	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
North Carolina	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Ohio	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Oklahoma	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Pennsylvania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Rhode Island	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Carolina	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Tennessee	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Texas	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
West Virginia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Wyoming	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

According to our research:

1. Nine states have enacted policies that require the state to provide written warnings to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state provides a written warning to school districts, but is not required to do so by state policy.
2. Sixteen states have enacted policies that require the state or another entity to provide technical assistance to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state or another entity provides such assistance to school districts, but are not required to do so by state policy.
3. Nine states have enacted policies that require the state to provide additional funding to low-performing school districts. In several other states, the state provides such funding to school districts, but is not required to do so by state policy.
4. Twenty-three states have enacted policies that require low-performing school districts to create and implement an improvement plan.
5. Fifteen states have enacted policies that require another entity, such as the state, to create an improvement plan for low-performing school districts.
6. Fourteen states have enacted policies that allow the state to place low-performing school districts on probation.
7. Fourteen states have enacted policies that allow the state to remove a low-performing school district's accreditation.
8. Five states have enacted policies that allow the state to withhold funding from low-performing school districts.
9. Ten states have enacted policies that allow the state to reorganize low-performing school districts.
10. Twenty-four states have enacted policies that allow the state to take over low-performing school districts.

Appendix B: State Narratives

California

In 1999, California started the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP), and allowed schools that scored below the 50th percentile on state assessments during the 1998-99 school year to apply to this program.²² With II/USP, California is taking a unique approach to intervention that sets it apart from other states. Rather than rely on internal resources in the state department of education, the state allows teams of outside evaluators – private consultants, universities, regional educational laboratories or county offices of education – to compete for the chance to assist low-performing schools. These teams provide technical assistance to troubled schools and assist in the writing of school improvement plans.

The state selected 430 schools, and each school chose its team of outside evaluators from a list of 80 such evaluators. These schools also created improvement committees comprised of school staff, non-school personnel and parents. Over the course of one year, the schools developed an improvement plan. Once the team of outside evaluators, the school district and the state approved a school's improvement plan, the state gave \$50,000 to each school.

If the improvement process fails to improve a school's results, a school is subject to a wide range of state sanctions, including removal of staff, reorganization of the school, including reconstitution as a charter school, public school choice for students and closure.

Since the implementation of the II/USP, test scores in general have risen, but achievement gaps seem to be growing due to a lack of qualified teachers in at-risk schools. There is also some question about whether funding and assistance are reaching the schools in the most difficult situations.²³ Reactions to the II/USP have been fairly positive, however, with principals and teachers approving of the professional

development opportunities and the overall improvement planning process. This buy-in from school staff may spell success for the program's future.

Finally, California has taken over four school districts since 1991:

- In 1991, the state took over the Richmond Unified School District (now known as the West Contra Costa Unified School District) due to financial problems within the district, and hired an administrator to run the district. In 1992, the state removed the administrator, and designated a trustee to monitor the district's financial performance.
- In 1992, the state took over the Coachella Unified School District due to financial problems within the district, and hired an administrator to run the district. In 1996, the state removed the administrator, and designated a trustee to monitor the district's financial performance.
- In 1993, the state took over the Compton Unified School District due to financial problems within the district. In 1993, the state legislature passed a law that required the takeover to also address inadequate student performance in the school district. In 2001, the state removed the administrator, and designated a trustee to monitor the academic and financial performance of the school district.
- In 2001, the state took over the Emery Unified School District due to financial problems within the school district, and hired an administrator to run the school district.

Connecticut

Connecticut's school accountability program dates back to 1999. Since that time, the state has provided technical assistance and additional funding to low-performing schools in an effort to improve student performance.

Under the guidance of the state department of education, a team from each of the state's 28 low-performing schools wrote a school improvement plan designed to address inadequacies at each school. The state assigned an individual known as a critical friend to the principals at each of the schools to assist in the implementation of the school improvement plans. Among other things, these individuals sit in on school improvement team meetings, review grants and provide training to school staff.

The state also established a principal's training academy for the principals at each of the schools. This academy provides rigorous training in data analysis, school reform, early learning plans and school improvement plans. In addition, Brown University carried out site visits to each of the schools, as well as analyzed the data surrounding student achievement and progress on the school improvement plans.

The state provided student assessment data to each school so they may monitor student progress and adjust the curriculum as necessary. The state also allotted \$232,353 in fiscal year 2000-01 and \$50,000 in fiscal year 2001-02 to assist low-performing schools. These funds were shared by all of the low-performing schools, to be used for any activity listed on the school's improvement plan.

Connecticut has yet to implement sanctions as part of this program. If schools do not demonstrate sufficient progress by February 2003, however, the state may implement sanctions, including school reconstitutions and closures.

State officials believe that threatening low-performing schools and withholding funding from them is counterproductive to the school improvement process. Instead, they

recommend being supportive of principals and staff, and clearly outlining indicators, objectives and outcomes in the school improvement plans as the best way to ensure improvement.

More specifically, state officials have found the following approaches to be particularly useful in helping schools improve their performance: providing comprehensive technical assistance; developing and implementing specific school improvement plans; conducting workshops for principals and staff, helping them to understand data analysis, student assessment trends and performance measures; and building strong relationships between critical friends and principals in low-performing schools.

Since the program is only two years old, it is difficult to measure the impact of the state's intervention. In 2003, when the state may implement sanctions, state officials will have their first chance to determine if their policies are having any effect on performance.

Finally, Connecticut has taken over four school districts since 1988:

- In 1988, the state took over the town and school district of Bridgeport due to financial problems. The state returned power to the town and school district in 1996.
- In 1992, the state took over the town and school district of West Haven due to financial difficulties. The state returned power to the town and school district in 1995.
- In 1997, due to a variety of problems within the Hartford School District, the state legislature enacted a law to abolish the locally elected school board and empower the governor to appoint a new one.
- In 2001, the state took over the town and school district of Waterbury due to financial problems.

Kentucky

With school accountability legislation dating back to 1990, Kentucky has the longest history of state intervention into low-performing schools and school districts. Kentucky also provides a good example of a state that is reassessing and revising its accountability plan, hoping to learn from its past experiences.

In 1994, Kentucky established the School Transformation Assistance and Renewal (STAR) program in an effort to provide technical assistance to low-performing schools. Under this program, about 60 technical experts, known as distinguished educators, provide mentoring to the staffs of low-performing schools. Distinguished educators must complete a training program in preparation for providing assistance to low-performing schools. After the training program, distinguished educators spend up to two years in a school, helping to create and implement a school improvement plan with the input of the school's staff. More specifically, they facilitate change at these schools through classroom observation, careful planning, curriculum alignment and a focus on teaching and learning.

To strengthen the STAR program, Kentucky is implementing a scholastic audit program in 2002, which will determine the specific needs of each of the lowest-performing schools. As part of this program, an audit team will conduct on site visits and make recommendations toward improving student achievement at each low-performing school.

Furthermore, Kentucky revised its school accountability system to include rankings of schools. The level of assistance – or the severity of the sanction – from the state will match the level of performance at the school.

For example, the state will give additional funding and conduct a scholastic audit of low-performing “Level 3” schools, and teachers and principals in these schools will be subject to review. If members of a school's staff do not comply with or are unable to fulfill the stipulations of a recommended professional growth plan, the state may remove or transfer

them to another school. The state may also remove local school council members. If the school fails to improve after two years, students may attend a higher-performing school.

Kentucky's interventions have produced some positive results. Of the 53 schools that received technical assistance in 1994, all showed improvement, with 66% of them eligible to receive rewards for performance. According to state officials, on site visits and mentoring of staff seem to have the greatest impact on low-performing schools.

This success did not come without controversy, however. Public pressure and criticism of the state's testing system, the Kentucky Instructional Results Information System (KIRIS), forced state leaders to modify the system. The state replaced the KIRIS with a new testing system, the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), and offered more technical assistance to low-performing schools, with an emphasis on teaching and learning.

Therefore, one important lesson to learn from Kentucky is the necessity of growth and change in state accountability systems. The ultimate goal is student achievement – if one approach fails, then others must be tried.

Finally, Kentucky has taken over five school districts since 1988:

- In 1988, state officials took over the Pike County School District due to financial problems within the district. In 1990, the state returned control to the school district. In 1998, the state board of education voted to place the school district under a declaration of financial emergency because it ended the fiscal year with a deficit budget. In 1999, the state released the school district from the declaration of emergency.
- In 1989, state officials took over the Whitley County School District and the Floyd County School District due to financial and management problems within the school districts. In 1990, the state board of education returned control to the districts. In 1997, state officials again assumed control of the Floyd County School District due to financial and management problems.

- In 1992, state officials assumed control of the Harlan County School District due to financial and management problems within the district. In 1996, state officials returned control to the district.
- In 1994, state officials assumed control of the Letcher County School District due to financial and management problems within the district. In 1997, state officials returned control to the district.

Maryland

Maryland's Schools for Success program includes state intervention for low-performing schools. The state's intervention program attempts to change the decisionmaking processes at schools, as well as provide them with resources to support improvement.

In partnership with the state department of education, low-performing schools create school improvement teams, which help principals and staff by assisting with data analysis, creating and implementing school improvement plans and providing professional development services.

The state department of education provides school improvement leadership training to teachers, administrators and school district personnel. The training helps them set improvement goals, use data to identify performance problems and find strategies to turn the school around. The state also provides approximately \$100,000 to each low-performing school, to be spent on professional development, class-size reduction, purchase of instructional materials and other staff needs.

After each school submits an improvement plan, they must provide annual updates and demonstrate significant improvement. If they fail to improve, they face sanctions.

Since 1994, Maryland has identified 119 schools as eligible for reconstitution, though so far only four schools have been named for reconstitution and another four have closed. In 2001, the state board of education voted to take over and reconstitute three elementary schools in the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS). Subsequently, the state contracted with Edison Schools, Inc. to manage the schools. Also in 2001, the state board of education voted to reconstitute Westport Elementary/Middle School in the BCPSS. Currently, 107 schools are on the reconstitution-eligible list.

Like New York and Texas, Maryland's tough stance towards school accountability has produced some positive results. State officials believe that collaborative efforts between the state and low-performing schools have been beneficial to improving school performance in the state, and that increasing the quality of leadership in the schools has

helped to improve teaching practices and raise student achievement. From their perspective, because their approach allows the school to remain part of the school systems and the community, it keeps the pressure on a school without completely ostracizing staff and students.

In addition, they assert that the implementation of school improvement plans has gone smoothly under the guidance of school improvement teams, although the timeline for submitting school improvement plans needs refinement. Such plans are currently due on August 31 of each year, and getting the appropriate parties together over the summer is sometimes a challenge.

Finally, Maryland has taken over two school districts since 1997:

- In 1997, due to a variety of problems within the Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS), the state legislature entered into a partnership with the city of Baltimore to run BCPS. From this partnership, a new, nine-member board of school commissioners was created, with members jointly appointed by the governor and the mayor.
- In 2002, the state intervened in the Prince George's County School District. The state enacted legislation that abolished the locally elected school board and created a nine-member school board appointed by the governor and the county executive.

Massachusetts

In 1999, the Massachusetts board of education adopted a comprehensive accountability system for schools and school districts, which assesses schools and school districts to determine if they meet state standards. The state first published school performance ratings in 2000, and found four junior high schools to be underperforming. A panel reviewed and conducted a fact-finding effort in these schools, which, up to this point, have not faced any sanctions. The state will publish school performance ratings again in 2002.

To more specifically support low-performing students, the state created the academic support services program (ASSP) in 1998. The ASSP addresses the needs of students scoring in the failing and needs improvement categories on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). The state also created an after-school grant program (ASGP) to support efforts to strengthen the coordination between the instruction that occurs during the school day and the activities that take place outside of the school day.

For the 2001-02 school year, the state appropriated \$40 million for ASSP and over \$5 million was provided for ASGP. School districts are using ASSP funds to extend student-learning time before and after school, on weekends and school vacations and during the summer. They are also using these funds to provide intensive, small group instruction and innovative programming. School districts report student-level data on ASSP program participation and progress. In addition, ASSP staff provides training and resources for school districts with high percentages of low-performing students and present promising program models at statewide conferences.

Massachusetts intends to implement a school and school district improvement planning process in the next two years, as well as expand services to further support low-performing students.

New Jersey

New Jersey has received a great deal of attention for its school district accountability system, particularly for its takeovers of low-performing school districts. Seen by many as a pioneer in the realm of school district takeovers, New Jersey's efforts have produced mixed results.

In May 1988, New Jersey began proceedings to take control of the Jersey City Public Schools due to financial, management and academic problems in the school district. Despite resistance from the school district, Jersey City became the first urban school district in the nation to come under full state control in 1989. In subsequent years, the state took over the Paterson Public Schools (1991) and the Newark Public Schools (1995), and assumed management of these school districts.

Despite its aggressive approach to taking over low-performing school districts, New Jersey is still struggling to bring troubled school districts up to state standards in student achievement. For example, while conditions in Newark's elementary, middle and high schools have improved, the gains are modest compared with the rest of the state. The number of high school students who passed the reading section of the state's "High School Proficiency Test" only rose from 41.1% in 1995 to 42.3% in 1998 (more recent data is not available). The math scores for high school students were better, with 46.1% of students passing in 1998, compared with 40% in 1995. The number of 8th graders who scored in the top level of the reading portion on the state's "Early Warning Test" rose from 15.8% in the 1995-96 school year to 19.3% in the 1997-98 school year. Scores also rose from 7.6% to 11% of students on the mathematics portion during the same time period. While still far below the state average of 54% in reading and 44% in math, students in Newark are showing improvement under the intervention system. Perhaps this is why a substantial number of parents in Newark support the takeover, citing upgrades in school planning, availability of resources and an improved learning atmosphere.²⁴

At the forefront of taking over low-performing school districts, New Jersey has experienced its share of frustration, and state officials continue to refine the intervention process in search for improved student results.

New York

New York's Schools Under Registration Review (SURR) program, established in 1989, identifies schools that do not meet state academic performance standards. A team of educators visits and helps these schools develop an improvement plan. Such teams are comprised of administrators, curriculum specialists, experienced educators, state staffers, school board members and parents. Site visits usually last four days, during which time team members observe and assess instruction, leadership and management, professional development plans, classroom materials, disciplinary procedures and parental involvement.

Following site visits, team members decide if the school has a productive learning environment and which classroom practices need to be changed to raise student achievement. Once a plan is submitted, the school district provides assistance and support to the low-performing school. At this point, the only involvement from the state is a liaison from the state department of education who monitors the implementation of the school improvement plan. Additional funding for the school comes from the school district, not the state.

SURR schools have three years to show improvement. If a school does not make required progress towards meeting performance standards during this time, the state may revoke registration and close the school. If the state revokes a school's registration and closes the school, it must then find space at other schools for the displaced students. Another option is school reconstitution, which involves replacing up to 50% of the staff and creating a new instructional approach at a low-performing school.

According to state officials, New York has reconstituted 46 schools and closed three others since 1990. The majority of these schools are located in the New York City Public Schools, and most state interventions and sanctions have been directed at these schools.

Meeting Script – Friday, February 17 –

CHAIRMAN THOMAS

The Senate Education Committee meeting is called to order.

Today is Friday, February 17, and the time is 8:00 a.m. In attendance are:

- Co-Chair Senator Meyer
- Vice-Chair, Senator Davis
- Senator Stevens
- Senator French
- and myself, Senator Thomas.

We have a quorum to conduct business.

Welcome, everyone. First, is there any business to come before the committee before we get started?

Today will continue our discussion of SB 194. We went through the bill on Monday and Wednesday, and we began hearing public testimony. We have taken your concerns into account, and today we are ready to hear the Committee Substitute.

I would be willing to entertain a motion to adopt the CS.

SENATOR MEYER: Mr. Chair, I move that we adopt the Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 194, version 27-LS1190I

SENATOR THOMAS: I object for the purposes of discussion. My aide, Murray Richmond will now come up and present the changes in the CS for us.

{MURRAY COMES UP, GOES THROUGH THE CS}

SENATOR THOMAS: I remove my objection. Are there other objections?

Are there any questions? Senator Meyer?

{AFTER QUESTIONS}

We left public testimony open on Wednesday. Is there anyone signed up to testify to this bill?

{AFTER PUBLIC TESTIMONY}

SENATOR THOMAS: Public testimony is now closed. There is a fiscal note for the bill. We do not have a fiscal note for the CS, but it should not differ significantly from note for the bill. Is there someone from the department to present the fiscal note for us?

{EITHER LES OR ELIZABETH WILL PRESENT THE FISCAL NOTE}

We now turn to the committee for discussion. Senator Meyer?

{AFTER DISCUSSION IF THE BILL IS READY TO PASS OUT}

I believe we are ready to hear a motion. Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Mr. Chair, I move that we move the Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 194, version 27-LS1190I (“*as amended*”), with attached fiscal note (or “*DEED fiscal note forthcoming*”), and individual recommendations.

That concludes our business for the day.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 2th at 8:00 a.m., **here in the Beltz Committee Room.** We will NOT be meeting on Monday of next week because of Presidents’ Day. On Wednesday we will hear two bills related to Vocational Education, SB 170, a bill requiring vocational counseling in schools and a bill dealing with the funding stream for vocational education.

And with that, we are adjourned at _____ a.m.

SENATE BILL NO. 194

01 "An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure in the
02 Department of Education and Early Development; establishing advisory councils for
03 school improvement; and requiring reports to the legislature."

04 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

05 * **Section 1.** AS 14.03.123(d) is amended to read:

06 (d) A public school or district that **is designated as a low-performing school**
07 **or district** [RECEIVES A LOW PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION UNDER THIS
08 SECTION] shall prepare and submit to the department a school or district
09 improvement plan, as applicable, **and shall cooperate with the department,** in
10 accordance with **AS 14.03.124 and** regulations adopted by the board. The
11 improvement plan must be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of
12 the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents,
13 parent organizations, students, tribal organizations, local government representatives,
14 and other community groups.

01 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.123(g) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

02 (3) "low-performing" means the bottom three percent in the state for
03 performance based on the accountability measures described in (f)(2) of this section.

04 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.123 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

05 (h) The department shall work with and evaluate a public school or district
06 that receives a low performance designation under (d) of this section to improve the
07 school or district as follows:

08 (1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and
09 experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the
10 quality of education in the school or district;

11 (2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic
12 savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed;

13 (3) direct the local school board to use state and federal funds for
14 critical needs, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early Development;

15 (4) provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and
16 principals;

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definition or possibly*

17 (5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and
18 guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers,
19 principals, and central office staff hired by the district;

20 (6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by
21 the local school board;

22 (7) direct the local school board to identify model curriculum,
23 including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the
24 department; if a new curriculum is required, the department shall provide technical
25 assistance to implement the curriculum;

26 (8) work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan
27 to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in
28 the academic performance audit conducted under (i) of this section;

29 (9) assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide
30 school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner;

31 (10) establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for
01 the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal of the designation of
02 low-performing schools or districts;

03 (11) direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require
04 continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups;

05 (12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of
06 Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as
07 leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local
08 school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when
09 and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored.

10 (i) For two years following a designation of a school or district as low
11 performing, the department shall contract with an external review team to conduct an
12 academic performance audit of the district and each low-performing school in the
13 district to identify the potential reasons for the school's low performance and lack of
14 progress. The review team shall consist of persons who have expertise in
15 comprehensive school and district reform. A review team may not include staff of the
16 school district that is the subject of the audit or staff of the department. The review
17 team shall meet with and report to the department and the superintendent of the
18 district.

19 (j) The audit required under (i) of this section shall be conducted based on
20 criteria developed by the department in the areas of curriculum, assessment,
21 instruction, learning environment, professional development, and leadership and must
22 include an examination of the following:

23 (1) student demographics;

24 (2) mobility patterns;

25 (3) school feeder patterns;

26 (4) strategic allocation of resources;

27 (5) the degree of high standards and expectations for all students;

28 (6) the degree of ~~high level~~ of collaboration and communication;

29 (7) frequency of monitoring of learning and teaching;

30 (8) ~~high level~~ the degree of family and community involvement;

31 (9) alternative secondary schools best practices; and

01 (10) any unique circumstances or characteristics of the school or
02 district, including substance abuse and other social factors.

03 (k) The department shall make audit findings available to the audited school

04 district and staff, the local community, and the state Board of Education and Early
05 Development.

06 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

07 **Sec. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; governance council.** (a)

08 For a public school ~~or district~~ that, after three consecutive years of school
09 improvement efforts under AS 14.03.123(d) and (h) - (k), continues to be a low-
10 performing school, as described in AS 14.03.123, the department, in conjunction with the
local school board and the district superintendent may ~~shall~~

11 (1) designate the school ~~or district~~ as a revitalization school or district;

12 (2) continue to identify a revitalization school ~~or district~~ and operate
13 under a school revitalization plan developed by the department and the district until
14 taken off revitalization status;

15 (3) assist the local school board with developing and implementing a
16 revitalization plan as provided under this section;

17 (4) maintain eligibility of the school or district for available federal
18 and state aid; and

19 (5) establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of
20 the revitalization district and two superintendents of districts in the state that are not in
21 revitalization status; the superintendent cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine
22 months after the revitalization designation, report to the governance council
23 established under this section.

24 (b) A school ~~or district~~ that has not been designated as a revitalization school
25 or district may, through the school board, request the establishment of a revitalization
advisory ~~governance~~ council for a school in the
26 district ~~or for the district~~ consistent with this section.

27 (c) A local school board that governs a school ~~or district~~ that has been
28 designated as a revitalization school ~~or district~~ shall establish a governance council for
29 each school designated for revitalization. Except as provided in (d) of this section, a
30 ~~governance~~ revitalization council for a school shall consist of members appointed by the
local

31 school board, only ~~one~~ three of whom may be a current school board member, as follows:

01 (1) four parents or guardians of students attending the school,
02 nominated by parents or guardians of the school;

03 (2) four community leaders residing within the school district,
04 nominated by the members selected under (1) and (3) of this subsection;

05 (3) two teachers at the school, nominated by teachers at the school;

06 (4) one representative from the department;

07 (5) one to four principals of the schools in the district or the principals'
08 designees; and

09 (6) the superintendent of the district or a representative of the

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10 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section.

11 (d) If a district has only one operating school, the district may petition the
12 department for a reduction of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council membership from four
13 parents to two parents, from four community leaders to one community leader, and from two
14 teachers to one teacher.

15 (e) Terms of members of the governance council selected under (c) or (d) of
16 this section shall be for two years, and no member shall serve more than two terms on
17 the council. Members of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council serve without
18 compensation but are
19 entitled to per diem and other expenses authorized for boards and commissions under
20 AS 39.20.180.

21 (f) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may ~~shall~~, in conjunction with the department
and the

22 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section,

23 (1) analyze school achievement data and school needs related to the
24 improvement plan for the school prepared under AS 14.03.123(d);

25 (2) meet with and review the report of the superintendent cohort
26 established under (a)(5) of this section;

27 (3) participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other
28 administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting the
29 results of the interviews to the superintendent of schools for the school district and to
the local school board;

30 (4) assist the principal of the school in making programmatic and
31 operational changes to improve the school's achievement, including adjustments in
01 program, school hours and days of operation, and enrollment goals for the school;

02 (5) work with the school administration to develop and approve a
03 school compact for parents and legal guardians and students that includes an outline of
04 the criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and school membership consistent with
05 the school's goals and academic focus, including means by which parents and school
06 personnel may build a partnership to improve student learning;

07 (6) develop and approve a written parent involvement policy that
08 outlines the role of parents and legal guardians in the school;

09 (7) if the ~~governance~~ revitalization council determines it necessary to recommend
10 intervention by the department, work with the department to develop an intervention
11 plan for the school involving available local, regional, and statewide resources;

12 (8) prepare a revitalization model that takes into account
13 recommendations consistent with the duties in (1) - (7) of this subsection for review
14 and a vote as provided under (i) of this section.

15 (g) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may

16 (1) review the annual draft prepared under AS 14.03.120(a) detailing
17 the goals described in the education plan and provide advice to the principal of the
18 school before submitting the report to the superintendent of schools;

19 (2) assist the principal of the school in developing a revitalization plan
20 before the plan is submitted to the superintendent of schools and cooperate with the
21 department in developing a revitalization plan;

22 (3) assist the principal of the school in developing, conducting, and
23 reporting the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues
24 related to the school climate and conditions; and

25 (4) provide advice to the principal of the school on any other major
26 policy matters affecting the school, except on any matters relating to a collective
27 bargaining agreement between the exclusive bargaining unit for teachers.

28 (h) A local school board, in conjunction with the department shall provide
29 appropriate training and instruction to members of the governance council to aid them
30 in the execution of their duties.

31 (i) Not later than 30 days after a ~~governance~~ revitalization council informs the local
school

01 board of the completion of a revitalization model under (f) of this section, the local
02 school board shall hold a public hearing to discuss the revitalization model and shall,
03 at the next regularly scheduled meeting, conduct a vote to accept the model
04 recommended by the ~~governance~~ revitalization council, select an alternative model, or
maintain the

05 current school status, as follows:

06 (1) if the local school board selects an alternative model, not later than
07 10 days after the vote of the local school board, the board shall meet with the
08 governance council to discuss an agreement on the local school board's alternative
09 revitalization model;

10 (2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the
11 last meeting between the local school board and the revitalization ~~governance~~ council, the
12 department shall decide whether to adopt the council's revitalization model, or the local
13 school board's alternative revitalization model or a mixture of the two to implement;

14 (3) if the local school board votes to maintain the current school status,
15 not later than 45 days after a vote of the local school board, the department shall
16 decide whether to implement the revitalization model recommended by the ~~revitalization~~
17 ~~governance~~ council or to maintain the current school status; if the final decision of the
18 local school board is to adopt the revitalization model, or parts of the model, the local
school board shall

19 implement the approved model during the subsequent school year in conformance
20 with state statutes and regulations and the provisions specified in federal regulations
21 and guidelines for schools subject to corrective action under 20 U.S.C. 6316(b)(7)

22 (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965), as amended, or other applicable
23 federal laws or regulations.

24 (j) Within two years after a local school board votes on a revitalization model,
25 the department shall, within available appropriations, monitor the schools and districts
26 that have been designated as revitalization schools or districts for demonstrable
27 progress, applying the following indicators:

- 28 (1) the revitalization model adopted by the school;
- 29 (2) the number and type of disciplinary incidents;
- 30 (3) the number of truants;
- 31 (4) the dropout rate;
- 01 (5) the student attendance rate;
- 02 (6) the average scale scores on the statewide secondary school
03 graduation qualifying examination;
- 04 (7) for high schools, the number and percentage of students completing
05 advanced placement coursework;
- 06 (8) the teacher retention rate; and
- 07 (9) the existence and size of the parent-teacher organization for the
08 school.

09 (k) On or before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the department shall
10 report to the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education

- 11 (1) the number of ~~governance~~ revitalization councils that have initiated
12 revitalization;
- 13 (2) a comparison of the ~~governance~~ revitalization councils that have initiated
14 revitalization and those that have not; and
- 15 (3) whether parental involvement has increased at schools with
16 ~~governance~~ revitalization councils.

17 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
18 read:

19 **SCHOOL REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE.** (a) On or
20 before January 1, 2014, the Department of Education and Early Development shall report to
21 the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education on

- 22 (1) the monitoring conducted under AS 14.03.124(j), added by sec. 4 of this
23 Act;
 - 24 (2) recommendations relating to changes in the revitalization options available
25 to schools, including whether ~~governance~~ revitalization councils may continue to recommend
revitalization;
 - 26 (3) comparison of the revitalization models adopted; and
 - 27 (4) the level of progress of schools adopting each revitalization model in
28 relation to the indicators described in AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act.
- 29 (b) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Education and Early

30 Development shall evaluate the ~~governance~~ revitalization councils established under AS
14.03.124, added

31 by sec. 4 of this Act, for compliance with that section. On or before October 1, 2019, the
01 department shall report to the standing committees with jurisdiction over education on the
02 evaluation conducted under this subsection. The report must also include recommendations
on

03 whether to continue to authorize ~~governance~~ revitalization councils to recommend
revitalization models.

SENATE BILL NO. 194

01 "An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure in the
02 Department of Education and Early Development; establishing advisory councils for
03 school improvement; and requiring reports to the legislature."

04 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

05 * **Section 1.** AS 14.03.123(d) is amended to read:

06 (d) A public school or district that **is designated as a low-performing school**
07 **or district** [RECEIVES A LOW PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION UNDER THIS
08 SECTION] shall prepare and submit to the department a school or district
09 improvement plan, as applicable, **and shall cooperate with the department,** in
10 accordance with **AS 14.03.124 and** regulations adopted by the board. The
11 improvement plan must be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of
12 the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents,
13 parent organizations, students, tribal organizations, local government representatives,
14 and other community groups.

01 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.123(g) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

02 (3) "low-performing" means the bottom three percent in the state for
03 performance based on the accountability measures described in (f)(2) of this section.

04 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.123 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

05 (h) The department shall work with and evaluate a public school or district
06 that receives a low performance designation under (d) of this section to improve the
07 school or district as follows:

08 (1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and
09 experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the
10 quality of education in the school or district;

11 (2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic
12 savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed;

13 (3) direct the local school board to use state and federal funds for
14 critical needs, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early Development;

15 (4) provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and *- choose another term -*
16 principals; *and retain h quality*

17 (5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and
18 guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers,
19 principals, and central office staff hired by the district;

20 (6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by
21 the local school board;

22 (7) direct the local school board to identify model curriculum,
23 including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the
24 department; if a new curriculum is required, the department shall provide technical
25 assistance to implement the curriculum;

26 (8) work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan
27 to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in
28 the academic performance audit conducted under (i) of this section;

29 (9) assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide
30 school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner;

31 (10) establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for
01 the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal of the designation of
02 low-performing schools or districts;

03 (11) direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require
04 continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups;

05 (12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of
06 Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as
07 leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local
08 school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when
09 and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored.

10 (i) For two years following a designation of a school or district as low
11 performing, the department shall contract with an external review team to conduct an
12 academic performance audit of the district and each low-performing school in the
13 district to identify the potential reasons for the school's low performance and lack of
14 progress. The review team shall consist of persons who have expertise in
15 comprehensive school and district reform. A review team may not include staff of the
16 school district that is the subject of the audit or staff of the department. The review
17 team shall meet with and report to the department and the superintendent of the
18 district.

19 (j) The audit required under (i) of this section shall be conducted based on
20 criteria developed by the department in the areas of curriculum, assessment,
21 instruction, learning environment, professional development, and leadership and must
22 include an examination of the following:

23 (1) student demographics;

24 (2) mobility patterns;

25 (3) school feeder patterns;

26 (4) strategic allocation of resources;

27 (5) the degree of high standards and expectations for all students;

28 (6) the degree of ~~high level~~ of collaboration and communication;

29 (7) frequency of monitoring of learning and teaching;

30 (8) ~~high level~~ the degree of family and community involvement;

31 (9) alternative secondary schools best practices; and

01 (10) any unique circumstances or characteristics of the school or
02 district, including substance abuse and other social factors.

03 (k) The department shall make audit findings available to the audited school

04 district and staff, the local community, and the state Board of Education and Early
05 Development.

06 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

07 **Sec. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; governance council.** (a)

08 For a public school ~~or district~~ that, after three consecutive years of school
09 improvement efforts under AS 14.03.123(d) and (h) - (k), continues to be a low-
10 performing school, as described in AS 14.03.123, the department, in conjunction with the
local school board and the district superintendent may ~~shall~~

11 (1) designate the school ~~or district~~ as a revitalization school or district;

12 (2) continue to identify a revitalization school ~~or district~~ and operate
13 under a school revitalization plan developed by the department and the district until
14 taken off revitalization status;

15 (3) assist the local school board with developing and implementing a
16 revitalization plan as provided under this section;

17 (4) maintain eligibility of the school or district for available federal
18 and state aid; and

19 (5) establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of
20 the revitalization district and two superintendents of districts in the state that are not in
21 revitalization status; the superintendent cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine
22 months after the revitalization designation, report to the governance council
23 established under this section.

24 (b) A school ~~or district~~ that has not been designated as a revitalization school
25 or district may, through the school board, request the establishment of a revitalization
advisory ~~governance~~ council for a school in the
26 district ~~or for the district~~ consistent with this section.

27 (c) A local school board that governs a school ~~or district~~ that has been
28 designated as a revitalization school ~~or district~~ shall establish a governance council for
29 each school designated for revitalization. Except as provided in (d) of this section, a
30 ~~governance~~ revitalization council for a school shall consist of members appointed by the
local

31 school board, only ~~one~~ *except for 5 member Boards.* three of whom may be a current school board member, as follows:

01 (1) four parents or guardians of students attending the school,
02 nominated by parents or guardians of the school;

03 (2) four community leaders residing within the school district,
04 nominated by the members selected under (1) and (3) of this subsection;

05 (3) two teachers at the school, nominated by teachers at the school;

06 (4) one representative from the department;

07 (5) one to four principals of the schools in the district or the principals'
08 designees; and

09 (6) the superintendent of the district or a representative of the

10 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section.

11 (d) If a district has only one operating school, the district may petition the
12 department for a reduction of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council membership from four
parents to

13 two parents, from four community leaders to one community leader, and from two
14 teachers to one teacher.

15 (e) Terms of members of the governance council selected under (c) or (d) of
16 this section shall be for two years, and no member shall serve more than two terms on
17 the council. Members of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council serve without
compensation but are

18 entitled to per diem and other expenses authorized for boards and commissions under
19 AS 39.20.180.

20 (f) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may ~~shall~~, in conjunction with the department
and the

21 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section,

22 (1) analyze school achievement data and school needs related to the
23 improvement plan for the school prepared under AS 14.03.123(d);

24 (2) meet with and review the report of the superintendent cohort
25 established under (a)(5) of this section;

26 (3) participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other
27 administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting the
28 results of the interviews to the superintendent of schools for the school district and to
29 the local school board;

30 (4) assist the principal of the school in making programmatic and
31 operational changes to improve the school's achievement, including adjustments in
01 program, school hours and days of operation, and enrollment goals for the school;

02 (5) work with the school administration to develop and approve a
03 school compact for parents and legal guardians and students that includes an outline of
04 the criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and school membership consistent with
05 the school's goals and academic focus, including means by which parents and school
06 personnel may build a partnership to improve student learning;

07 (6) develop and approve a written parent involvement policy that
08 outlines the role of parents and legal guardians in the school;

09 (7) if the ~~governance~~ revitalization council determines it necessary to recommend
10 intervention by the department, work with the department to develop an intervention
11 plan for the school involving available local, regional, and statewide resources;

12 (8) prepare a revitalization model that takes into account
13 recommendations consistent with the duties in (1) - (7) of this subsection for review
14 and a vote as provided under (i) of this section.

15 (g) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may

16 (1) review the annual draft prepared under AS 14.03.120(a) detailing
17 the goals described in the education plan and provide advice to the principal of the
18 school before submitting the report to the superintendent of schools;

19 (2) assist the principal of the school in developing a revitalization plan
20 before the plan is submitted to the superintendent of schools and cooperate with the
21 department in developing a revitalization plan;

22 (3) assist the principal of the school in developing, conducting, and
23 reporting the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues
24 related to the school climate and conditions; and

25 (4) provide advice to the principal of the school on any other major
26 policy matters affecting the school, except on any matters relating to a collective
27 bargaining agreement between the exclusive bargaining unit for teachers.

28 (h) A local school board, in conjunction with the department shall provide
29 appropriate training and instruction to members of the governance council to aid them
30 in the execution of their duties.

31 (i) Not later than 30 days after a ~~governance~~ revitalization council informs the local
school

01 board of the completion of a revitalization model under (f) of this section, the local
02 school board shall hold a public hearing to discuss the revitalization model and shall,
03 at the next regularly scheduled meeting, conduct a vote to accept the model
04 recommended by the ~~governance~~ revitalization council, select an alternative model, or
maintain the

05 current school status, as follows:

06 (1) if the local school board selects an alternative model, not later than
07 10 days after the vote of the local school board, the board shall meet with the
08 governance council to discuss an agreement on the local school board's alternative
09 revitalization model;

10 (2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the
11 last meeting between the local school board and the ~~revitalization governance~~ council, the
12 department shall decide whether to adopt the council's revitalization model, ~~or~~ the local
13 school board's alternative revitalization model or a mixture of the two to implement;

14 (3) if the local school board votes to maintain the current school status,
15 not later than 45 days after a vote of the local school board, the department shall
16 decide whether to implement the revitalization model recommended by the ~~revitalization~~
17 ~~governance~~ council or to maintain the current school status; if the final decision of the
18 local school board is to adopt the revitalization model, or parts of the model, the local
school board shall

19 implement the approved model during the subsequent school year in conformance
20 with state statutes and regulations and the provisions specified in federal regulations
21 and guidelines for schools subject to corrective action under 20 U.S.C. 6316(b)(7)

22 (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965), as amended, or other applicable
23 federal laws or regulations.

24 (j) Within two years after a local school board votes on a revitalization model,
25 the department shall, within available appropriations, monitor the schools and districts
26 that have been designated as revitalization schools or districts for demonstrable
27 progress, applying the following indicators:

28 (1) the revitalization model adopted by the school;

29 (2) the number and type of disciplinary incidents;

30 (3) the number of truants;

31 (4) the dropout rate;

01 (5) the student attendance rate;

02 (6) the average scale scores on the statewide secondary school
03 graduation qualifying examination;

04 (7) for high schools, the number and percentage of students completing
05 advanced placement coursework;

06 (8) the teacher retention rate; and

07 (9) the existence and size of the parent-teacher organization for the
08 school.

09 (k) On or before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the department shall
10 report to the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education

11 (1) the number of ~~governance~~ revitalization councils that have initiated
12 revitalization;

13 (2) a comparison of the ~~governance~~ revitalization councils that have initiated
14 revitalization and those that have not; and

15 (3) whether parental involvement has increased at schools with
16 ~~governance~~ revitalization councils.

17 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
18 read:

19 **SCHOOL REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE.** (a) On or
20 before January 1, 2014, the Department of Education and Early Development shall report to
21 the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education on

22 (1) the monitoring conducted under AS 14.03.124(j), added by sec. 4 of this
23 Act;

24 (2) recommendations relating to changes in the revitalization options available
25 to schools, including whether ~~governance~~ revitalization councils may continue to recommend
revitalization;

26 (3) comparison of the revitalization models adopted; and

27 (4) the level of progress of schools adopting each revitalization model in
28 relation to the indicators described in AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act.

29 (b) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Education and Early

30 Development shall evaluate the ~~governance~~ revitalization councils established under AS
14.03.124, added

31 by sec. 4 of this Act, for compliance with that section. On or before October 1, 2019, the
01 department shall report to the standing committees with jurisdiction over education on the
02 evaluation conducted under this subsection. The report must also include recommendations
on

03 whether to continue to authorize ~~governance~~ revitalization councils to recommend
revitalization models.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version SB194
Fiscal Note Number _____
() Publish Date _____

Identifier (file name) SB194-EED-TLS-2-10-12 Dept. Affected Education & Early Development
Title "An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure." Appropriation Teaching and Learning Support
Allocation Student & School Achievement
Sponsor Senate Education Committee
Requester Senate Education Committee OMB Component Number 2796

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	FY13 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY13 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services	92.4		95.0	98.0	101.0	103.9	107.0	
Travel	14.0		14.0	14.0	14.0	14.0	14.0	
Services	2,457.0		2,457.0	2,457.0	2,457.0	2,457.0	2,457.0	
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants, Benefits	2,212.0		2,212.0	2,212.0	2,212.0	2,212.0	2,212.0	
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	4,775.4	0.0	4,778.0	4,781.0	4,784.0	4,786.9	4,790.0	

FUND SOURCE		(Thousands of Dollars)						
1002	Federal Receipts							
1003	GF Match							
1004	GF	4,775.4	4,778.0	4,781.0	4,784.0	4,786.9	4,790.0	
1005	GF/Prgm (DGF)							
1037	GF/MH (UGF)							
1178	temp code (UGF)							
TOTAL		4,775.4	0.0	4,778.0	4,781.0	4,784.0	4,786.9	4,790.0

POSITIONS							
Full-time	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Part-time							
Temporary							

CHANGE IN REVENUES							
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Estimated **SUPPLEMENTAL (FY12) operating costs** _____ (separate supplemental appropriation required)
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated **CAPITAL (FY13) costs** _____ (separate capital appropriation required)
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version (if initial version, please note as such)

Initial version.

Prepared by Paul R. Prussing
Division Deputy Director, TLS
Approved by Mike Hanley
Commissioner

Phone 465-8721
Date/Time 2/9/12 3:30 PM
Date 2/10/2012

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB194

Analysis

Sec. 2. As 14.03.123(g) amendment defines “low performing” and the bottom 3% in the state. Currently, this would be 17 schools. Therefore, this fiscal note includes cost estimates for providing the services and task as outlined in Sec. 3 AS 14.03.123 amendments and Sec. 14.03.124 for up to 17 schools.

Sec. 3. AS 14.03.123 cost estimates

(1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the quality of education in the school or district;

14 coaches at current rate of \$69,000; **\$966,000.00**

(2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed; Our current audit process expanded to include fiscal; 5 contractors (3 instructional auditors, 2 Fiscal) onsite at the district office and schools for 5 days; 3 report writing days at \$600.00 per day x 5 contractors x 8 days= \$24,000 per audit x 14 audits= **\$336,000**

(3) **No additional cost;**

(4) Provide Incentives to attract highly qualified teachers; 14 schools with an average of 15 teachers= 210 teachers with a \$5,000 Incentive= **\$1,050,000**

(5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers, principals, and central office staff hired by the district; **New SSOS staff**

(6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by the local school board;

New and Current SSOS staff

(7) Identify Model curriculum and the department shall provide technical assistance to implement the curriculum; curriculum specific consultant grant to districts for up to \$25,000 per districts, 8 district estimate with 14 revitalization schools.= **\$200,000**

(8) Work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in the academic performance audit conducted under; AASB consulting contract for 8 boards- **\$69,000**

(9) Assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner; 4 Technical assistance team consultants for all 8 districts at contract rate of \$69,000= **\$552,000** (10)

Establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks; **New and Current SSOS staff**

(11) Direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups; **New and Current SSOS staff**

(12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored, **see (8)**

(i) (j) and (k) external review team to conduct an academic performance audit of the district and report of audit findings. Our current audit process expanded to include fiscal; 5 contractors (3 instructional auditors, 2 Fiscal) onsite at the district office and schools for 5 days; 3 report writing days at \$600.00 per day x 5 contractors x 8 days= \$24,000 per audit x 8 audits= **\$192,000**

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB194

Analysis Continued

Sec. 4. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; governance council

(5) Establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of the revitalization district and two superintendents of districts in the state that are not in revitalization status; the superintendent cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine months after the revitalization designation, report to the governance council established under this section.

Travel and perdiem for 2 superintendents for 7, 2 day meetings: \$265 per day (perdiem and hotel) x 2= \$530.00; airfare \$1,000 x 2= 2,530 x8 districts = 20,240 x 7 meetings= **\$141,680.00**

(c) A local school board that governs a school or district that has been designated as a revitalization school or district shall establish a governance council for each school designated for revitalization

Governance perdiem based on a council team of 12 members meeting 3 times per year for 5 days (1 travel day). \$265 per day (perdiem and hotel) x 5 days x 12 members x 3 meetings = \$47,700 x 14 councils= \$658,000; airfare \$1,000 X 3 meetings X 12 members= 36,000 x 14 councils= \$504,000.00 **Total \$1,162,000.00**

Sec. 5. SCHOOL

REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE

1 full time staff member, Education Specialist II, to coordinated and ensure legislative reports and timelines are meet; \$92,378.27, staff travel: 17 trips x \$1,000 per trip= 14,000; **Total \$106,378.00**

Changes to SB 194

- 1) Page. 2, line 15; added “and retain” and changed language to “high quality” to subsection (4)
- 2) Page. 3, lines 27, 28 and 30; added “the degree of” to subsections (5), (6) and (8)
- 3) Page 4, line 7; changed “goverance” to “revitalization advisory” (This change occurs throughout the entire bill; specific instances will not be addressed individually.)
- 4) Page 4, line 8; deleted “or district” ”(This change also occurs throughout the entire bill; specific instances will not be addressed individually.)
- 5) Page 4, lines 10, 11; the phrase “in conjunction with the local school board and the district superintendent” are added.
- 6) Page 4, Line 11; “shall” is changed to “may”
- 7) Page 4, Lines 25, 26; “request the establishment of a governance council for a school” is changed to “may request the local school board to establish a revitalization advisory council for a school”
- 8) Page 4, line 31; “shall consist of 13 members” adds 13 as a total.
- 9) Page 5, lines 11-14; adds (d) “For a local school board consisting of more than five members, the board may appoint not more than three of its members to a revitalization advisory council. For a local school board consisting of five or fewer members, the board may appoint not more than two of its members to a revitalization advisory council.”
- 10) Page 7, lines 15-18; Edited and deleted parts of the previous section. Replaced with “(2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the last meeting between the local school board and the revitalization advisory council, the local school board shall report to the department the reasons for rejecting the revitalization model developed by the revitalization advisory council;
- 11) Page 7, lines 19-24; Deleted section that required departmental decision making if board elects to maintain current status. Added “”or part” to the sentence concerning the boards adoption of a revitalization model.

live up to 13

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CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 194(EDC)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure in the**
2 **Department of Education and Early Development; establishing advisory councils for**
3 **school improvement; and requiring reports to the legislature."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 *** Section 1.** AS 14.03.123(d) is amended to read:

6 (d) A public school or district that **is designated as a low-performing school**
7 **or district** [RECEIVES A LOW PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION UNDER THIS
8 SECTION] shall prepare and submit to the department a school or district
9 improvement plan, as applicable, **and shall cooperate with the department.** in
10 accordance with **AS 14.03.124 and** regulations adopted by the board. The
11 improvement plan must be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of
12 the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents,
13 parent organizations, students, tribal organizations, local government representatives,
14 and other community groups.

1 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.123(g) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

2 (3) "low-performing" means the bottom three percent in the state for
3 performance based on the accountability measures described in (f)(2) of this section.

4 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.123 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

5 (h) The department shall work with and evaluate a public school or district
6 that receives a low performance designation under (d) of this section to improve the
7 school or district as follows:

8 (1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and
9 experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the
10 quality of education in the school or district;

11 (2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic
12 savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed;

13 (3) direct the local school board to use state and federal funds for
14 critical needs, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early Development;

15 (4) provide incentives to attract and retain high quality teachers and
16 principals;

17 (5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and
18 guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers,
19 principals, and central office staff hired by the district;

20 (6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by
21 the local school board;

22 (7) direct the local school board to identify model curriculum,
23 including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the
24 department; if a new curriculum is required, the department shall provide technical
25 assistance to implement the curriculum;

26 (8) work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan
27 to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in
28 the academic performance audit conducted under (j) of this section;

29 (9) assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide
30 school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner;

31 (10) establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for

1 the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal of the designation of
2 low-performing schools or districts;

3 (11) direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require
4 continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups;

5 (12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of
6 Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as
7 leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local
8 school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when
9 and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored.

10 (i) For two years following a designation of a school or district as low
11 performing, the department shall contract with an external review team to conduct an
12 academic performance audit of the district and each low-performing school in the
13 district to identify the potential reasons for the school's low performance and lack of
14 progress. The review team shall consist of persons who have expertise in
15 comprehensive school and district reform. A review team may not include staff of the
16 school district that is the subject of the audit or staff of the department. The review
17 team shall meet with and report to the department and the superintendent of the
18 district.

19 (j) The audit required under (i) of this section shall be conducted based on
20 criteria developed by the department in the areas of curriculum, assessment,
21 instruction, learning environment, professional development, and leadership and must
22 include an examination of the following:

- 23 (1) student demographics;
24 (2) mobility patterns;
25 (3) school feeder patterns;
26 (4) strategic allocation of resources;
27 (5) the degree of high standards and expectations for all students;
28 (6) the degree of collaboration and communication;
29 (7) frequency of monitoring of learning and teaching;
30 (8) the degree of family and community involvement;
31 (9) alternative secondary schools best practices; and

1 (10) any unique circumstances or characteristics of the school or
2 district, including substance abuse and other social factors.

3 (k) The department shall make audit findings available to the audited school
4 district and staff, the local community, and the state Board of Education and Early
5 Development.

6 * Sec. 4. AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

7 **Sec. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; revitalization advisory**
8 **council.** (a) For a public school that, after three consecutive years of school
9 improvement efforts under AS 14.03.123(d) and (h) - (k), continues to be a low-
10 performing school, as described in AS 14.03.123, the department, in conjunction with
11 the local school board and the district superintendent, may

12 (1) designate the school as a revitalization school;

13 (2) continue to identify a revitalization school and operate under a
14 school revitalization plan developed by the department and the district until taken off
15 revitalization status;

16 (3) assist the local school board with developing and implementing a
17 revitalization plan as provided under this section;

18 (4) maintain eligibility of the school for available federal and state aid;
19 and

20 (5) establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of
21 the district in which the revitalization school is located and two superintendents of
22 districts in the state that have no schools in revitalization status; the superintendent
23 cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine months after the revitalization
24 designation, report to the revitalization advisory council established under this section.

25 (b) A school that has not been designated as a revitalization school may
26 request the local school board to establish a revitalization advisory council for a school
27 in the district consistent with this section.

28 (c) A local school board that governs a school that has been designated as a
29 revitalization school shall establish a revitalization advisory council for each school
30 designated for revitalization. Except as provided in (e) of this section, a revitalization
31 advisory council for a school shall consist of ~~13~~ members appointed by the local

up to

provide
for smaller
numbers
schools

school board, as follows:

- (1) ~~four~~ ^{three} parents or guardians of students attending the school, ~~nominated by parents or guardians of the school;~~ ^{one or more}
- (2) ~~four~~ ^{three} community leaders residing within the school district, ~~nominated by the members selected under (1) and (3) of this subsection;~~ ^{one or more}
- (3) ~~two~~ ^{one or more} teachers at the school, ~~nominated by teachers at the school;~~ ^{one or more School members}
- (4) one representative from the department; ^{School Board members.}
- (5) the principal of the school; and
- (6) the superintendent of the district or a representative of the superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section.

(7)

~~shall~~ (d) For a local school board consisting of more than five members, the board may appoint not more than three of its members to a revitalization advisory council. For a local school board consisting of five or fewer members, the board may appoint not more than two of its members to a revitalization advisory council.

(e) If a district has only one operating school, the district may petition the department for a reduction of the revitalization advisory council membership from four parents to two parents, from four community leaders to one community leader, and from two teachers to one teacher.

(f) Terms of members of the revitalization advisory council selected under (c) or (e) of this section shall be for two years, and a member may not serve more than two terms on the council. Members of the revitalization advisory council serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and other expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

(g) A revitalization advisory council may, in conjunction with the department and the superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section,

- (1) analyze school achievement data and school needs related to the improvement plan for the school prepared under AS 14.03.123(d);
- (2) meet with and review the report of the superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section;
- (3) participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting the

1 results of the interviews to the superintendent of schools for the school district and to
2 the local school board;

3 (4) assist the principal of the school in making programmatic and
4 operational changes to improve the school's achievement, including adjustments in
5 program, school hours and days of operation, and enrollment goals for the school;

6 (5) work with the school administration to develop and approve a
7 school compact for parents and legal guardians and students that includes an outline of
8 the criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and school membership consistent with
9 the school's goals and academic focus, including means by which parents and school
10 personnel may build a partnership to improve student learning;

11 (6) develop and approve a written parent involvement policy that
12 outlines the role of parents and legal guardians in the school;

13 (7) if intervention by the department is required, the revitalization
14 advisory council shall work with the department and the local school board to develop
15 an intervention plan for the school involving available local, regional, and statewide
16 resources;

17 (8) prepare a revitalization model that takes into account
18 recommendations consistent with the duties in (1) - (7) of this subsection for review
19 and a vote as provided under (j) of this section.

20 (h) A revitalization advisory council may

21 (1) review the annual draft prepared under AS 14.03.120(a) detailing
22 the goals described in the education plan and provide advice to the principal of the
23 school before submitting the report to the superintendent of schools;

24 (2) assist the principal of the school in developing a revitalization plan
25 before the plan is submitted to the superintendent of schools and cooperate with the
26 department in developing a revitalization plan;

27 (3) assist the principal of the school in developing, conducting, and
28 reporting the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues
29 related to the school climate and conditions; and

30 (4) provide advice to the principal of the school on any other major
31 policy matters affecting the school, except on any matters relating to a collective

1 bargaining agreement between the exclusive bargaining unit for teachers.

2 (i) A local school board, in conjunction with the department, shall provide
3 appropriate training and instruction to members of the revitalization advisory council
4 to aid them in the execution of their duties.

5 (j) Not later than 30 days after a revitalization advisory council informs the
6 local school board of the completion of a revitalization model under (g) of this section,
7 the local school board shall hold a public hearing to discuss the revitalization model
8 and shall, at the next regularly scheduled meeting, conduct a vote to accept the model
9 recommended by the revitalization advisory council, select an alternative model, or
10 maintain the current school status, as follows:

11 (1) if the local school board selects an alternative model, not later than
12 10 days after the vote of the local school board, the local school board shall meet with
13 the revitalization advisory council to discuss an agreement on the local school board's
14 alternative revitalization model;

15 (2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the
16 last meeting between the local school board and the revitalization advisory council, the
17 local school board shall report to the department the reasons for rejecting the
18 revitalization model developed by the revitalization advisory council;

19 (3) if the final decision of the local school board is to adopt all or part
20 of the revitalization model, the local school board shall implement the approved model
21 during the subsequent school year in conformance with state statutes and regulations
22 and the provisions specified in federal regulations and guidelines for schools subject to
23 corrective action under 20 U.S.C. 6316(b)(7) (Elementary and Secondary Education
24 Act of 1965), as amended, or other applicable federal laws or regulations.

25 (k) Within two years after a local school board votes on a revitalization model,
26 the department shall, within available appropriations, monitor the schools that have
27 been designated as revitalization schools for demonstrable progress, applying the
28 following indicators:

- 29 (1) the revitalization model adopted by the school;
30 (2) the number and type of disciplinary incidents;
31 (3) the number of truants;

- 1 (4) the dropout rate;
2 (5) the student attendance rate;
3 (6) the average scale scores on the statewide secondary school
4 graduation qualifying examination;
5 (7) for high schools, the number and percentage of students completing
6 advanced placement coursework;
7 (8) the teacher retention rate; and
8 (9) the existence and size of the parent-teacher organization for the
9 school.

10 (l) On or before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the department shall report
11 to the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education

12 (1) the number of local school boards that have implemented a
13 revitalization model;

14 (2) a comparison of the school status after local school boards have
15 initiated a revitalization model and the school status after local school boards have
16 rejected a revitalization model; and

17 (3) whether parental involvement has increased at schools with
18 revitalization advisory councils.

19 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
20 read:

21 **SCHOOL REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE.** (a) On or
22 before January 1, 2014, the Department of Education and Early Development shall report to
23 the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education on

24 (1) the monitoring conducted under AS 14.03.124(k), added by sec. 4 of this
25 Act;

26 (2) recommendations relating to changes in the revitalization options available
27 to schools, including whether revitalization advisory councils may continue to recommend
28 revitalization;

29 (3) comparison of the revitalization models adopted; and

30 (4) the level of progress of schools adopting each revitalization model in
31 relation to the indicators described in AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act.

1 (b) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Education and Early
2 Development shall evaluate the revitalization advisory councils established under
3 AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act, for compliance with that section. On or before
4 October 1, 2019, the department shall report to the standing committees with jurisdiction over
5 education on the evaluation conducted under this subsection. The report must also include
6 recommendations on whether to continue to authorize revitalization advisory councils to
7 recommend revitalization models.

Meeting Script – Wednesday, February 15 –

CHAIRMAN THOMAS

The Senate Education Committee meeting is called to order.

Today is Wednesday, February 15, and the time is 8:00 a.m. In attendance are:

- Co-Chair Senator Meyer
- Vice-Chair, Senator Davis
- Senator Stevens
- Senator French
- and myself, Senator Thomas.

We have a quorum to conduct business.

Welcome, everyone. First, is there any business to come before the committee before we get started?

Today will continue our discussion of SB 194. We went through the bill on Monday, and there were some significant questions raised during the presentation. We have taken your concerns into account, and today staff will present some suggested changes based on your comments. We will also hear public testimony today.

Many states struggle with how to help their lower performing schools. Some states have active plans to help their schools. In Alaska we have local control, which works extremely well for the majority of our districts. However there are some cases where assistance is needed to help districts give our children a quality education.

SB 194 targets our lowest performing schools for additional help from the Department of Education and their local communities. While there is no silver bullet for fixing all our educational problems, we cannot afford to stand by idly and let low performing districts continue to struggle on their own. SB 194 gives the department, local communities and district superintendents the tools they need to help our students succeed.

My aide, Murray Richmond will walk us through the suggested changes in the bill. We are not offering a CS yet, but will do so when we are sure that your concerns about the bill are adequately addressed. Today we will hear the suggested changes, and hear public testimony concerning the bill, and then set it aside for further review.

Murray please come up and put yourself on the record:

{Murray comes up, walks committee through the bill}

Thank you. Are there any remaining questions? Senator Meyer?

{AFTER QUESTIONS}

Thank you. And now we will open this up to public testimony.

{IF TIME, and if Elizabeth is here}

There is a fiscal note for the bill, and Elizabeth Nudelman is here to answer questions about that.

*we will have a revised fiscal note & a CS Friday
to allow*

Our next meeting will be Friday, February 17th at 8:00 a.m., **here in the Beltz Committee Room.** We will hear public testimony for SB 182, "An Act amending the amount of state funding provided to school districts for pupil transportation." .

And with that, we are adjourned at _____ a.m.

Packet Information

- 1) Gainesville school board wants more input from governance council
- 2) Empowering Parents and Building Communities: The Role of School Based Councils in Educational Governance and Policy
- 3) Hartford Public Schools School Governance Council; A Promising First Year
- 4) Educational Leadership; Local School Councils
- 5) School Governance Councils; Guidance on Election Procedures
- 6) Hartford Public Schools; School Governance Councils Basics
- 7) School Governance Councils in Connecticut
- 8) School Governance Councils; Frequently Asked Questions
- 9) School Governance Councils Meet
- 10) School Governance Councils Responsibilities
- 11) Berkley Unified School District; Bylaws for School Governance Councils

SENATE BILL NO. 194

01 "An Act providing for a school improvement and revitalization procedure in the
02 Department of Education and Early Development; establishing advisory councils for
03 school improvement; and requiring reports to the legislature."

04 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

05 * **Section 1.** AS 14.03.123(d) is amended to read:

06 (d) A public school or district that **is designated as a low-performing school**
07 **or district** [RECEIVES A LOW PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION UNDER THIS
08 SECTION] shall prepare and submit to the department a school or district
09 improvement plan, as applicable, **and shall cooperate with the department,** in
10 accordance with **AS 14.03.124 and** regulations adopted by the board. The
11 improvement plan must be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of
12 the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents,
13 parent organizations, students, tribal organizations, local government representatives,
14 and other community groups.

01 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.123(g) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

02 (3) "low-performing" means the bottom three percent in the state for
03 performance based on the accountability measures described in (f)(2) of this section.

04 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.123 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

05 (h) The department shall work with and evaluate a public school or district
06 that receives a low performance designation under (d) of this section to improve the
07 school or district as follows:

08 (1) supply the school or district with a person who has training and
09 experience in education and who can provide one-on-one assistance to enhance the
10 quality of education in the school or district;

11 (2) provide an operations audit to identify possible programmatic
12 savings and review the manner in which financial resources are being directed;

13 (3) direct the local school board to use state and federal funds for
14 critical needs, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early Development;

15 (4) provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and
16 principals;

17 (5) provide additional training and technical assistance for parents and
18 guardians of children attending the school or schools in the district and for teachers,
19 principals, and central office staff hired by the district;

20 (6) provide targeted resources for graduation success as requested by
21 the local school board;

22 (7) direct the local school board to identify model curriculum,
23 including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the
24 department; if a new curriculum is required, the department shall provide technical
25 assistance to implement the curriculum;

26 (8) work with the local school board to develop and implement a plan
27 to address deficits in achievement and in the learning environment as recommended in
28 the academic performance audit conducted under (i) of this section;

29 (9) assign a technical assistance team to the school or district to guide
30 school or district initiatives and report progress to the commissioner;

31 (10) establish instructional and learning environment benchmarks for
01 the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal of the designation of
02 low-performing schools or districts;

03 (11) direct the establishment of learning cohorts in schools that require
04 continuous monitoring of student performance by teacher groups;

05 (12) provide training to local school boards through the Association of
06 Alaska School Boards to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness as
07 leaders of their districts in ensuring delivery of quality education, and require local
08 school boards to submit to the commissioner an annual action plan that outlines when
09 and the manner in which the local school board's effectiveness will be monitored.

10 (i) For two years following a designation of a school or district as low
11 performing, the department shall contract with an external review team to conduct an
12 academic performance audit of the district and each low-performing school in the
13 district to identify the potential reasons for the school's low performance and lack of
14 progress. The review team shall consist of persons who have expertise in
15 comprehensive school and district reform. A review team may not include staff of the
16 school district that is the subject of the audit or staff of the department. The review
17 team shall meet with and report to the department and the superintendent of the
18 district.

19 (j) The audit required under (i) of this section shall be conducted based on
20 criteria developed by the department in the areas of curriculum, assessment,
21 instruction, learning environment, professional development, and leadership and must
22 include an examination of the following:

23 (1) student demographics;

24 (2) mobility patterns;

25 (3) school feeder patterns;

26 (4) strategic allocation of resources;

27 (5) the degree of high standards and expectations for all students;

28 (6) the degree of ~~high level~~ of collaboration and communication;

29 (7) frequency of monitoring of learning and teaching;

30 (8) ~~high level~~ the degree of family and community involvement;

31 (9) alternative secondary schools best practices; and

01 (10) any unique circumstances or characteristics of the school or
02 district, including substance abuse and other social factors.

03 (k) The department shall make audit findings available to the audited school

04 district and staff, the local community, and the state Board of Education and Early
05 Development.

06 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

07 **Sec. 14.03.124. Revitalization designation; plan; governance council.** (a)

08 For a public school ~~or district~~ that, after three consecutive years of school
09 improvement efforts under AS 14.03.123(d) and (h) - (k), continues to be a low-
10 performing school, as described in AS 14.03.123, the department, in conjunction with the
local school board and the district superintendent may ~~shall~~

11 (1) designate the school ~~or district~~ as a revitalization school or district;

12 (2) continue to identify a revitalization school ~~or district~~ and operate
13 under a school revitalization plan developed by the department and the district until
14 taken off revitalization status;

15 (3) assist the local school board with developing and implementing a
16 revitalization plan as provided under this section;

17 (4) maintain eligibility of the school or district for available federal
18 and state aid; and

19 (5) establish a superintendent cohort made up of the superintendent of
20 the revitalization district and two superintendents of districts in the state that are not in
21 revitalization status; the superintendent cohort shall meet regularly and, within nine
22 months after the revitalization designation, report to the governance council
23 established under this section.

24 (b) A school ~~or district~~ that has not been designated as a revitalization school
25 or district may, through the school board, request the establishment of a revitalization
advisory ~~governance~~ council for a school in the
26 district ~~or for the district~~ consistent with this section.

27 (c) A local school board that governs a school ~~or district~~ that has been
28 designated as a revitalization school ~~or district~~ shall establish a governance council for
29 each school designated for revitalization. Except as provided in (d) of this section, a
30 ~~governance~~ revitalization council for a school shall consist of members appointed by the
local

31 school board, only ~~one~~ three of whom may be a current school board member, as follows:

01 (1) four parents or guardians of students attending the school,
02 nominated by parents or guardians of the school;

03 (2) four community leaders residing within the school district,
04 nominated by the members selected under (1) and (3) of this subsection;

05 (3) two teachers at the school, nominated by teachers at the school;

06 (4) one representative from the department;

07 (5) one to four principals of the schools in the district or the principals'
08 designees; and

09 (6) the superintendent of the district or a representative of the

*with district
parents*

*no attempt
to establish
parental boards
- direct or
board control*

10 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section.
11 (d) If a district has only one operating school, the district may petition the
12 department for a reduction of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council membership from four
parents to
13 two parents, from four community leaders to one community leader, and from two
14 teachers to one teacher.

15 (e) Terms of members of the governance council selected under (c) or (d) of
16 this section shall be for two years, and no member shall serve more than two terms on
17 the council. Members of the ~~governance~~ revitalization council serve without
compensation but are
18 entitled to per diem and other expenses authorized for boards and commissions under
19 AS 39.20.180.

20 (f) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may ~~shall~~, in conjunction with the department
and the
21 superintendent cohort established under (a)(5) of this section,

22 (1) analyze school achievement data and school needs related to the
23 improvement plan for the school prepared under AS 14.03.123(d);

24 (2) meet with and review the report of the superintendent cohort
25 established under (a)(5) of this section;

26 (3) participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other
27 administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting the
28 results of the interviews to the superintendent of schools for the school district and to
29 the local school board;

30 (4) assist the principal of the school in making programmatic and
31 operational changes to improve the school's achievement, including adjustments in
01 program, school hours and days of operation, and enrollment goals for the school;

02 (5) work with the school administration to develop and approve a
03 school compact for parents and legal guardians and students that includes an outline of
04 the criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and school membership consistent with
05 the school's goals and academic focus, including means by which parents and school
06 personnel may build a partnership to improve student learning;

07 (6) develop and approve a written parent involvement policy that
08 outlines the role of parents and legal guardians in the school;

09 (7) if the governance council determines it necessary to recommend
10 intervention by the department, work with the department to develop an intervention
11 plan for the school involving available local, regional, and statewide resources;

12 (8) prepare a revitalization model that takes into account
13 recommendations consistent with the duties in (1) - (7) of this subsection for review
14 and a vote as provided under (i) of this section.

15 (g) A ~~governance~~ revitalization council may

*Don't want to create another
layer but results in overlap
between existing structures*

16 (1) review the annual draft prepared under AS 14.03.120(a) detailing
17 the goals described in the education plan and provide advice to the principal of the
18 school before submitting the report to the superintendent of schools;

19 (2) assist the principal of the school in developing a revitalization plan
20 before the plan is submitted to the superintendent of schools and cooperate with the
21 department in developing a revitalization plan;

22 (3) assist the principal of the school in developing, conducting, and
23 reporting the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues
24 related to the school climate and conditions; and

25 (4) provide advice to the principal of the school on any other major
26 policy matters affecting the school, except on any matters relating to a collective
27 bargaining agreement between the exclusive bargaining unit for teachers.

28 (h) A local school board, in conjunction with the department shall provide
29 appropriate training and instruction to members of the governance council to aid them
30 in the execution of their duties.

31 (i) Not later than 30 days after a ~~governance~~ revitalization council informs the local
school
01 board of the completion of a revitalization model under (f) of this section, the local
02 school board shall hold a public hearing to discuss the revitalization model and shall,
03 at the next regularly scheduled meeting, conduct a vote to accept the model
04 recommended by the ~~governance~~ revitalization council, select an alternative model, or
maintain the
05 current school status, as follows:

06 (1) if the local school board selects an alternative model, not later than
07 10 days after the vote of the local school board, the board shall meet with the
08 governance council to discuss an agreement on the local school board's alternative
09 revitalization model;

10 (2) if no agreement can be achieved, not later than 45 days after the
11 last meeting between the local school board and the governance council, the
12 department shall decide whether to adopt the council's revitalization model or the local
13 school board's alternative revitalization model to implement;

14 (3) if the local school board votes to maintain the current school status,
15 not later than 45 days after a vote of the local school board, the department shall
16 decide whether to implement the revitalization model recommended by the
17 governance council or to maintain the current school status; if the final decision of the
18 local school board is to adopt the revitalization model, the local school board shall
19 implement the approved model during the subsequent school year in conformance
20 with state statutes and regulations and the provisions specified in federal regulations
21 and guidelines for schools subject to corrective action under 20 U.S.C. 6316(b)(7)
22 (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965), as amended, or other applicable

23 federal laws or regulations.

24 (j) Within two years after a local school board votes on a revitalization model,
25 the department shall, within available appropriations, monitor the schools and districts
26 that have been designated as revitalization schools or districts for demonstrable
27 progress, applying the following indicators:

28 (1) the revitalization model adopted by the school;

29 (2) the number and type of disciplinary incidents;

30 (3) the number of truants;

31 (4) the dropout rate;

01 (5) the student attendance rate;

02 (6) the average scale scores on the statewide secondary school

03 graduation qualifying examination;

04 (7) for high schools, the number and percentage of students completing

05 advanced placement coursework;

06 (8) the teacher retention rate; and

07 (9) the existence and size of the parent-teacher organization for the
08 school.

09 (k) On or before July 1 of each odd-numbered year, the department shall
10 report to the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education

11 (1) the number of governance councils that have initiated
12 revitalization;

13 (2) a comparison of the governance councils that have initiated
14 revitalization and those that have not; and

15 (3) whether parental involvement has increased at schools with
16 governance councils.

17 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
18 read:

19 **SCHOOL REVITALIZATION; REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATURE.** (a) On or
20 before January 1, 2014, the Department of Education and Early Development shall report to
21 the standing committees of the legislature having jurisdiction over education on

22 (1) the monitoring conducted under AS 14.03.124(j), added by sec. 4 of this
23 Act;

24 (2) recommendations relating to changes in the revitalization options available
25 to schools, including whether governance councils may continue to recommend revitalization;

26 (3) comparison of the revitalization models adopted; and

27 (4) the level of progress of schools adopting each revitalization model in
28 relation to the indicators described in AS 14.03.124, added by sec. 4 of this Act.

29 (b) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Education and Early
30 Development shall evaluate the governance councils established under AS 14.03.124, added
31 by sec. 4 of this Act, for compliance with that section. On or before October 1, 2019, the

01 department shall report to the standing committees with jurisdiction over education on the
02 evaluation conducted under this subsection. The report must also include recommendations
on
03 whether to continue to authorize governance councils to recommend revitalization models.

[Print This Article](#)

Gainesville school board wants more input from governance councils

Dallas Duncan
dduncan@gainesvilletimes.com
January 2, 2012

Gainesville City Schools board members are looking to have more input from parents and school leaders in policy development.

At a previous board meeting, members asked to set up a policy development process that increases involvement from school governance councils.

"It's been in place but they want to make sure there's a formal checkoff," Superintendent Merrienne Dyer said. "A policy would be up to be reviewed by the board. If there's no changes, then we would send it to the governance councils and say, 'The board has done first reading and seen no changes to be made. We want your feedback.'"

Now the school board wants a formal policy review by the governance councils, complete with a written report. With the existing policy review process, the only things that require a formal report from the governance councils are school calendars and reduced work schedule days, Dyer said.

"The Georgia School Boards Association says your policy should be reviewed on a rolling basis. Every now and then something changes with legislation or federal policy, or it could be a practice that changes. The board wants to be sure that our policies are kept current," Dyer said. "They seek input from constituents. Our school board wanted to be sure that our governance councils were formally made a part of that."

School governance councils consist of the principal, two teachers, two to six parents and two business partners and community leaders. All but the principal are elected by faculty and other parents, Dyer said.

State law requires all schools to have a school council to review student achievement data, engage parents and advise the principal.

"A school governance council like we have, they are actually a decision-making

body about items that are in the charter," Dyer said.

The governance councils can make decisions about extracurricular activities, which include athletics, after-school programs, tutoring and clubs. They are also in charge of surveying their school community and interviewing and recommending new administrative personnel to the school board.

The only exception to that is when an administrator is transferred between schools. The school board, school governance council and Dyer are involved in that process.

Though it's not explicit in the school system charter, school governance councils also have some say in the school budgets, which are developed by the principal. Dyer said the community leaders in the governance council are good assets with that process, as they have financial planning experience.

"It just increases the decision-making force and the involvement of all the stakeholders. It also, in my opinion, takes some of the pressure off the board and superintendent because it shares the decisions," Dyer said.

<http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/archives/61332/>

CDRC

**Empowering Parents and Building Communities:
The Role of School-based Councils
in Educational Governance and Accountability
(First Draft)**

Alec Ian Gershberg, Gavin Shatkin

2002-004

WORKING PAPER

Community Development Research Center

New School University

**Empowering Parents and Building Communities:
The Role of School-based Councils
in Educational Governance and Accountability**
(First Draft)

May 31, 2002

Alec Ian Gershberg, New School University
Gavin Shatkin, University of Michigan

New York: The New School University, Community Development Research Center, Working Paper #2002-004

Introduction

In recent years, policy-makers and educators have increasingly recognized that parents can play an important role in school governance. This recognition has coincided with a global trend towards decentralization of the education sector and reforms for greater decision-making autonomy at the school level, reforms that have usually been premised on the need for improved school performance and accountability. Most commonly termed school-based management, or SBM, such reforms have been adopted by school systems as diverse as those in Victoria, Australia; Memphis, Tennessee; Chicago, Illinois; Nicaragua; and Minas Gerias, Brazil. These reform efforts have institutionalized the participation of parents, community-members, teachers, students, and other role groups through school-site councils (SSCs) while holding principals responsible for academic performance. The formation of SSCs is premised on the theory that providing a voice for various stakeholders in schools will lead to better decision-making and a greater commitment from all groups to improved educational outcomes (Odden et al 1997; Gershberg 1999b).

These reforms have implications for community development that have largely been disregarded in both the education and community development literatures (Stone et al 1999). Particularly in low-income communities, schools influence the socioeconomic and cultural fortunes of communities both because they are often one of the few viable institutions that remain when neighborhoods experience decline, and because upwardly mobile families often cite the decline of schools as a reason for leaving a neighborhood. If the proponents of SBM are correct in their assessment of the benefits of such reforms, parent participation has the potential to create a virtuous circle of school improvement and community development in several ways:

- Parent participation may lead to new initiatives in schools that provide needed services to community residents such as health care, counseling, literacy assistance, or English as a second language;
- Participation may provide parents with opportunities to develop leadership skills, thereby acting as an impetus for leadership development in communities;
- Collaborative decision-making may strengthen ties between schools and communities, leading to a greater commitment of resources to schools by local businesses and individuals;
- SBM may lead to curriculum and instruction that is better suited to community strengths and capabilities, thereby leading to improved educational achievement and reducing or reversing the flight of middle-class families.

We know little, however, about when parent participation is successful, and the circumstances under which the outcomes listed above may occur. Reform models vary significantly in the composition of SSCs and the extent of decentralization. Some councils have a majority of parents while others are led by school staff with some parental and community representation. Some have advisory or even perfunctory powers while others can hire and dismiss the principal and set important school policies. Several questions remain: What circumstances and reform models lead to effective parent participation? Does such participation have the desired impact on educational performance? And, finally, does participation lead to the outcomes for community development listed above?

This paper argues that SBM reforms can, under certain circumstances, result in effective parent participation and that when it does, community development benefits can be realized. It does so through an examination of SBM in four jurisdictions—Kentucky, Hawaii, Chicago, and the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas—that have undertaken particularly ambitious experiments with SBM. Data for the paper are derived from secondary sources and interviews with key actors in school reform in each of the four places including public officials, representatives of non-profit organizations, academics, as well as parents, principals, and teachers who have participated in SSCs. Interviews were conducted during visits to the four places between April of 2000 and March of 2001.

In the first section of the paper, we review the literature on SBM and develop a framework for analyzing the relationship between SBM, the role of parents on SSCs, and community development outcomes. We then discuss the extent of parental participation in schools in the two states and two cities and the impact of these reforms on school decision-making and educational outcomes. In the final section, we discuss the relationship between SBM and community development.

Parent Participation in School-Based Management: A Review of the Literature

The emergence of school site councils represents a fundamental departure from conventional relations between parents and school professionals. As such the literature on the subject is in a formative stage,

primarily consisting of case studies of a handful of well-publicized examples of SBM, most notably Chicago and Kentucky (Hess ed. 1992; Pankratz and Petrosko 2000). Few have attempted to synthesize lessons and develop a generalizable framework with which to assess experiences with SBM (Summers and Johnson 1996; Wohlstetter et al 1995). Fewer still have focused on the implications of such reforms for disadvantaged communities. This section will develop a comparative framework for analyzing the role of parent participation in school governance and the implications of such participation for school improvement and school-community relations.

The earliest experiments with SBM were initiated in the late 1980s, and were a response to the perceived failures of school systems. Popular perceptions viewed a lack of accountability in schools as contributing to a waste of funds, inappropriate and outdated curriculum and instructional practices, and a lack of responsiveness of schools to parents and children (Hess and Easton 1992; Pankratz 2000). SBM has frequently been implemented alongside measures to use standardized testing to determine school funding and teacher assignments—the rationale is to provide schools with the flexibility to be innovative, while holding them accountable for the results (Pankratz 2000). By the mid-1990s statewide mandates for SBM had been instituted in Kentucky, Hawaii, Texas, Colorado, and North Carolina. City or countywide mandates were in place in Chicago, Miami, Memphis, Los Angeles, San Diego, Rochester, and Cincinnati, among others.

Models of SBM vary widely. In some cases, SSCs are empowered to make binding decisions and establish policy regarding personnel, budget, curriculum, and extra-curricular activities (Table 1). Chicago's SSCs have perhaps the widest range of powers, including the authority to hire and dismiss principals, develop and implement school improvement plans, and set the school budget (Bryk et al 1997). In other cases, council powers are merely advisory, and the scope of their authority is more limited. Councils also differ in the groups they represent, which may include principals, teachers, parents, community residents, students, and school staff. In most cases, teachers and the principal form the majority; Chicago is the only large school system in which parents and community representatives are mandated by law to have

majority membership on councils. The proportion of representatives from each group on councils has obvious implications for their relative influence; weak representation of parents is often a significant obstacle to their effective participation.

Table 1: Types of Decisions that may be Decentralized to School-Site Councils

Organization of Instruction	Set instruction time. Choose textbooks Define curriculum content Determine teaching methods
Personnel Management	Hire and fire school principal Recruit and hire teachers Set or augment teacher pay scale Assign teaching responsibilities Determine provision of in-service training
Planning and Structures	Create or close a school Select programs offered in school Define course content Set examinations to monitor school performance
Resources	Develop school improvement plan Allocate personnel budget Allocate non-personnel budget Allocate resources for in-service teacher training

The main rationale for the adoption of SBM is that it will lead to improved student academic performance. A growing qualitative and quantitative research literature has emerged on the characteristics of high-performing or effective schools (Mohrman and Wohlstetter 1994; Creemers 1994; Darling-Hammond 1997) that mirrors the much larger literature on successful organizations (Barzelay 1992; Lawler 1992). This literature concludes that strong leadership, highly qualified and committed staff, a focus on learning, and responsibility for results characterize high-performing schools. Another set of literature reviews the evidence on the process by which schools improve, and yields conclusions that are consistent with the effective schools research. For example, in an evaluation of school improvement on three continents, Dalin et al (1994) concludes that essential ingredients in successful reforms are a sustained commitment to quality improvement, local empowerment to adapt programs to local conditions, strong emphasis on school and classroom practice, and strong support linkages between education authorities and the school "via information, assistance, pressure and rewards."

Advocates for SBM and SSCs argue that these reforms contribute to these outcomes in several ways. First, SBM may stimulate leadership development among principals by enabling them to effectively develop and communicate a school-wide and community-wide commitment to a common mission and vision for the school, which can be managed by the implementation of the school improvement plan. Second, SBM and school site councils can contribute to excellent teaching in a variety of ways. When decisions on significant pedagogic matters are transferred to schools, teachers are empowered and motivated to work collectively to improve services delivered to students. When school principals are given the authority to carry out meaningful evaluations of teaching staff, teachers can focus their training on what they need to improve. When resources for training and training decisions are given to the school, teachers and principals can be demand-driven in purchasing the training they need, rather than being supply-driven in accessing training provided by centralized bureaucracies. Third, SBM can facilitate and reinforce a focus on student learning by providing the information required to assess learning problems, devolving appropriate pedagogic decision-making to the school, and allocating additional resources to schools with special needs. The visible product of this process is a solid school improvement plan, constructed with the active participation of teachers and the community, and with real possibilities of being implemented.

Finally, when implemented along with measures to assert standards for educational achievement, SBM can also enhance accountability in two ways. First, it provides a mechanism for 'accountability from below' from parents, community representatives and students to complement the 'accountability from above' from the Board of Education and other school bureaucracies. Providing all stakeholders with a voice in school decisions also makes politically sensitive measures to increase accountability more palatable. For example, the decentralization reform in Chicago replaced tenure for school principals with four-year contracts and required each principal to sign an annual performance contract with the system specifying measurable goals for the year. Schools that consistently fail to meet goals may see their principal dismissed and teaching staff reassigned (Hess and Easton 1992; Bryk et al. 1997). In Kentucky,

a school's level of funding may rise or fall based on its ability to meet biennial improvement goals on statewide standardized tests (Foster 2000).

While the focus of past analyses has been on these educational outcomes, SBM has implications for school-community relations that are less frequently discussed. Students in low-income communities face obstacles to academic achievement beyond deficiencies in curriculum and instruction caused by inadequate funding, high staff turnover and inefficiency. Research has persistently shown that, in poor communities, the prevalence of single-parent households, the lack of formal education among parents, the stresses of poverty, crowded and inadequate housing, and other factors conspire to create a home and community situation that inhibits academic achievement (Wilson 1996; Kaufman 1994). These conditions are exacerbated by the sense of alienation that many parents feel towards schools due either to linguistic obstacles (in the case of some immigrant families) or a general perception that school employees do not represent the interests of the community. As Stone et al (1999) state:

Particularly in low-income communities, teachers voice concerns that parents fail to help educators do their jobs. For their part, many parents and community members experience the school as an alienating institution.... Enlisting schools in community development means first reversing the dissociation between schools and poor neighborhoods.... These initiatives call for engaging parents in the life of the school, sometimes in school governance itself.

Recognizing the implications of the community context in which schools are embedded allows us to identify a number of ways in which educational performance can be improved, and to understand the implications of school improvement for community development. Figure 1 provides a graphical representation describing three impacts of parent participation on educational outcomes, school-community relations, and community development. The first reflects the arguments discussed above—parental influence may lead to curriculum and instruction that better meets the needs and capacities of communities. Second, collaborative decision-making between parents and community members on the one hand, and principals, teachers, and school staff on the other, may enhance school community relations. This may lead to improved educational performance both because parents may become more aware of their role in their children's education and educated about the influence of the home

environment on student achievement, and because parents and community members may commit increasing time and financial resources to schools. In addition, parent participation may have a direct influence on the physical, social and economic development of communities in three ways. First, participation in schools may lead parents to develop skills that may enable them to take on leadership roles elsewhere in their communities. Second, perceptions of improvements in schools, as well as the sense of investment in the process that comes with participation, may help to slow or reverse the flight of families out of low-income neighborhoods. Third, participation in school improvement may act to facilitate community involvement around other issues, be they physical redevelopment, the lack of social services, or others.

Such outcomes are not a foregone conclusion—they are dependent on parents being able to participate effectively and assert meaningful influence on decision-making. Shaeffer (1994: 16) highlights the useful distinction between parent participation, which implies a relatively strong and active role on the part of parents and other stakeholders, and parent involvement, which connotes “passive collaboration.” For this study, participation by a stakeholder group means that the group gains some power that its members consider important, and can make decisions autonomously. Yet parents face a number of obstacles to participation, including resistance from teachers and principals, and the lack of access to relevant information, that may thwart their influence and render their experience demoralizing rather than empowering. Thus an understanding of when and why parents are able to participate is essential to an analysis of the impact of SBM on school-community relations.

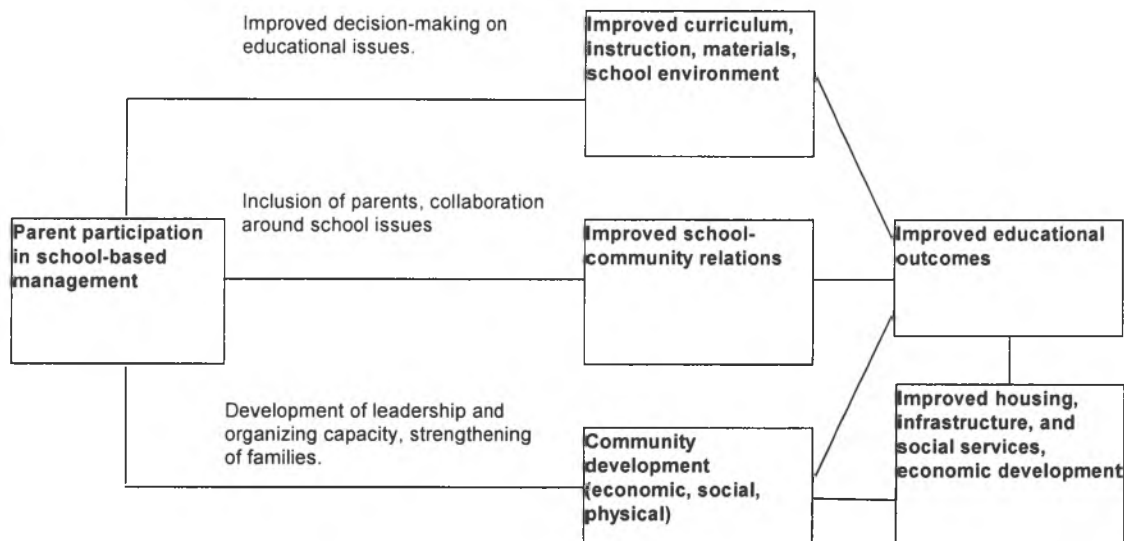


Figure 1:
The Impact of Parent Participation in School Based Management on Educational Outcomes

Research points to a number of factors at the school level that affect parent participation. Perhaps the most important factor is principal leadership—principals who are effective leaders and employ a collaborative model of decision making may successfully engage parent participation even where SBM has not been implemented. Second, parents are likely to exercise much more influence where they are organized and assert a common agenda, and particularly where they have technical and political support from independent non-profit organizations that work on issues of school governance. Finally, the relative representation of parents on SSCs and the degree of authority of SSCs have important implications for parent influence for obvious reasons.

Table 2 describes four organizational models of SBM that can be observed in practice that have quite different implications for parent participation. Three parameters define the degree of parent influence in each model. The first is the degree of authority decentralized to the school level, including the degree of autonomy in allocating the school budget, the extent to which important decisions can be made at the school level, and the degree to which schools are restricted by Board of Education regulations, or collective bargaining agreements regarding wages, personnel decisions, or uses of school buildings. The

second is the degree of authority of SSCs relative to principals—whether they are empowered to set policy, and the extent of their mandate. The third is the representation of parents on SSCs relative to other groups. Where parents are a majority or plurality they are likely to exercise greater influence, and are also likely to be empowered by the recognition of their preeminent role to play a more active part in leading and making decisions.

Table 2. Four Models of Parent Participation on School-Site Councils

Model of SBM	Degree of authority at school level	Degree of authority of councils	Parent representation in decision-making
Parent participation	High	High	High
School accountability	High	High	Low
Principal-centered	High	Low	Low
Bureaucratic oversight	Low	Low	Low

The four models defined by the table are abstractions—no actual experience with SBM corresponds perfectly with any one of them. Nonetheless, they are useful for analyzing the models implemented in practice. Under the parent participation model of SBM, councils have a broad mandate to institute and implement changes in many aspects of school management. Parents have a majority on councils, and are elected by parents or community residents. Such an arrangement creates the potential for participatory democracy within schools, although this outcome is dependent on a high degree of parent commitment and organization. Due to political resistance from principals and teachers, and skepticism regarding parent participation among lawmakers, this model is relatively rare, with Chicago being the sole example in a major school system. The school accountability model tends to coincide with measures for increased accountability, such as high-stakes testing. It is premised on the need to give various school-level stakeholders a voice in order to gain their acceptance of politically sensitive attempts to hold them accountable—Kentucky’s experience corresponds most closely with this model (Pankratz and Petrosko 2000). Under the principal-centered model, power is decentralized but school councils are merely advisory, leaving other stakeholders with little formal authority over principals. This model corresponds most closely to El Paso, where SSCs have no power to implement school policy. In the final, district

centered model, reforms bring little change as the educational bureaucracy gives up little budgetary discretion or decision-making power, limiting the authority of both principals and SSCs.

The implications of these various models for school-community relations and community development are apparent. Where councils have little authority and school autonomy is limited, there is little potential for collaborative decision-making. Where parents have limited influence, they are unlikely to gain leadership skills or to feel empowered by their experience on councils. However, even where the parent participation model prevails, the implications for community development are dependent on the success of SBM—where the model leads to conflict or has a negative or neutral impact on school performance, it is unlikely to lead to positive outcomes for communities.

The Origins of School-Based Management in Chicago, Kentucky, Hawaii, and El Paso

The following discussion will provide an historical overview of reforms for SBM in each case study jurisdiction, as a prelude to the analysis of the role of parent participation in each. The purpose is to understand the ways that locality-specific contexts shape the model of SBM that is adopted. While SBM is usually seen as a means to improve educational performance, the models adopted reflect different judgments as to the causes of school failure, and differences in the political clout of parents, teachers, principals, and other groups. Thus, for example, the reforms in Chicago were implemented with the explicit objective of addressing the frustration and alienation of low-income communities towards the school system—a motivation that was largely absent in the other three cases. Variations in the motives behind the reforms had profound implications in each case for the model of SBM adopted, and by extension for school-community relations. Table 1 describes the characteristics of SBM in each case.

Table 1. Summary of Characteristics of SBM in Chicago, Kentucky, Hawaii and Ysleta

	Composition of school-site council	Method of selecting parent members	Extent of school-site council authority
Chicago	6 parents, 2 community residents, 2 teachers, the principal, one student (in high school).	Elected by community residents.	Sets policy regarding curriculum and instruction and extra-curricular activities. Responsible for hiring and dismissal of principals, establishing school improvement plan, and allocating budget.
Kentucky	Principal or head teacher, three teachers, two parents.	Selected by largest parent organization in school.	Sets policy regarding curriculum and instruction and extra-curricular activities, although they must work within curriculum guidelines established by standardized tests. Responsible for budget allocation and establishment of school improvement plan.
Hawaii	To be determined by at school level. Must include principal, and representatives of teachers, parents, community members, school staff and students.	To be determined at school level.	Responsible for all aspects of school decision-making, although the precise responsibilities and power of SSCs is determined at the school level. SSCs must apply for waivers and exceptions where decisions contravene Department of Education regulations.
El Paso	Half school professionals, half parents and community representatives. Actual size and composition to be determined at the school level.	Selected by principal with advisory assistance of school council.	SSC's role is purely advisory, and covers curriculum and instruction, personnel decisions, establishment of school improvement plans, and extra-curricular activities.

Chicago

Chicago is by far the most frequently cited case study in SBM, and its reforms are the most far-reaching. It is the only large city or state in which legislation mandates that parents must represent a majority of members of councils, which are referred to in Chicago as Local School Councils (LSCs).¹ These councils are responsible for hiring or dismissing principals, and developing school improvement plans that establish school policies regarding curriculum and instruction, use of the school building, and extra-curricular activities (Bryk et al 1997). They also have considerable flexibility in managing the school budget. Despite recent efforts to curb SSC powers, Chicago's experience continues to be the most radical experiment with SBM yet undertaken. The following account describes the distinct set of factors—an acute educational crisis, socioeconomic and demographic change, the emergence of black political power, and an active set of non-profit and community-based organizations working on educational issues—that brought the reforms into being.

Chicago's school system is predominantly minority (53 percent of students are African-American and 34 percent are Latino) with **X percent** of children eligible for free lunch. Like many urban school systems in 'rust belt' cities, the Chicago school system experienced a crisis in the 1970s and 80s brought on by increasing poverty, the flight of middle-class families to the suburbs, and a declining tax base. The result was persistent budget shortfalls and an increasingly impoverished student population. Between 1978 and 1984, the dropout rate stood at about 43 percent, reaching two-thirds in some low-income neighborhoods, and half of graduates were reading below the 9th grade level (Bryk et al 1997). Two events in 1987 acted to galvanize support for educational reform. The first was the death of Mayor Harold Washington, who had been elected three years earlier as the city's first African-American mayor on a platform of neighborhood development. Educational issues had become associated with Washington's legacy following a series of educational summits that he convened in the mid-1980s. The second event was a 19-day teachers strike that shut down the schools. Pervasive distrust in low-income communities of city government and school professionals, and concern for the poor performance of

students, created a groundswell of support for greater community control of schools. An effective grassroots campaign championed by a coalition of non-profit organizations, academics, and business leaders led to the passage of the Chicago School Reform Act (CSRA) of 1988.

The hallmarks of the CSRA were its mandate of a high degree of parent and community participation, measures for teacher and principal accountability, and increased resources for schools (Hess 1992). Principals were to be hired under four-year performance contracts. Greater budgetary discretion at the school level was combined with a requirement that schools undertake more intensive planning efforts, specifically to develop three-year improvement plans to be updated yearly. Funding was to be directly allocated to schools based on a formula accounting for the number of disadvantaged students in a district, resulting in a significant budget increase for schools with large numbers of low-income students. The reforms also changed the school board membership from a system of 11 school board members nominated by the mayor, to a 15-member board with representatives nominated by a School Board Nominating Commission that was dominated by parent and community representatives from LSCs. Most significantly, however, was the creation of the SSCs, which left significant power at the school level in the hands of parents and community residents. The reforms met with considerable enthusiasm in communities—in the first elections for SSC representatives in October of 1989, 313,000 people turned out to vote for 17,000 candidates for 5,420 LSC members in 542 Chicago schools.

Implementation of SBM in Chicago has continued to engender controversy, and in recent years Mayor Richard Daley and the successive superintendents have attempted to reduce the influence of parents. These efforts are premised on the assessment that SBM has not led to improvements in academic performance, although advocates contend that they have (Designs for Change 2001). In 1995 and 1996 a series of reforms were initiated. The school board was pared to five members to be selected by the mayor. The authority of LSC was also reduced, and the board was given expanded authority to take over failing schools and reassign principals and teachers. Responsibility for the training of SSC parent

¹ While councils go by different names in the four case study school systems, the term school-site council will be used throughout

members was placed in the hands of the Board of Education—prior to these changes training had largely been conducted by independent non-profit organizations, many of which had been formed by advocates who had been involved in the school reform movement. Soon after the reform, the Board of Education placed 109 schools under probation. Since that time the Board and nonprofit education advocacy groups have engaged in a continuous debate about the outcomes of this experiment with Board intervention for school performance (Designs for Change 2001).

Kentucky

While Chicago's school reform is notable for its focus on school-community relations, Kentucky's is notable for its focus on improved educational performance as measured by standardized tests. The reforms were initiated in response to a ruling of the state supreme court that found the state's educational financing system unconstitutional. The state had long had one of the most ineffective educational systems in the country. In the 1980s, Kentucky ranked 50th among states in adult literacy and adults with a high school diploma, 49th in the percent of people who went on to college, and 48th in per pupil educational expenditure (Hunter 1999). The system was also marked by disparity in access to educational resources, with the highest spending districts spending two and a half times more per pupil than the lowest spending districts. The state supreme court finding created a political movement for reform that differed from the one in Chicago in that it was largely elite-based. The most prominent advocacy organization in the school reform movement was the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, formed by attorney Edward Prichard and consisting of a group of government-appointed members of a citizen's committee on educational reform (Sexton 2000). Although the group attempted to stimulate greater public involvement in the issue through televised public meetings on the school system and other means, it depended largely on support from prominent politicians and newspaper editorials in its lobbying effort.

The Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA), which was passed in 1990, led to extensive changes in school financing and governance. Funding for schools increased dramatically, and the state's rank in

this paper for purposes of clarity.

funding per pupil rose to 21st in the country by the mid-1990s (Hunter 1999). KERA also created Family Resource Centers to provide a variety of social services to families. Finally, it institutionalized SBM and SSCs, although their authority is more limited than in Chicago. Schools have the authority to shape curriculum and instruction and set the hours of instruction, but must achieve certain goals in standardized testing or face restructuring by the state. The mandate for parent participation under KERA is much more modest than in Chicago. They are a minority and, where no strong independent parent organization exists, principals often exercise considerable influence in the choosing of parent representatives.

The Kentucky model of SBM reflects the focus of the reforms on educational achievement, as well as the influence of teachers' and principals' organizations on the legislation. There was a conscious effort in the drafting of KERA to use SBM to overcome political obstacles to increasing the accountability of educators and school administrations. This motive was accepted both by policy-makers and non-profit advocacy groups. As one activist who was involved in the lobbying effort stated:

The parents were involved for the standard reason that parents are involved, that they should have a voice. But essentially there was a political bargain—teachers will accept responsibility, and accept accountability, in return for some control over the local decisions. I think Chicago started out with a different set of purposes, to return the schools to the community and deal with political frustration on the part of parents. We had that, but at the state level you are not going to come up with the same rationale you come up with in a city. We might have had community and parental frustration with the schools, but there was never an argument that called for the creation of mini school boards elected from the community.

The limited mandate for parent participation in KERA also reflects skepticism about community control that partially reflects popular stereotypes of rural communities in Kentucky, and particularly the Appalachian communities in the eastern part of the state. Scholars who follow the reform movement highlight the fact that, while KERA sought to establish some balance of power between parents, teachers, and principals at the school level, there was broad acceptance among advocates and policy-makers that principals should remain the dominant power, and that the state should remain the final arbiter of change.

There's an element of paternalism in the reform. Everyone has the image of Eastern Kentucky as a bunch of hillbillies sitting around drinking moonshine. These are distasteful stereotypes, but people locally know about them. People felt that school achievement in certain areas, especially Eastern Kentucky, was so abysmal, that there was such an ingrained sense of good old boyism, that we had to break through all this. Even at an unconscious level, the mindset was that we've got to drag those people, kicking and screaming, into the 20th and 21st centuries. And the only way we can get their attention is to say "you've got to improve your school achievement or we will take over your school and send somebody over there to tell you what to do." So it was an attempt to try to pull achievement up, push it pull it, cajole it, threaten, do something to pull us out of this lethargic situation.

Hence schools have significant responsibility for setting curriculum and instruction, yet have to follow strict guidelines set by the state. They can set the number of hours of instruction, but must retain enough instructional time to cover the considerable amount of material covered by the standardized tests. In practice, the outcome is that schools are increasing the number of instructional hours, and in some cases cutting time devoted to music and physical education classes, to ensure that students are prepared for exams. While these changes have raised some concern, Kentucky's success in raising scores on standardized tests have muted any criticism of the reform.

Hawaii

Hawaii's school system is marked by considerable ethnic diversity—(demographics on student body?). Those claiming native Hawaiian ancestry are disproportionately low-income, and are concentrated in rural communities such as the Waianae district on the island of Oahu. As in Chicago, the reforms for SBM were implemented in the context of considerable tension between communities and the state, and for some activists educational issues are inextricably linked with the movement for Hawaiian sovereignty. This link is explicitly manifest in the emergence of Hawaiian language charter schools—this phenomenon will be discussed in the next section.

The Hawaiian experience with SBM is distinct in a number of ways. Unlike the other case studies, it was instituted from within the Hawaii Department of Education without significant outside pressure following a visit to observe SBM in Miami-Dade County by then Superintendent Charles Taguchi in 1988. SBM was instituted statewide in 1989, and although it has never been mandatory, about 86 percent of schools

have implemented it since. The legislation also leaves considerable room for flexibility in the type of SBM model schools choose, stating simply that schools should have a process that incorporates input from six stakeholder groups—principals, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and other community members. The most common arrangement adopted has been the formation of a school site council with a single representative of each group. However, some schools have chosen different mixes of representatives, and a few have adopted other decision-making frameworks, such as open meetings, that do not involve the formation of councils (Pacific Educational Research Laboratory 1992). The reforms are also distinct in that they have not accompanied other dramatic changes, such as substantial increases in educational funding or the institution of high-stakes testing. They are a modest, stand-alone effort to bring new actors into school governance.

Schools have been given considerable authority under SBM legislation in areas such as curriculum and instruction, school hours, extra-curricular activities, and others. Changes that contravene Board of Education regulations must go through a waivers and exceptions process. Although this process has been the source of some frustration, some schools have been able to make significant changes, including major changes in curriculum and instruction, changes in the school calendar (such as adopting a calendar year school schedule), and hiring for new instructional programs.

Ysleta School District (YISD), El Paso

The Ysleta School District is one of nine school districts in El Paso County. The prevalence of Mexican immigrants in the district creates a unique set of issues—of the district's almost 50,000 students, 86 percent are Latino, 27 percent have limited English proficiency, and 33 percent are low-income (citation?). Thus students face unique issues with language and acculturation. The district also has an unusually large population of migrant workers whose children may change schools several times a year. Despite these issues, in 1998 Ysleta was the first urban district to be declared a Recognized District by the state for its improvements on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test.

Texas mandated SBM at the state level in 1995. As with Kentucky, Texas' model of SBM is largely focused on improving educational achievement and implementing standards-based reform. The Texas Educational Code establishes the use of monetary rewards and sanctions for schools based on performance. The Code also establishes minimum requirements for SBM, and makes SSCs responsible for establishing and reviewing campus educational plans, performance objectives, and classroom instructional programs. However, districts establish specific guidelines for the structure of councils and the extent of their authority.

In the YISD, the mandate for SBM is generally weaker than in the other three cases. Most importantly, the SSC's advisory role means that principals are the final authority in most decisions. SSCs, referred to as Campus Educational Improvement Committees (CEICs) in El Paso, are comprised of 50 percent professional staff, and 50 percent parents, community members and business representatives. Of the professional members, two-thirds must be teachers, with the remaining one-third composed of other campus or district level staff. The parent and community members are selected by principles with the advisory assistance of the SSC. The actual size of the SSC is established by the SSC itself. In practice, SSCs have had a limited impact on school policy in most cases due to their marginal role and lack of formal power.

Comparison of site-based management models

A number of insights emerge from the previous discussion. First, it is notable that movements for parent participation based in civil society was instrumental in ensuring the relatively high degree of decentralization and parent representation in Chicago, and to a lesser degree in Kentucky. Organizations of civil society played a role not only in shaping the legislation, but also in galvanizing public interest in reform, and in bringing various actors at the school level to the table and ensuring that their voice was represented. Second, the profiles of each case indicate that a cookie-cutter approach to school reform is inappropriate—in each case SBM models were designed to address distinctive local educational issues and political obstacles.

In each of the above cases, the primary rationale for SBM was the need to improve educational performance. In fact, such improvement has been recorded, particularly in Kentucky and Ysleta. In YISD, the district went from having only one of its 49 schools rated 'recognized' or 'exemplary' (the two highest ratings accorded by the Texas Department of Education) in 1994, to 44 of 50 in 1998. Kentucky was one of only three of 38 states to show statistically significant improvement on the NAEP tests between 1993 and 1998. In Chicago, the results have been more mixed—a study by Bryk et al (1997) found that, while math scores have trended up at the elementary school level since reform, reading scores have trended up only in the earlier grades, while trending down afterwards. Furthermore it is impossible to determine to what degree these changes are attributable to SBM as opposed to other reforms, such as high-stakes testing and school choice, that have been implemented during the same period. In fact a statistical analysis in Kentucky found no relationship between the implementation of SBM and test scores (Petrosko and Lindle 2000).

Parent Participation and Decision-Making: Outcomes for School Improvement

While this paper has argued that successful collaboration around school improvement may influence community development, such success is not a foregone conclusion. SBM is premised on the assumption that parent participation will enhance mutual understanding between various role groups and lead to a freer flow of ideas, yet an alternative hypothesis is that the opposite will occur. Parents may have perspectives on curriculum and instruction, school hours and other issues that conflict with those of principals and teachers, and may even contravene collective bargaining agreements. Obstacles to effective communication based on linguistic and cultural barriers, and different communication styles, may cause misunderstanding and exacerbate parents' sense of alienation. The result may be inactive or conflict-ridden SSCs, and a deterioration of school performance. This section will discuss experiences with parent participation in Chicago, Kentucky, Hawaii and El Paso. It will argue that, while the relative authority of SSCs and the representation of parents on SSCs are the most important factors affecting successful parent participation, two other factors also play a key role—the leadership style of principals,

and the existence of civic capacity in the community at large. It will then discuss the impact of parent participation on school improvement, and on school-community relations.

Previous studies have identified a number of issues that emerge in parent participation. Principals and teachers often initially resist parent participation out of concern that parents may make ill-informed or capricious decisions (Wohlstetter et al 1995). They may also feel that their job security is threatened if parents are given authority over personnel decisions. There was some teacher and principal resistance to parent representation on SSCs in all of the case study cities and states. However, research indicates that SBM and parent participation are usually accepted once implemented. In Chicago, for example, surveys indicated that 75.6 percent of teachers on councils expressed positive feelings about councils (Ryan et al 1997). In Kentucky, a 1999 survey found that 82 percent of principals, 76 percent of teachers, and 85 percent of parents said that SBM was functioning well (Kentucky Institute for Educational Research 1999). Thus while conflict between parents and other SSC representatives are an issue, it tends to be the exception and decreases over time.

An additional concern regarding SBM is that parents may not have the time or capacity to participate effectively. Survey research tends to dispel this concern as well. In Chicago, a survey of parent LSC members found that 83 percent of parent representatives spent 5 hours or more per month, and one-third spent 10 hours or more per month on SSC related duties (Ryan et al 1997). In addition, about 48 percent of these same parents reported spending 10 or more hours per month in school outside of their LSC duties. Thus many parents are willing and able to commit a significant amount of time to school-related responsibilities. Survey research in Chicago and Kentucky also indicates that parent members of councils are uniformly more educated than the population at large, and are much more likely to be professionals (Ryan et al 1997).

The actual effectiveness of councils, and the ability of parents to influence decisions, are much harder to assess. In a 1997 study, Bryk et al found significant variations in SSCs' performance following Chicago's

dramatic reforms. They describe three categories of schools. The first are those that have focused on specific issues, such as safety and security, school uniforms, peripheral educational changes, or 'Christmas tree' programs that are not conceptualized within a broader educational philosophy. The second consists of SSCs that are largely nonfunctional, meaning that they frequently do not meet quorum, meet for less than an hour, experience significant conflicts between role groups, and spend most of the time during meetings discussing procedural issues. The final set of SSCs, which the authors represent as an ideal, are those that systematically plan for a coherent agenda of school reform based on a well-defined educational philosophy. They term these 'emergent restructuring' schools, and find that they represent about one-third of all schools. Interviewees in Kentucky, El Paso, and Hawaii discussed similar categorizations, although the issues and approaches differed. The following are some of the more notable changes to school policy and practices that have been put into place by SSCs:

- In Hawaii, a number of schools have extended the school year to a calendar year, and have made other innovative changes in scheduling;
- In Chicago, SSCs have substantially increased the number of African-American principals (numbers?);
- In all cases, SSCs have led to schools adopting national models of school improvement, such as...

In addition to changes in curriculum and instruction, some schools have initiated programs to involve parents directly in the classroom. A notable example is the efforts of Community Organizing for Family Issues (COFI), a consulting group that works with community-based organizations in Chicago to train parents to be more involved in their communities. COFI has organized parents in several schools to implement the Parent-Teacher Mentoring program, which places parents in the classroom as assistants to teachers. The objective of the program is both to assist teachers who are often burdened with large class sizes, and to empower parents to become more involved in their children's education. While parents initially struggled in many schools to find enough teachers who would volunteer to mentor a parent, the program has gradually gained acceptance, and in some instances teachers have requested that SSCs make the program mandatory. The program has resulted in significant improvements in students' achievement on standardized reading tests. About 14 schools are in various phases of implementing the program. This model also has implications for school-community relations, as will be discussed later in this paper.

While the above changes have most certainly been shaped to some degree by parent participation, it is difficult to determine precisely how much influence parents have on councils. Determining conclusively the extent of parent influence would involve a content analysis of a sample of minutes from SSC meetings, and an analysis of the decisions that resulted from these meetings—a task that is beyond the scope of this study. However, research does provide some evidence regarding parent influence, and how parents and other role groups perceive their influence. An evaluation of the YISD's model of SBM, for example, concluded that a significant proportion of schools have become 'democratic dictatorships' in which SSCs coexist with the reality of principal dominance of decision-making (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts 1998). In Hawaii 42 percent of parents, as compared to 75 percent of teachers, rate their influence on curriculum decisions as a five or six on a scale of six (Izu et al 1996). In Chicago, in contrast, parents are more confident of their role in decision-making. A study conducted in 1997 found that 91 percent of SSC members agree with the statement that the principal asks the SSC for its input, and 80 percent agree that the SSC is highly or moderately involved in the budget process (Ryan et al 1997). This almost certainly reflects the greater representation of parents on SSCs in Chicago.

What, however, explains the differences in levels of parent input between schools within the same district, city or state? Research points to two factors. First, Bryk et al (1997) argue that the presence of a principal who is a good leader and successfully engages in a collaborative leadership style is the single most important school-level factor that enhances parent participation. As supervisors in the school setting, principals enjoy a particularly powerful position relative to other SSC members. The dominance of principals is even apparent in some Chicago schools, despite the fact that the principal is hired by SSCs on which parents are a majority. Even where principals and teachers have good intentions towards parent participation, their professional position, familiarity with school issues and frequent interaction may bias decision-making. A Kentucky principal expressed this concern:

Parents aren't on the premises, so even the most scrupulous educator who would never claim to have made a decision before the (SSC) met, nonetheless has more insider knowledge than the parents do. As a result, parents feel left out or misdirected or uninformed when it comes time to talk about particular issues. Even if they are

consciously not doing it the fact is that proximity gives them more information, more data on which to base their analysis of the problem than what parents have.... There are a ton of intangible things that happen during the day that educators don't think of. So it's the insiders versus the outsiders, and the outsiders are outnumbered.

Overcoming this dynamic requires a principal who finds ways to systematically incorporate input from parents (for example by organizing community meetings), and can act as an advocate for parents and a mediator between parents and other members of SSCs. Thus a principal who can establish a vision and process for school change is essential to effective parent participation on SSCs.

A second important factor in the effectiveness of councils is the presence of civic capacity in the community at large (Stone et al 1999). Where recognized community organizations are present, they can help parent members of councils to develop a unified agenda, and train them to understand educational and budget issues and articulate their positions. In Chicago, parent mobilization around school reform led to the formation of a number of organizations that have since focused on organizing and training parents and advocating for a strong parent role on SSCs. Their role has been controversial. Since the mid-1990s, organizations such as Parents United for a Responsible Education (PURE), and the Chicago Association of Local School Councils, have lost the right to train parent SSC members, most likely due to their vocal opposition to many school board policies. Other organizations, most notably Designs for Change, have played a critical role in research and advocacy for a continued strong role for parents.

Where at least one of these two conditions exist, substantial parent participation is possible even where SBM legislation does not focus on the role of parents. An example is the Waiialae Elementary School in Honolulu, Hawaii. Located in an upper-middle class neighborhood of predominantly single-family homes, Waiialae was the first school in Hawaii to submit a letter of intent to implement SBM (Izu et al 1996; Pacific Region Educational Laboratory 1992). It has since initiated a number of changes, including experimenting with portfolio-based assessment, replacing report cards with parent-teacher conferences, and significant changes in curriculum. Waiialae's early adoption of SBM was initiated through collaboration between a community-based organization called Friends of Waiialae School (FWS) and a

principal who was unusually facilitative in her leadership style. Through the efforts of FWS and the principal, all major changes were discussed at length in open forum meetings to which all community residents were invited. The level of mobilization in the community was such that, in 1995, 90 percent of parents were aware of SBM, and more than half had been to an SBM open forum meeting (Izu et al 1996). In sum, the changes that were made reflected the convergence of a number of fortuitous events and an exceptional level of commitment from both parents and educators. Particularly in Hawaii, where evaluations of SBM record high levels of frustration with the difficulty of attaining the necessary waivers and exceptions from Board of Education regulations, few schools have undertaken such significant efforts at reform.

Where neither of these conditions exist, parent input is generally limited. In Kentucky, Hawaii, and Ysleta, even where parents are confident and articulate, their role is primarily one of gadfly and watchdog, ensuring that funds are used responsibly, school professionals remain accountable, and that a parent perspective is represented. These roles are important, but do not represent a potential for dramatic improvement in school-community relations.

In school systems where SBM has not created opportunity for significant parent voice in school policy, alternative models of school governance have sometimes emerged. Two such models are the charter school movement in Hawaii and the Alliance School movement in El Paso. The charter school movement in Hawaii is in many ways a direct outcome of disenchantment over the model of SBM implemented by the Department of Education. Many principals, teachers and parents in Hawaii have expressed frustration with the waivers and exceptions process, and some have accused the Department of Education of using its resources to try to continue to direct school-level policy (Auditor, State of Hawaii 1998). In addition, the lack of state guidelines for SSCs has resulted in limited parent participation in most schools. Since the legislation mandating charter schools was passed, many communities have seized upon the rather vague guidelines to develop highly inventive new models of school management and curriculum. Of the 24 new schools created about half have Hawaiian language and cultural programs. This represents a sentiment

that the existing school system has not adequately served the native Hawaiian community, and the belief that education must have a strong base in local culture if it is to have an empowering affect on native Hawaiian communities. Most notably, a number of Hawaiian language immersion schools have been formed in which instruction is entirely in the Hawaiian language. These schools represent in part an effort to revive the Hawaiian language, and have required the translation of a large amount of instructional material.

The Alliance School initiative was organized by the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), and is currently being implemented in approximately 100 schools in Texas (Shirley 1997). In El Paso, the El Paso Interreligious Service Organization (EPISO), a community organizing entity that is affiliated with the IAF, has been the main actor. Like IAF organizations elsewhere in Texas, EPISO has been active in a number of community development and infrastructure delivery issues in the local colonias, low-income areas on the fringe of the city that are populated primarily by first and second-generation Mexican immigrants. The IAF employs a model of organizing based on the principals Saul Alinsky, the famed Chicago organizer. The Alinsky method is premised on the need to develop the political consciousness of communities so that they will eventually undertake radical political activism of their own accord.

Organizing around school improvement was a natural outgrowth of EPISOs community development activities, as educational achievement was perceived among many low-income Mexican immigrants as critical to the economic success of the community. The Alliance school model involves much more intensive parental involvement than conventional SBM models. Community organizers first identify potential leaders among parents, and encourage them to organize 'house meetings' of 10 to 15 people to discuss issues of concern to them. These meetings are meant to broaden the dialogue regarding school policies, and increase awareness of educational issues. Frequent public meetings are held to discuss issues and provide parents with an opportunity to raise concerns. 'Parent academies' are held with prominent speakers on educational, social, economic and political issues in an effort to enhance understanding of how these issues might inform decisions in local schools. 'Accountability sessions' are

also held with local political leaders and representatives of the school district so that parents have an opportunity to articulate their concerns in a forum explicitly designed to their advantage. Parent leaders also become active in the lobbying efforts of the Alliance School Initiative. The model puts parents at the forefront of policy-making at the school level, and in political lobbying efforts at the district and state levels.

The initiative has resulted in several major educational innovations. Among them is the NetSchools Constellation program, a remarkable initiative that was initiated by the SSC at Ysleta Elementary School. By a unanimous vote at an open meeting attended by approximately 500 parents, teachers, students and community activists, the school decided to provide all students between the third and sixth grade with a personal laptop computer. The initiative came about when parents identified the lack of computers in the predominantly low-income households in the neighborhood as a major obstacle to academic achievement. The NetSchools initiative is now being implemented throughout the YISD. Ysleta Elementary has also constructed a new school building with significant design input from parents. Parents in several middle schools have also successfully requested an increase in the number of advanced placement (AP) courses in order that students be eligible for college. Evaluations have shown that Alliance Schools have experienced above average improvement on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test.

The implementation of the Alliance Schools project requires both strong leadership from the principal, and the presence of strong community organizations, in this case one with a faith-based component. As stated by an EPISO organizer:

The reason there is a relationship with a community-based organization, like EPISO or Austin Interfaith or another group, is that principals are constantly being told to control their parents. And there has got to be an independent base of power that can hold the school district accountable and allow talented principals to take some risks in organizing their parents. The congregation base in EPISO provides that independent political base.

In sum, building stronger schools and stronger communities cannot be viewed separately—they are part of an iterative process. Strong SSCs require a certain extent of awareness and mobilization within the

broader community, and can be further strengthened where the mobilization of parents meets with a cooperative and facilitative attitude from a progressive principal.

SBM and Community Development

The final section of this paper will assess the direct impact of SBM on community development. We have already listed a number of ways in which such an impact may occur: by enhancing leadership skills among parents; by raising awareness of issues in the socioeconomic and physical environment of the community that discourage educational achievement; by opening up schools for a number of functions that may benefit communities, including the delivery of public health and social services, literacy assistance and English as a second language programs, after-school programs, and others; and by improving school-community relations, thereby helping communities to retain population. We will address each of these issues in turn.

There is little doubt that leadership development is a beneficial externality of SBM. In the four case study areas, at any given time 5400 parents and community residents in Chicago, 2500 in Kentucky, and hundreds more in Hawaii and El Paso are playing leadership roles in school governance. For many of these people this is a first experience in a leadership role. Whether the SSC experience leads to a true sense of empowerment, however, rests on the question of how much influence parents can realistically exercise, and how much support they receive in their efforts from other council members, other parents, and the broader community. In all four case study areas, interviewees related anecdotes about parents who had gone on from SSCs to play leadership roles at the community, and sometimes at the city level. These include cases of parent SSC members who ran for local school board or other elective posts; who found employment in community development organizations or social service agencies; who became teachers or other school professionals; or who simply played a much greater role in their community though informal organizing, attendance at community meetings, and other activities.

Once again, Chicago provides the paradigmatic example. The strong parent role in school governance creates an incentive for parents to participate, and the city's dense infrastructure of community and civic organizations has capitalized on the reforms as a potent issue around which to organize parents for involvement in schools and other community issues. The Community Leadership and Family Issues (COFI) group, discussed earlier, has explicitly attempted to capitalize on the synergy between neighborhood organizing and SBM. Likewise, PURE and other non-profit organizations have recruited staff from among SBM members to engage in lobbying efforts.

Based as it is upon an Alinsky model of organizing, the Alliance School Initiative in Texas makes leadership development an explicit goal. It deliberately places parents in roles that require them to exhibit leadership (such as in house meetings) and confront people in leadership positions (such as in accountability sessions). Many parents who have been associated with Alliance Schools attribute a personal transformation to the experience, and take pleasure in recounting their conversion from passive parent to active advocate for their children. One parent recounted her role in EPISO's efforts to lobby for expanded funding for arts programs:

Before the Alliance School initiative came along, I was the one who would just park in front to drop off my kids, and pick them up when it was time to go home. Now I am running down the hallway with a senator telling him how important this money is for this for the school, I am fighting for my kids. They are getting ready to vote on this bill, and we are pulling them off the senate floor.

Particularly in predominantly Latino immigrant communities, where linguistic and cultural issues can present obstacles to civic participation, such experiences can play a critical role in building the foundation for broader civic and political participation.

With regards to the role of parent participation in schools as a means to raise awareness about other community issues, the Alliance School model again provides an intriguing case. The Alinsky model of organizing is premised on the belief that once people are organized to solve an issue in their community, they will inevitably come to recognize the interconnectedness of this issue with other problems they face. The task of the organizer is therefore to identify those issues that are most likely to stimulate interest

with the intent of using that issue as a catalyst for community activism (Alinsky 19??). This approach has experienced considerable success in El Paso. In Ysleta Elementary School, for example, parents lobbied successfully to change traffic patterns and increase the number of stoplights in their neighborhood after a girl was struck and killed by a truck on her way home from school. A number of Alliance Schools have developed other initiatives, including adult education, health screenings for community residents, and a pre-kindergarten program, after parents identified the importance of the health and well-being of the family in childrens' education. Parents from Alliance Schools in the colonias of Socorro, one of the poorest parts of El Paso, were instrumental in having the local streets paved and widened. They raised the issue of school busses' inability to navigate local streets in their lobbying effort. More generally, the Alliance school initiative has allowed EPISO to gain greater recognition both in communities and citywide, and it has been able to capitalize on this to advance its community development agenda.

Concerning the hypothesis that SBM leads to schools being used for functions that benefit communities, this has taken place to some degree in all four of the case studies. In Hawaii and Kentucky, separate initiatives have been established to provide social and health services through schools. Under KERA, schools with at least 20 percent of children eligible for free lunch can apply to receive grants from the state for Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs). The services that are to be delivered by these Centers are determined at the school level, and can include reading programs to prepare young children for school, services to connect children to eye care or health care, after school care, education for new or expectant parents, drug and alcohol counseling, job training and placement, or others. By 1999, 702 schools—93 percent of those eligible—had established such centers (Kentucky General Assembly 2000). The most common services provided were health services and referrals, and counseling for family crisis and mental health. In Hawaii, Parent-Community Networking Centers have been established to organize volunteers at the community level to provide tutoring and other services (Ing 1999).

The COFI project in Chicago has also led to the development of new functions in schools. In addition to the parent-teacher mentoring program mentioned earlier, parents trained under the program have initiated community centers in schools which are centers for ESL and GED classes and other educational programs for parents, recreational activities for children, and a number of social service programs. SSCs have played a critical role in this initiative both because many parents associated with COFI are SSC members, and because parent representatives on SSCs provide a source of support for such initiatives. In El Paso, SSCs have initiated classes in ESL and preparation for citizenship, among others.

Finally, it is impossible to determine from existing evidence what impact SBM has had on the stability of communities. As SBM has coincided in most cases with a broader movement for educational reform, as well as major political and social change, it is not possible to determine whether parent participation is responsible for enhancing community stability to any significant degree. It seems reasonable to speculate, however, that the combination of improved academic achievement and increased opportunities to interact with school professionals have influenced such relations. In our discussions with parent representatives on SSCs, most expressed satisfaction, and in some case surprise, at the level of professionalism of teachers and principals. An EPISO organizer recounted the interaction between parents and teachers at a house meeting at Ysleta Middle School:

We had about 200 parents and teachers sitting around talking about what their experience in education had been and why they wanted their students to go to college. And the parents were so shocked to learn that most of the teachers were the first in their family to go to college, and that they had struggled to do it. And you just saw the ice breaking in the way people began interacting with each other. Because they had assumed that the teachers had been born with a silver spoon in their mouth, and that wasn't the case. And that allowed them to see each other as human beings.

Countless less dramatic revelations have occurred in SSC meetings, and through the day-to-day interactions of parents, teachers, principals, community representatives, and students.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis has highlighted a number of potential impacts of parent participation on SBM on community development. Some caution is required in drawing conclusions from the evidence presented. SBM alone is not sufficient to bring about significant change—certain facilitating conditions must be present. Most notably, parent participation is unlikely to be successful in the absence of a strong civil society or an activist principal. It is also notable that schools that succeed under SBM reforms tend to have collaborative decision-making processes in place already. In Hawaii, for example, an evaluation of SBM found that the first 9 schools that implemented SBM were already moving towards participatory decision-making models prior to the reform (Izu et al 1996). Nevertheless, SBM can play an important role in realizing the potential of schools as critical institution in reversing decline in low-income communities.

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Hartford Public Schools School Governance Councils

A Promising First Year

A key element of the Hartford Public Schools' Strategic Operating Plan is the creation of School Governance Councils (SGCs), guided by the SGC Policy adopted by the Board of Education (the Board) in May 2009. These councils represent an important effort by the Hartford Public School District (the District) to institutionalize parent and community involvement in the governance of its higher performing, autonomous schools. During this first policy year, Achieve Hartford! conducted an independent evaluation of SGC implementation and performance. Our results are summarized here.

While part I of this report, released in March 2010, addressed the ability of eligible schools to successfully launch SGCs and demonstrate compliance with Board policy through January 2010, this report evaluates the entire first year of SGC implementation, assessing both the ability of SGCs to maintain policy compliance as well as function effectively as a governing body.

Executive Summary

Overall, the implementation and performance of SGCs in Hartford during this first year of the Board's adopted policy can be considered positive. Based on our research, the initial goal of a full launch of SGCs in Year 1 was ambitious, as implementation in other cities operating with similar school-based councils has occurred over several years. While not perfect, compliance and performance results during this first year indicate a strong start. Highlights of Year 1 implementation include the following:

- A total of 28 out of 40 eligible schools operated governance councils in 2009-2010, 27 of which operated under the provisions of the Board's SGC Policy;
- Most SGCs accomplished their primary tasks of finalizing a school compact (24 of 27), approving and submitting a school budget on time (27 of 27), and addressing their school's accountability plan at some level (20 of 27).
- Survey results noted that council members felt generally well-prepared, operated with a high focus on student achievement, and worked well as a team. However, survey results also suggested that members felt minimally empowered on certain budget issues and that greater parent involvement is needed.
- Training for SGCs was provided by Leadership Greater Hartford and proved largely beneficial. More targeted, content specific training is being designed for year 2;
- The average attendance rate for all SGCs over the initial four training sessions was 72%;
- The average attendance rate for all SGCs over their regular meetings increased to 79%;
- Only 20 out of 27 SGCs, or 74%, held the minimum of 6 meetings over Year 1; and
- Only 52% of newly formed SGCs achieved 50% parent membership levels.

SGCs operated in 28 schools this past year and, while some are operating at different levels than others, the majority represent strong decision-making bodies, each made up of parents, school staff, community members and the principal working together to improve their school. Taking into account the expected room for improvement for any initiative this size, the first year of SGC implementation demonstrated a positive first year.

The School Governance Council Policy

Adopted in May 2009, the Hartford Public Schools School Governance Council Policy applies to all "Autonomous Schools as defined by the Board's Accountability Policy and School Performance Matrix." To guide the formation and operation of SGCs, the policy stipulates, among other things, the following:

- SGC duties include establishing a process and timeline for (1) the development and approval of the school's budget, (2) the development and approval of a School Compact, and (3) the analysis of school needs relative to the school accountability plan;
- All members are required to participate in initial and annual training;
- SGC's shall be comprised of no more than 12 members, with parents comprising 50%;
- The process for parent selection shall be led by the principal in collaboration with the PTO;
- All members are equal partners in decision-making and all decisions must be made by consensus (or 2/3 majority vote where consensus is not achieved); and
- One parent co-chairperson shall be elected by the SGC and, along with the principal, is charged with setting meeting agendas, presiding over meetings, and attending district meetings.

It should be noted that in May 2010, the Connecticut State legislature passed laws requiring that SGCs be formed in certain low performing schools across the state. Such laws, and the structure of the mandated SGCs, were based largely on the policy implemented by in Hartford.

Summary of our Part I Evaluation

Out of 40 eligible schools, 28 schools operated SGCs this past school year, 27 of which operated under the provisions outlined in the Board's SGC policy. Each newly launched SGC went through a training process facilitated by Leadership Greater Hartford (LGH). The training was conducted in four parts, three of which focused on developing a strong team dynamic within SGCs, and one that focused on content-specific training related to SGC Year I responsibilities. Survey results from our Part I research indicated that the initial trainings were largely beneficial and, in particular, increased members' understanding of the role of SGCs and their responsibilities as a member. Each council was also paired with an LGH coach who could help ensure the process of getting up and running moved as smoothly as possible. Involvement of coaches ranged from one SGC including the coach as a decision-making member of their council, to another SGC deciding that no help from their coach was needed.

In comparison to three other cities which have created SGCs - Boston, Cincinnati and Chicago - Hartford's launch of new SGCs at nearly half its schools in Year I represented a meaningful accomplishment. Our research noted that, in Chicago for example, it took over five years for councils to get effectively implemented and operate with consistent authority. The District's accomplishment is noteworthy, as it helps demonstrate the importance the District has placed in SGCs as part its overall reform plan.

Our Part I evaluation highlighted some suggestions for the improvement of SGC implementation:

1. Modify the SGC Policy to reflect the need for Superintendent discretion to defer formation of SGCs at a particular school based on unique operating circumstances;
 2. Provide increased guidance to principals on how to fill membership openings, especially in the recruitment of parents, since only 14 SGCs (or 55%) reached the required 50% parent membership by January 2010; and
 3. Focus the training of new SGC members more on content-related tasks to better prepare council members to carry out their specific roles and responsibilities.
-

Year I Performance

SGC Performance Relative to Policy Provisions

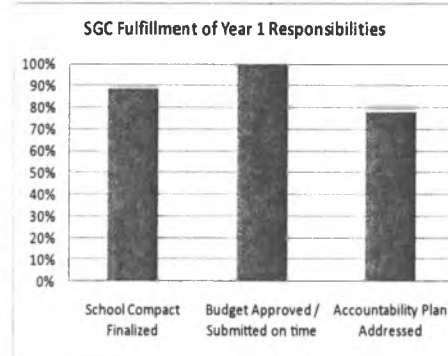
A key aspect of the Board's SGC Policy directs SGCs to focus "on the analysis of student achievement, development of improvement plans, allocation of resources and programmatic and operational changes [...]." Consequently, the District charged SGCs with three major Year I responsibilities which included finalizing a school compact, preparing and submitting a school budget, and addressing at some level the school's Accountability Plan. Aggregate SGC performance in these areas is presented in the graph on the right.

Insert A presents the performance of each SGC against the three main deliverables as well as certain other policy provisions, based on self-reported data by principals. Areas of favorable performance include:

- 24 of 27 SGCs finalized a School Compact;
- 27 of 27 SGCs submitted an approved budget on time;
- 21 of 27 addressed the school accountability plan;
- Five SGCs reported perfect attendance at all meetings, with the average attendance for all SGCs being 79%.

Areas subject to further improvement include:

- Only 52% of required SGCs achieved the 50% parent membership level; and
- Only 72% of required SGCs held the minimum of 6 regular meetings.



SGC Performance and Site Based Management

Both the SGC Policy and the initial training of SGC members reflect an effort by the District to make SGCs in Hartford models of effective "Site Based Management". Site based management is defined as the delegation of decision-making authority to individual schools in a way that enables shared decision-making among the principal, teachers, parents, community members and students¹. Achieve Hartford! conducted a survey to assess the degree that effective site based management was practiced throughout SGCs in Year I. Specific Results of the survey are displayed in **Insert B**. Research criteria that guided the development of our questions along with survey takeaways are noted below:

Key Element	Criteria for Success	Key Takeaways
Council Preparedness	Councils understand their role in policy making and have received sufficient training to fulfill that role. ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members and principals generally agreed that knowledge of needed subject matter was sufficient to fully contribute. • However, council members also expressed the need for more in depth training and time spent understanding the budget.
Real Authority	People at the school site must have "real" authority over resources and policies that affect teaching and learning. ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members and principals reported good sharing of authority between parent and principal co-chairs. • Council members and principals felt less empowered to make real change during the budget process because of a lack of budget flexibility. • Collaboration between principals and PTOs in the selection of parent members varied greatly from one SGC to another.
Team Dynamic	Effective councils have an internal dynamic that is cooperative, collaborative, and values the voice of each member. ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members felt very comfortable sharing their opinions during meetings. • Council members and principals agreed strongly that SGCs functioned well as a team.
Focus on Student Achievement	In order to improve school performance, a council's attention should be focused towards that end. ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council members and principals reported considering the impact on student achievement in their decisions.

Recommendations and a Look Forward

School Governance Councils operated at 28 schools this past year, and while areas for improvement exist, the vast majority of SGCs represent strong decision-making bodies, each made up of parents, school staff, community members and the principal working together to improve their school. Given the length of time needed for impactful reform initiatives, the launch this past year can be considered a success. Looking forward is now a priority.

The District's focus for next year shifts from solely launching new SGCs to simultaneously providing continued training to those SGCs already up and running. Also of note, many existing SGCs are expected to continue bringing on new members that will necessitate initial training. The District must plan for the expansion of SGCs to the 12 eligible schools not launched this year, as well as others that may become eligible based upon their performance on 2010 state tests. Additionally, because sustaining reform in Hartford is dependent upon maintaining a standard of excellence across all schools, the District must work to ensure that each SGC is functioning at a high level.

As we have noted in this report, there have been a number of positive results to the Year 1 launch. Those results must continue and improve over time. In addition, the following table represents recommendations for improving SGC implementation in Year 2 and beyond, categorized into five important areas. The recommendations stem from the evaluation work completed this year by Achieve Hartford! and from suggestions provided by SGC council members and principals via open-ended survey questions.

Data Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District has manual and sporadic processes for tracking data relative to key SGC policy provisions. A consistent process for recording attendance, membership makeup and other policy compliance data should be established for each SGC and the aggregation of such data assigned to a district staff person for tracking and analysis. Standard and simple compliance metrics (similar to those reported in Insert A) should be established and regularly reported to allow for consistent SGC evaluation and performance measurement.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased communication should flow from the SGC to the school community to allow for improved access to SGC activities and discussions. At the school level, publicizing council member make-up, meeting times and locations, and agenda items would be helpful for stakeholders within the school community to engage with SGCs and monitor progress.
Engaging Parents more Consistently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both quantitative and survey data suggests that many SGCs need to better engage parents. Efforts should be directed towards policy provisions that require SGCs to work with PTOs to select parent members.
Sharing Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both quantitative and survey data suggest varying levels of performance among SGCs. While such variance is not unexpected in Year 1, a means for sharing best practices among SGCs should be developed and promoted. Though the utilization of coaches varied widely among SGCs, having a coach was generally well received. Moving forward, best practices for how to utilize a coach should be documented and shared to ensure effective site based management is being practiced within all SGCs.
Additional Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District should make available more focused budget training to enable maximum participation among SGC members in budget related discussions. In addition to upfront training, ongoing, task-specific training should be made available throughout the year.

Endnotes:

1. Reynolds, Larry J. 1997. *Successful Site-Based Management*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
2. David, Jane L. 1994. "School-Based Decision Making: Kentucky's Test of Decentralization." *The Phi Delta Kappan* 75 (9): 706-12. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20405209>.
3. Wohlstetter, Priscilla. 1995. "Getting School-Based Management Right: What Works and what Doesn't." *The Phi Delta Kappan* 77 (1): 22-6. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20405479>.
4. Parker, Kirsten, and Kenneth Leithwood. 2000. "School Councils' Influence on School and Classroom Practice." *Peabody Journal of Education* 75 (4, Educational Accountability Effects: An International Perspective): 37-65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1493052>.
5. Wohlstetter, Priscilla, Roxane Smyer, and Susan Albers Mohrman. 1994. "New Boundaries for School-Based Management: The High Involvement Model." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 16 (3): 268-86. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/116440>.

Insert A

School	# of Members as of June 2010	Reported Attrition	# of Parents	% Parents	# of Meetings	% Attendance	School Compact Finalized	Budget Approved / Submitted on time	Accountability Plan Addressed
1 Adult Education	10	4	n/a	n/a	7	90%	y	y	y
2 Breakthrough Magnet School	8	2	4	50%	5	n/a ¹	n	y	n
3 Breakthrough II Elementary School	8	0	3	38%	6	100%	y	y	y
4 Bulkeley High School	9	1	3	33%	7	80%	y	y	y
5 Classical Magnet School	6	0	2	33%	10	100%	y	y	y
6 Culinary Arts Academy (at Weaver)	5	0	3	60%	6	100%	y	y	y
7 Global Communications Academy	8	0	4	50%	10	90%	y	y	y
8 Hartford Magnet Middle School	11	2	4	36%	8	100%	y	y	y
9 HPHS Engineering & Green Tech. Academy	6	2	3	50%	3	80%	y	y	y
10 HPHS Law & Government Academy	9	0	5	56%	6	75%	y	y	n
11 HPHS Nursing Academy	9	0	3	33%	7	10%	y	y	y
12 High School Inc.	11	0	6	55%	3	75%	y	y	n
13 Kennelly School	12	2	5	42%	10	80%	y	y	y
14 Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts	12	0	7	58%	7	75%	y	y	y
15 Latino Studies Academy at Burns	10	6	2	20%	12	90%	n	y	n
16 Montessori Magnet School	6	0	3	50%	5	95%	n	y	y
17 Naylor School	8	1	4	50%	7	90%	y	y	n
18 Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School	12	0	6	50%	6	55%	y	y	y
19 Parkville Community School	9	3	2	22%	8	85%	y	y	y
20 Pathways to Technology Magnet School	8	0	4	50%	5	87%	y	y	y
21 Rawson School	8	4	3	38%	9	30%	y	y ²	y
22 America's Choice at SAND	6	0	3	50%	4	100%	y	y	y
23 Simpson-Wavery School	8	3	3	38%	7	72%	y	y	y
24 Sports & Medical Sciences Academy ³	20	5	9	45%	21	80%	y	y	n
25 University HS of Science and Engineering	8	0	4	50%	6	75%	y	y	y
26 West-Middle Elementary School	13	1	5	38%	5	78%	y	y	y
27 Wish School	7	2	3	43%	8	66%	y	y	y
AVERAGE / TOTAL	9	1.3	4	44%	7	79%	24	27	21
28 CommPACT at MD Fox ⁴	9	n/a	1	11%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Notes:

1. Percent attendance for the SGC at Breakthrough Magnet School was not available.

2. The SGC at Rawson originally approved and submitted a budget on time, though that budget was put back under review.

3. The SGC at the Sports and Medical Sciences Academy maintains membership and meeting structures distinct from what is outlined in the SGC Policy, and therefore is not included in *average* calculations other than "% Attendance."

4. Because of its unique school model, the governance council at MD Fox CommPACT maintains distinct responsibilities and structure relevant to the CommPACT model.

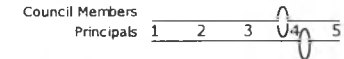
Insert B

Survey Results regarding Site Based Management

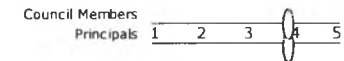
Scale of "1" (strongly disagree) to "5" (strongly agree)

Council Preparedness

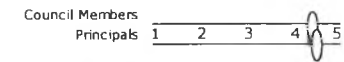
During preparation of my school's budget, my knowledge of the subject matter was sufficient enough for me to recommend changes.



During preparation of my school's accountability plan, my knowledge of the subject matter was sufficient enough for me to recommend changes.

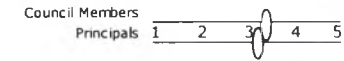


During preparation of my school's school compact, my knowledge of the subject matter was sufficient enough for me to recommend changes.

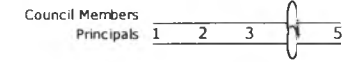


Real Authority

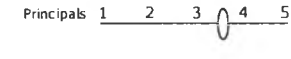
My school's budget had enough flexibility for our SGC to make significant decisions about how to allocate our school's resources.



Our parent co-chair shares authority with the principal and sets meeting agendas.

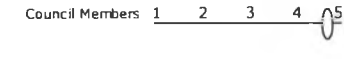


Council members were selected in consultation with my school's PTO or other parent organization.

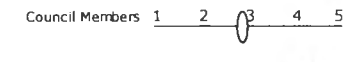


Team Dynamic

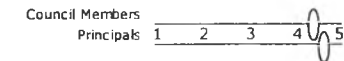
I am comfortable with sharing my opinions at council meetings.



The most dominant voice during SGC meetings is the principal.

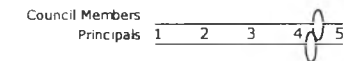


As a whole, I believe our SGC functions well as a team.

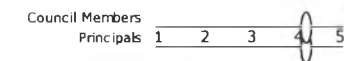


Focus on Student Achievement

My SGC considers how every decision made by the council will impact student achievement.



I am confident that because of actions taken by our SGC, student achievement at our school will improve.



Scale of "1" (strongly disagree) to "5" (strongly agree)



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Educational Leadership

Local School Councils



Forsyth County Schools has a strong tradition of local school governance involving staff, parent and community partners. Originally called Local School Advisory Councils (LSACs), FCS converted to Local School Councils (LSCs) in 2000 under Georgia's the A+ Education Reform Act.

FCS has active LSCs in all schools, with the exception of those school that have been open for less than a year. Councils are comprised of a minimum of seven council members, including the principal, at least two certified teachers elected by teachers, parents (who make up the majority of the council, with at least 2 being businesspersons) and other members as specified in the bylaws.

LSCs are advisory bodies that provide recommendations to the school principal and FC Board of Education. Councils meet at least four times a year annually. All meetings and corresponding minutes are open to the public.

LSC meeting agendas and minutes are located in **eBoard** by selecting "meetings" from the channel bar that runs horizontally across the top of the page. From the drop down menu, select the name of the LSC you are seeking.

LSC meeting minutes are also included in monthly BOE meeting agendas and annual LSC recommendations are presented to the BOE each spring. Both the minutes and recommendations can be viewed at **eBoard**. To view the minutes, select "meetings" from the channel bar and then select a BOE regular meeting date. When the agenda appears, scroll to the bottom of it and select "Local School Council Minutes".

Resources:

[2011-2012 Local School Council Meeting Dates](#)

[2011-2012 LSC Members](#)

[2011 School Council Training Materials \(Includes complete Guidebook\)](#)

[2011 School Council Training Materials \(to accompany the Georgia School Council Guidebook above\)](#)

[Georgia School Council Institute Georgia Statutes Regarding LSCs Summary of 2004 Changes to School Council Law](#)

[FCS Schools \(Includes links to schools's website, mailing address, phone and fax, as well as list of administrators and email.\)](#)

[FCS Board of Education](#)

[Sept 12 Information](#)



School Governance Councils

Guidance on Election Procedures

School Governance Councils (councils) provide a remarkable opportunity for Connecticut schools to engage with families and community members in a partnership to make our schools centers of excellence that prepare all students for success. Councils are intended to represent the diverse interests of the families, teachers, students and community members that make up the school population. *To that end, every effort should be made to engage broad participation in a fair and open council election process.*

The law that created School Governance Councils (Public Act 10-111, Section 21(g)) states that the parents, teachers, students and community members who serve on local councils must be elected in the numbers indicated in the table below. The law, however, does not specify a process for conducting the elections. A School Governance Council should develop bylaws to provide them with guidance for conducting elections and other council business. The development of operating bylaws should begin as soon as possible after a council meets for the first time.

The first councils established will not have the benefit of bylaws to guide their elections because they must be elected before bylaws are put in place. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to assist schools in conducting the election process for those initial council members. The following pages provide advice on the election process, term length for council members and a sample process and checklist for elections.

School Governance Council Membership and Election Process

The councils consist of 14 voting members plus up to three nonvoting members depending on the type of school involved. The following tables describe the category of membership, the number of members and how they are elected.

<i>Member</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Election Process</i>
Parents or guardians of students at the school	7	Elected by the parents or guardians of students attending the school, each household with a student attending the school will have one vote.
Teachers at the school	5	Elected by the teachers of the school.
Community leaders within the school district	2	Elected by the parent or guardian members and teacher members of the council.
School principal or designee (nonvoting)	1	Principal may participate directly or name a designee.

Additional members and election process in high schools:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Election Process</i>
Students, high school council members only (nonvoting)	2	Elected by the school's student body.

Creating a Valid Election Process

The election process should signal to the entire school community that the School Governance Council will be a collaborative body that represents the diversity of the students they serve. The following steps are intended as suggestions to help ensure an inclusive and valid election process.

Election Committee



- It is recommended that an election committee be formed that is representative of the diversity of the school and is unaffiliated with any potential candidates. The principal may serve as the coordinator of this committee.
- The election committee should assist in conducting the election activities such as scheduling dates, posting announcements, collecting nominations, overseeing the voting itself and formally announcing the results.
- Representatives of existing groups should be enlisted to help with the election process (for example, the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and the teachers' unions).

Call for Nominations for Parents and Teachers



- A call for nominations should be sent to all parents or guardians in the school to nominate themselves or other parents or guardians for the seven available positions on the council. Every effort should be made to provide nomination and election materials to parents in a language they understand.
- A call for nominations should also be sent to all teachers to nominate themselves or others for the five positions on the council.
- The election committee should verify that those nominated are eligible and willing to serve.

Voting



- The ballot for the parent or guardian election should be distributed to each household.
- The ballot for the teacher election should be distributed to all teachers.
- Voting procedures that will maximize participation should be determined by the election committee. For example, parents and teachers should be given sufficient time and multiple opportunities to cast their ballot – whether through dropping the ballot off at the school office or another community location outside of school hours to accommodate work schedules or through the U.S. mail.

Results



- Immediately following the election, ballots should be counted with supervision by either the election committee or, if no committee was formed, at least a school administrator, one parent and one teacher who are unaffiliated with any candidates.
- The principal should announce the results in a newsletter or other publication and post the new membership of the council on the school's Web site and key locations in the school.

Term Length for School Governance Council Members

P.A. 10-111 requires that voting members serve two-year terms and that no member can serve more than two terms on a council. The nonvoting student members serve a one-year term and no student member can serve more than two terms.

All council members' terms will expire in two years, potentially causing significant disruption to a council's ability to function effectively. To avoid having the terms of all council members expire at the same time, it is recommended that the first elections create staggered terms of office. One strategy for doing this is to use a lottery system, such as drawing straws, to establish two-year terms for half of the council and one-year terms for the other half. For example, the four parents, three teachers and one community member who drew a long straw would serve two-year terms, and the remaining three parents, two teachers and community member who drew short straws would serve a one-year term. Under this example, an election process would then continue each year.

Voting and Ballots: Frequently Asked Questions

PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

What names will appear on a school's ballot?

All of the names of parents who were nominated and who have a child enrolled in the school the council serves are included on the ballot. A parent is a person who is the natural, adoptive or stepparent of a child enrolled in the school and includes those people acting as legal guardian or registered custodian of the child, such as grandparents.

How many candidates can a household vote for on the ballot?

A household can cast a vote for each open parent seat on the council. For the first election, all seven seats are open. For example, if ten names appear on the ballot, each household may vote for up to seven parents on the ballot.

How are ballots distributed?

P.A. 10-111 requires that each household with a student attending the school shall have one vote to elect the parent or guardian members of the council. The law is silent as to how ballots should be distributed. One potential distribution method is to mail a ballot to each household via U.S. mail. If more than one family resides at the same location, each family should be sent their own ballot. Another alternative to mailing out ballots is to ask the parents or guardians to come to the school and vote over a period of a few days or evenings. Schools should consider using public service announcements through radio, newspapers and other means to inform families that ballots have been distributed.

Who receives a ballot?

Each household with a student or students enrolled in the school for the current school year should receive one ballot.

What happens if the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions?

The council's membership must comply with the provisions in P.A. 10-111. Therefore, if there are not enough nominees received during for the first election, the full membership of the council will be completed by repeating the process of seeking nominations and holding a second election.

Is there a minimum number of voters required to consider the election fair?

While not required, schools should consider setting a threshold of participation they hope to achieve in order to encourage maximum outreach and participation in the process.

TEACHERS

How are the teacher representatives determined?

P.A. 10-111 requires that the teacher members of the council be elected by the teachers of the school. A nomination process should be conducted, followed by a vote. It is recommended that the teachers eligible to serve on the council be those certified staff who perform the majority of their duties in a teaching capacity at that school. Paraprofessionals are not eligible to serve as teacher members of the council.

STUDENTS

How are student representatives determined?

P.A. 10-111 requires that the nonvoting student members on the high school councils shall be elected by the student body of the school. It is recommended that these representatives be elected by the student body through existing student government procedures. If no student government exists, students may be permitted to campaign for the position of council representative at a general assembly of the student body and the student body may make their selection by voting.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

How are community members elected to the council?

P.A. 10-111 requires that the community leader members be elected by the parent or guardian members and teacher members of the School Governance Council. The parent and teacher representatives should determine a process for soliciting interest from community members. P.A. 10-111 requires only that the community members of the council be a leader within the school district and that they be elected by the parent and teacher members of the council. This definition was intentionally left open by the drafters of the legislation and it is intended to incorporate community leaders of influence in each community, including, but not limited to, religious leaders, nonprofit leaders and business leaders.

Sample Process and Checklist for Parent Elections

The table below presents a sample process for conducting School Governance Council elections. Schools should determine the timeline they will use to solicit nominations and conduct the election.

PROCESS	INSERT DATE	
1. Notice of election and call for nominations distributed to all parents.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Closing date for nominations. Once the nomination forms come back, notify the persons(s) and determine if they are eligible and if they accept or decline.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Date by which the list of candidates will be displayed. Prepare your ballot with all names of nominees.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Date by which voting ballots will be prepared and distributed. Send out ballots to every household with deadline for return.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Provide an opportunity for parents to meet the candidates.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Close of ballot. Provide various times and methods for parents to cast their ballots.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Vote count. Once ballots are returned, determine election results.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Announcement of new council members. Send election results out to school community and post on Web site.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. First council meeting to elect community members (principal will preside). Introduce new members at the council meeting and document in minutes.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Second council meeting to elect office holders and begin to adopt bylaws (principal will preside).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Resources for Conducting School Governance Council Elections

The following resources from other states may be helpful in structuring your school's election process:

- The Georgia School Council Institute has produced a guide book related to multiple functions of councils. Chapter 5 is particularly relevant to the election process. It is available by [clicking here](#) or by going to <http://tinyurl.com/348exsc>.
- The Local School Council Election Guide developed by Chicago Public Schools is available by [clicking here](#) or going to <http://tinyurl.com/39yphrj>.

Excellent models are also available internationally:

- The Principals Guide to School Council Elections, developed by the Department of Education in Victoria, Australia is available by [clicking here](#) or going to <http://tinyurl.com/238pbzz>.
- Ontario's guidance for school council members provides detailed materials for conducting elections and is available by [clicking here](#) or going to <http://tinyurl.com/26ihg4p>.

Connecticut Public Act 10-111 and guidance documents created by the Connecticut State Department of Education can be found on the Department's web site at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/SCG>.

For additional information: Judy Carson, Ph.D., Connecticut State Department of Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457. Phone: 860-807-2122. E-mail: judy.carson@ct.gov.

School Governance Council Basics

September 23, 2009

www.hartfordschools.org/councils

What are School Governance Councils?

The Hartford Board of Education believes that the success of the school and the students it serves is the shared responsibility of school staff, parents or legal guardians and community members. As such, the creation of School Governance Councils was approved in the Spring of 2009.

School Governance Councils are the primary, local school decision-making body of a school devoted to achieve its mission and vision. Toward this end, the SGC will focus on the analysis of student achievement, development of improvement plans, allocation of resources and programmatic and operational changes which enhance the quality of the school and the achievement of its students.

Councils will be made up of up to 12 members, with parents representing 50% of the membership and the other half being made up of a combination of the following:

1. Students (9-12)
2. Teachers
3. Support Staff
4. Religious & Faith-Based Institutions
5. Community Organizations
6. Higher Education Partners
7. Business Partners
8. Lead Agency
9. Design Partner Organization

For more detail on their duties, you can get a copy of the approved Hartford Board of Education Policy on School Governance Councils at www.hartfordschools.org/councils

If you have any questions you can email us at: councils@hartfordschools.org or call 860-695-8653.

SGC Schools and Training Dates

The following is a list of schools that will have School Governance Councils this year, and the dates for training that the school's principal has selected. Use links below to contact your principal if you'd like to participate in your school's council. Note that **child care and food will be provided** for the training sessions:

Robert Rader and Patrice McCarthy

A new, largely parent-led initiative to improve the education of public school children has started in several states, and ultimately could affect how schools and districts are structured.

The initiative, which has resulted in the creation of school governance councils, could help districts as they focus on improving student achievement. The potential downside is they could become another state mandate that will blur and possibly erode the current structure of local school governance.

As part of legislation signed into law last spring, 14 Connecticut schools—including a charter—in five underperforming districts were required to establish governance councils. By Nov. 15, another 184 low-performing schools in the state will have to set up these councils, and former Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan has predicted they will eventually be in place in every school in Connecticut.

School governance councils have taken hold in California, where their authority is much greater than in Connecticut, as well as in Kentucky. The Chicago Public Schools, the nation's third-largest district, also uses the model.

Much like other reform movements, judging their value will take time and careful evaluation.

How councils are set up

Connecticut's school governance councils are made up of seven parents, five teachers, two community leaders, and the principal—who does not vote. The exact composition of each council depends on whether it is an elementary or high school—at the higher grades, two nonvoting student members must be included.

The councils are advisory and have no actual "governance" authority. Much confusion could have been avoided if they were, in fact, called school advisory councils. However, the active parents, teachers, and community members on the council can have quite an impact on local decision-making.

Our organization, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), believes the councils can help in increasing student performance, as long as they are organized properly, work in a collegial manner, and make appropriate decisions. In fact, this is an opportunity to increase parent involvement, which has been discussed by boards for years.

The councils are charged with:

- Analyzing achievement data and needs, relative to the school's improvement plan.
- Reviewing the fiscal objectives of the school's draft

budget and advising the principal before it is submitted to the superintendent.

- Participating in the hiring of the principal or other administrators by interviewing candidates and providing feedback to the superintendent.

- Helping the principal make changes to increase student achievement, including program changes and adjusting the school hours and days of operation.

- Working with administrators to develop and approve a school compact for parents, legal guardians, and students that includes an outline of criteria and responsibilities for enrollment and participation.

- Developing and approving a written parent involvement policy.

In some situations, the governance council can recommend that its school be reconstituted. It also can recommend a model for turning around the school.

Working with the councils

Connecticut's law requires that local school boards must provide training for these councils. Our state department of education turned to CABE to provide the training.

CABE is providing advice to the councils on the many issues they will face, including members' roles and responsibilities, how to analyze and review student achievement and financial data, and ways to engage parents and community members. We also have provided draft bylaws so council members—who share a lot in common with new school board members in learning their roles and responsibilities—understand the process and the necessity of working together.

The training started in June. Since the first 14 schools are underperforming, naturally there is some skepticism about the jobs that administrators, teachers, and others are doing. However, we believe bringing everyone together may help us see all the obstacles faced by the schools, the staff, and parents.

The jury is still out on whether governance councils will have a long-term effect on achievement, but having a tough conversation in a rational, thoughtful way may help strengthen our weakest schools as we work to increase parent involvement and student achievement. ■

Robert Rader (rrader@cabe.org) is executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. Patrice McCarthy (pmccarthy@cabe.org) is deputy director and general counsel for CABE and the chairwoman of NSBA's Council of School Attorneys.

School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated June 1, 2011

Contents:

- I. Election of Councils
- II. Operation of Councils
- III. School Status
- IV. Other

Note: Recently added questions are marked as .

I. ELECTION OF COUNCILS

1. Who is responsible for conducting the election?

- A. Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e, the local and regional board of education is the entity required to establish the School Governance Council (council). The Department expects that the local and regional board of education will delegate this task at the school level to the principal and the principal's responsibilities will include coordinating the election with a variety of interested stakeholders.

2. Must an election be held if there are fewer nominees than available parent seats on the School Governance Council?

- A. Yes.

3. What process should be used to fill vacant parent positions if there are an insufficient number of candidates on the ballot?

- A. The full membership of the council will be completed by a continuing process of soliciting nominations and an eventual second election.

4. What process should be used to fill parent, teacher, student and community member positions that become vacant following the election?

- A. The members of the council should determine this process once the council is established.

5. How are community members nominated?

- A. C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e requires that each council have two members that shall be community leaders within the school district. The community leader members are elected by the parent and teacher members of the council and therefore these members may determine the nomination process once the council is established.

6. What constitutes a "community member?"

- A. C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e requires only that the community members of the council be a leader within the school district and that they be elected by the parent and teacher members of the council. This definition was intentionally left open by the drafters of the legislation and it is intended to incorporate community leaders of influence in each community, including, but not limited to, religious leaders, nonprofit leaders and business leaders.

School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated June 1, 2011

- 7. Can the school use its Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to nominate parents to serve on the council?**
- A. C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e requires that the parent or guardian members of the council shall be elected by the parents or guardians of students attending the school. Therefore, the nomination process has to be fair and open to the entire parent community (not just members of the PTO). However, the PTO could assist in organizing and staffing the nomination/election process with involvement from administration and staff.
- 8. Can the school use its data team as the representation for the teacher members of the council?**
- A. The teacher members have to be elected to the council by the teachers of the school. If members of the data team are nominated and elected by their peers, then yes.
- 9. Before C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e was passed, a school has been operating with another type of governance council, for example it may be called a school leadership team. Does this existing council or team meet the requirements of C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e?**
- A. The School Governance Councils required under C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e must be established through school-wide elections and they have very specific membership requirements. If the membership of the previous school leadership team was not elected pursuant to the requirements of the new law and if the membership composition does not conform to the law, the school must establish a new council. There is no provision in the law to grandfather members of existing councils into the state's model.
- 10. Can the school use its teachers union to nominate teachers to serve on the council?** *(added December 7, 2010)*
- A. C.G.S. SEC. 10-223e requires that the teacher members of the council shall be elected by the teachers who work in the school. Therefore, the nomination and election process could be assisted by teacher's union of the school.
- 11. A school has been reconstituted as a COMMPACT school under state law. Under the provisions of the COMMPACT state statute, there is a school council. The council does not meet the statutory requirements of the School Governance Council described in C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e but serves a similar function. Should there be two distinct councils in the school?** *(added December 7, 2010)*
- A. Under the COMMPACT School model, the council may not be elected and the membership does not mirror the requirements written in C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e. In fact, the SGC's are tasked with specific responsibilities in the law with limited flexibility for the SGC to conduct other tasks. Given these restrictions and a lack of flexibility in the law, it makes sense for there to be two different bodies to ensure that the council complies with the law and to allow the current council to continue the work that it has been doing.
- 12. If a school has a council in place and they used election procedures that conform to the state statute, can those persons continue to serve out their term as that council becomes the school governance council for the purposes of C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e?** *(added December 7, 2010)*
- A. The school governance council required under C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e should start a-new and those members should be encouraged to run for election.

School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated June 1, 2011

- 13. Can a parent whose child has been placed by the school district in an out-of-district education setting be nominated and elected to serve on a council? (added June 1, 2011)**
- A. The law says the parent member has to be a parent or guardian of a student attending the school.
- 14. Can a teacher of a school who is also the parent of a child attending that school be nominated and elected as a parent member of a council? (added June 1, 2011)**
- A. The law does not specify whether a parent who works at the school can also serve on the school governance council. However, the intent of the law is to broaden the participation in the school. While not specifically prohibited, having a teacher serve in the role of parent on the council is not the intent of the law. Each school governance council should create bylaws to address such situations.
- 15. Can a community member elected to a council be a parent or teacher in that school? (added June 1, 2011)**
- B. Since the law does not define community member it does not exclude that person from being a parent or teacher in the school. However, the intent of the law is to broaden the participation in the school to include people that are in addition to parents and teachers. So while not specifically prohibited, having a teacher or parent serve in the role of community member is not the intent of the law. Each school governance council should create bylaws to address such situations.



II. OPERATION OF COUNCILS

- 16. Are School Governance Councils required to develop bylaws?**
- A. C.G.S. SEC. 10-223e does not require that a council develop bylaws. However, the State Department of Education (SDE) recommends that each council do so and will be working with the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) and other stakeholders to develop model bylaws.
- 17. Should councils elect an executive committee (chair, vice-chair, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary)?**
- A. C.G.S. SEC. 10-223e does not require that a council elect an executive committee. However, SDE recommends that each council do so.
- 18. Must councils use Robert's Rules of Order?**
- A. C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e does not make a recommendation as to the procedural rules that a council must follow. However, SDE recommends that each council follow Robert's Rules of Order or a similar process for ensuring that meetings are run in a fair and equitable manner. For more information see www.robertsrules.com.
- 19. Are meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act? If so, is there a Web site or document that provides specific guidance?**
- A. Yes, meetings of each council are subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et seq. The Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission has a Web site with various relevant resources located at www.state.ct.us/foi/.

School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated June 1, 2011

- 20. Are records subject to the Open Records Act? If so, is there a Web site or document that provides specific guidance?**
- A. Yes, documents created or maintained by each council are subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et seq. The Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission has a Web site with various relevant resources located at www.state.ct.us/foi/.
- 21. Do community members of the School Governance Council vote?**
- A. Yes
- 22. We have let our student members (on our current school councils) vote. Can we still do this?**
- A. No, C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e requires that the student members of the council be nonvoting members. If a separate council is established to perform tasks not under the purview of the council pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e, the student members may vote.
- 23. Our current governing board also hears many discipline appeals. Would the new School Governance Council still be able to do this?**
- A. No. The councils established pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e are tasked with specific responsibilities in the public act. While there is some flexibility in the act for the council to "provide advice on any other major policy matters affecting the school to the principal of the school, except on matters relating to the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement," this language would not encompass ruling on disciplinary appeals.
- 24. If a school is required to institute a School Governance Council and that school does not receive Title 1 funds, does it have to develop the parent involvement policy and school-parent compact which are required under the Federal Title 1 Program?**
- A. Yes. The council under C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e is required to develop both regardless of the school's Title 1 eligibility.
- 25. Do School Governance Councils need to carry indemnity insurance similar to what local boards of education carry? (added June 1, 2011)**
- A. There is no express requirement in C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e for councils to carry indemnity insurance. Each local board of education should make its own determination.
- 26. The law says that School Governance Councils "shall" advise in particular areas including "reviewing the fiscal objectives of the school's draft budget and advise the principal before the budget is submitted to the superintendent." What about the case where a school has no input into its budget; all budget decisions are handled at the central office. Is the council out of compliance because they will never advise in this area? (added June 1, 2011)**
- A. In a situation where a draft budget is not developed at the school level, the council should work with the board to determine other avenues to advise the district in the development of the budget impacting the school. Such efforts could include but not be limited to review and analysis of the prior year's budget and its fiscal objectives. The council, board and district should participate in developing a process for allowing school governance councils to provide their recommendation regarding the budget.



School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated June 1, 2011

27. Some schools that are required to have councils by November 1, 2011 may choose to have elections and constitute their councils earlier, for example before school ends in June. For administrative purposes, can SDE identify their start date as the required date of November 1? This will have implications for tracking schools and the three year clock on recommending reconstitution. (added June 1, 2011)



A. The councils that commence earlier will have an official start date of November 1, 2011.

28. The law says that the council shall participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting on such interviews to the superintendent and the local board of education. Does this mean that the council serves on the interview committee? (added June 1, 2011)



A. The School Governance Council must be involved in conducting interviews; however, the law does not require that the council serve on or as the board of education's interview committee. The council should work with the board of education to determine an appropriate role consistent with the local board of education's hiring practices ensuring that the council's recommendation is shared with the superintendent and local board of education as a formal part of the process.

III. SCHOOL STATUS

29. Are the School Governance Councils permanent once a school is identified? If not, how does a school get released from this requirement?

A. As the law is written, there is no provision for ceasing the operation of a council. However, only those local and regional school boards with a low achieving school due to failing to make adequate yearly progress in mathematics and reading at the whole school level are required to establish such councils.

30. If a school has been reconstituted previously, can the School Governance Council recommend that it be reconstituted again? What constitutes reconstitution? Does this provision apply only to the schools receiving the School Improvement Grant? Or does it also apply to schools that have been through substantial changes as a result of No Child Left Behind sanctions (restructured, redesigned, etc)?

A. Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e, the council may not vote to reconstitute if: (1) the school was already reconstituted as a result of receiving a federal school improvement grant that was contingent on reconstitution; or (2) a reconstitution of the school was initiated by another source. Therefore, a council may not vote to reconstitute a school that has already been reconstituted by an outside source, such as the State Board of Education or the local or regional board of education. For this purpose, reconstitution is defined as one of the six models included in the act: (1) turnaround; (2) restart; (3) transformation; (4) CommPACT school; (5) innovation school; and (6) any other model developed under federal law.

31. A school is on the list that requires the formation of a School Governance Council. The school's overall performance on either the 2010 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) or Connecticut Achievement Proficiency Test (CAPT) has improved leading it to Safe Harbor status. Does the new status mean that the school does not have to form a School Governance Council?

A. C.G.S. Sec. 10-223e requires that all schools that have not made adequate yearly progress in mathematics and reading at the whole school level prior to July 1, 2010,

School Governance Councils
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated June 1, 2011

must form a council. Safe Harbor reached based on the school's performance on the 2010 CMT(s) or CAPT would not allow a school to be exempt from this requirement.

32. If a school voluntarily establishes a School Governance Council, does that council have the same powers that are given to the councils in the schools that are mandated (in other words, if a school that is not on the list establishes a council, can that council recommend reconstitution after it has been in place for three years)? *(added June 1, 2011)*



- A. School Governance Councils established voluntarily are not bound by the state statute. A voluntary school governance council is governed by the local board of education's policy.

IV. OTHER

33. What are the consequences/implications for schools that are required to implement school governance councils but do not do so?



- A. Noncompliance with the school governance council requirements falls within the same penalty as noncompliance with any other state education law. Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-4b provides general enforcement provisions for noncompliance with state education laws. Remedies would include enforcement orders by the Connecticut State Board of Education.

School governance councils meet

Maggie Gordon, Staff Writer

Published 11:05 p.m., Thursday, December 1, 2011

STAMFORD -- More than 150 parents, teachers, administrators and other members of the community from 11 city schools came to the University of Connecticut Stamford on Monday night to participate in Stamford's first meeting of School Governance Councils, with representatives from each school working together to understand their roles.

The councils were created earlier this academic year as a result of 2009 test scores that identified the 11 schools as "low achieving."

As a result of new state regulations, these schools were required to form the councils, which are advisory boards dedicated to improving student achievement and helping school principals lead, according to Mike Meyer, the district's director of student support services.

Councils have been formed at K.T. Murphy, Roxbury, Springdale, Julia A. Stark, Davenport Ridge, Hart, Dolan, Turn of River, Rippowam, Stamford High and Westhill High schools.

er told council members.

Patti Avalone, a representative from the state, led the meeting.

"The research shows that if people are involved in school, it's like a bigger family. It really is. It's better for morale," Avalone said. Parent and community involvement, like the involvement that will be produced through the councils, has been proven to lead to a higher graduation rate and fewer suspensions and expulsions, she said.

"And schools with high engagement have a better reputation in the community," she said, "because those parents will go out to the soccer field, the nail parlor or the barbershop and talk about the great things that go on in that school."

While Avalone explained that council members will be responsible for examining school achievement and the goals used to improve it -- as well as evaluating budget objectives and engaging parents -- she explained that the groups' purpose is not to "manage" the administration.

"We can't step in and say, 'Step aside, principal, there's a new sheriff in town.' "

During the meeting, representatives from the schools came up with norms for their councils. A member of Hart's council said a main goal should be "to keep the focus on the students," while a Turn of River member said members should remember "to have fun."

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BYLAWS FOR
SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCILS (SGC)

I. Purpose and Philosophy

The success of a school and the students it serves comes through the shared responsibility of the staff and entire school community.

II. Charge of the School Governance Council

A School Governance Council (SGC), composed of the school's principal, teachers, staff members, parents/guardians, residents, or community members, shall be established at each pre-K-12 school site or designated program in accordance with California law, local statute, and policies and bylaws adopted by the Board of Education.

Each School Governance Council shall develop a *Single Plan for Student Achievement (School Plan)* which shall be focused on improving student learning and shall direct the revenues from the *Berkeley Public Schools Educational Excellence Act of 2006* (BSEP/Measure A), together with State and Federal Program funds allocated to the school such as Title I, EIA, SIP, and other funds, to implement the Board-approved *School Plan*.

The School Governance Council shall have as its major responsibility the monitoring and evaluation of the elements of the *School Plan* to ensure that BSEP funds, Title I, EIA, SIP, and other resources, are improving student success and being spent appropriately. The School Governance Council shall insure that the BSEP/Measure A funds in the *School Plan* are clearly delineated from all other funds in the Plan. At least annually, the School Governance Council must formally review the Plan goals, outcomes, expenditures and data, before submission to the Board of Education for annual approval.

The School Governance Council shall also have as its responsibility the recommendation of alternative methods of class size reduction at the school, should this be necessary or desirable in a particular year (pursuant to Section 3.A.ii, *Berkeley Public Schools Excellence Act of 2006*). In such an instance the recommendation shall be forwarded to the Board of Education for action.

Responsibilities of the District

As per Board policy, the Superintendent or designee will provide training and information to the members of School Governance Councils that will facilitate their ability to collaboratively analyze data, design measurable goals, and

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

develop, monitor, and evaluate programs. This training will include a written handbook distributed to all School Governance Council members.

The District will also make available regularly to the Principal and the School Governance Councils revenue and expenditure reports, including an annual revenue and expenditure report, to enable the School Governance Council to prepare its *Single Plan for Student Achievement*. The District will provide student data to the Principal to be shared with the SGC in a format that allows the data to be used as a basis for decision-making in developing the *School Plan*.

The District will also make available to the BSEP Planning & Oversight Committee (P&O) information needed to demonstrate that SGCs are properly constituted and also actively and properly involved in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of the *School Plan*.

Responsibilities of the School Principal

A principal's leadership is critical to the success of the School Governance Council. The greater the principal's ability to engage and involve the SGC and other members of the community in planning, program and budget development, the more effectively student learning will be improved at that site.

The principal is a voting member of the School Governance Council, and vital to the success of the planning and implementation of the *School Plan*. By law, the principal has no administrative authority over the SGC and therefore may not veto decisions made by the SGC nor make changes to the *School Plan* after it has been approved by the School Governance Council. Because it is the principal's responsibility to implement the *School Plan*, the School Governance Council should give weight and consideration to the principal's view.

The principal has the following duties with respect to the development of the School Plan:

- Provide vision, leadership and information to the School Governance Council.
- Provide student data to the SGC in a format that allows the data to be used as a basis for decision-making in developing the *School Plan*.
- Provide clear revenue and expenditure information for the SGC to use in developing a realistic and accountable *School Plan*.
- Administer the school-level activities of the approved *Single Plan for Student Achievement*.
- Ensure that District guidelines with respect to hiring, procurement of materials and conflict of interest are followed.
- Together with members of the previously elected SGC, ensure that elections for the School Governance Council are open, widely publicized, and timely.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

Responsibilities of School Governance Council Members

The School Governance Council must demonstrate that they have disseminated information about their work widely in the school community and that they have solicited input from all groups *and individuals* included in their community. While the School Governance Council may not, in every case, include members representing each group comprising the school community, the elected members must consider the needs of the children of all the various school groups and individuals, and must demonstrate the means by which the needs of all children have been considered in developing and implementing the *Single Plan for Student Achievement*. All members of the school community must have opportunities to bring their interests and concerns before the SGC.

School Governance Council members are strongly encouraged to attend the annual SGC orientation meeting, and other workshops provided by District staff relevant to the SGC's charge and responsibilities.

Responsibilities of School Governance Council Chair/Co-Chairs

Responsibilities of the SGC Chair/Co-Chairs:

- Preside over the meetings of the School Governance Council.
- Make arrangements for an alternate Chair or Co-Chair to preside over any meetings which the Chair is unable to attend.
- Communicate regularly with the school's Planning and Oversight Committee Representative.
- With the SGC membership, publicize the upcoming SGC election each year, via a welcoming letter to parents and staff, announcements and tables at PTA meetings and Back-to-School Night, encouraging parents and staff to participate on the School Governance Council.
- Attend SGC orientations and training meetings as provided by District staff.

And, in collaboration with the Principal:

- Set the SGC meeting agendas.
- Assure the SGC's compliance with the Brown Act (e.g. SGC meeting notices and agendas widely disseminated to the school community at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting, meeting minutes kept, records properly kept, etc.).
- Submit the SGC election report and membership roster, and the contact information for school's Planning and Oversight Committee Representative(s) to the appropriate District office.
- With the support of District staff, guide the SGC to analyze student data, assess school needs, review school budgets, and develop school goals and the *Single Plan for Student Achievement*.
- Submit any requested changes to the *School Plan* in the required manner.
- With the SGC membership, publicize the role and work of the School Governance Council and the contents of the *School Plan* throughout the year.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

III. Election and Term of Office of School Governance Council Members

Election Period and Term of Office

A well-publicized election to the School Governance Council shall be conducted by each school during September each year, with the elections completed by October 1. The term of office is October 1 through September 30 of the following year. Staggered two year terms are allowed if the site so chooses, with the terms ending September 30. To ensure a fully constituted School Governance Council throughout the school year, non-voting Alternates from each represented group (parents, classified and certificated staff, and students for 9-12 schools) shall also be elected at this time. Elected alternate members should attend all meetings, so that they may be prepared to fully participate as voting members should the need arise. In the absence of voting members, Alternates may be counted for the quorum and may vote in their place. A School Governance Council member may be re-elected for subsequent terms, without limit.

Parent Election

Parents/guardians, residents, or community members shall be elected from the school at large, in an election conducted by the Principal or designee and outgoing School Governance Council members.

Recruitment of candidates and election of members should be conducted in such a manner as to promote a SGC which reflects the ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic and programmatic composition of the site. As an example, members might be those from diverse ethnic backgrounds, and those participating in special programs such as bilingual education, special education, gifted and talented, and compensatory education. To this end, efforts should be made to ensure that information is disseminated and the election process is made accessible to all members of the school community. Parents nominated for re-election may not be involved in the supervision and oversight of the election process, i.e., chairing the election meeting, counting the votes, distributing fliers, and so forth.

Staff Elections

Representatives of the teachers, selected by teachers, and other school personnel, selected by other school personnel, shall constitute staff representatives to the School Governance Council. They shall be selected using the school's normal process for selecting committee members, as coordinated by the Principal. This process shall be completed during the month of September.

Student Election

Student members of the BSEP Site Committee shall be elected from Berkeley High School. Student members of the School Governance Council shall be elected from Berkeley Technology Academy (B-Tech) and the Independent Study Program. Non-voting student representatives to the School Governance Council may be elected from the three Middle Schools.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

Composition & Quorum Requirements

The size, composition and quorum requirements of the School Governance Council vary by school type (see page 14).

Conduct of Elections

For suggestions about how to conduct a School Governance Council election see Appendix.

IV. Selection of Planning & Oversight Committee Representative(s)

Upon completion of the School Governance Council election, the SGC shall select the school's Representative(s) to the district-wide BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee (P&O Committee). The number of P&O Committee Representatives varies by school type (see chart). An equal number of Alternates shall be chosen by the SGC to represent the school in the absence of the Representative(s).

Planning and Oversight Committee Representatives need not sit on the school's School Governance Council, but they are required to communicate regularly with the SGC. It is generally expected that Planning and Oversight Committee Representatives will have a definite connection to the school that they represent, such as being a parent or staff member at that school.

The term of office of Planning and Oversight Committee Representatives is one year, from October 1 until September 30 of the following year. There is no limit to the number of terms, consecutive or interrupted, which Planning and Oversight Representatives may serve.

For more details regarding the responsibilities of Planning and Oversight Committee Representatives, see the *BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee Bylaws*.

Submission of SGC Roster

Upon completion of the School Governance Council election and the selection of the school's Planning and Oversight Committee Representative(s), the Principal or Chairperson shall submit an election report and membership roster of the School Governance Council and the P&O Representatives to the appropriate District office.

V. Operations of the School Governance Councils

The School Governance Councils are governed by the State of California Brown Act and these Bylaws. School site rules consistent with these Bylaws should be established by individual sites to cover such operating agreements as:

- the term and election procedures of SGC members and officers
- the SGC's regular meeting times

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

- quorum requirement if the size of the SGC exceeds the minimum
- minimum attendance required of members
- other operating agreements.

Meeting notice, time and place

School Governance Council meetings shall be in a public place, open to the public, and noticed at least 72 hours in advance (preferably longer). Such notice could be given in the Principal's bulletin, on the school e-tree, sent home with students where appropriate, etc. The day and time of SGC meetings shall be agreed upon among the Council members (both parents and staff). Meeting times should be regular, preferably set times, (for example, the first Tuesday of each month at a particular time), and a calendar of meetings should be established at the first meeting and then published, to allow maximum community participation.

Election of officers

The SGC needs to elect officers with stated responsibilities and authority, including:

- Chair or co-Chairs to preside over SGC meetings. If co-Chairs are elected, at least one should be a parent. It is strongly recommended that the principal not be the Chair.
- Secretary, to insure meeting minutes are recorded.

Filling Vacancies

Every effort should be made to have a complete SGC. Alternates fill in automatically when there is a vacancy. In the event that a vacancy occurs and there is no Alternate, consideration should be given to the need for representation from the entire school community.

Accessible meetings

Effort should be made to arrange child care for meetings, if requested by the participants. Likewise, effort should be made to provide an interpreter in the event that non-English speaking individuals wish to participate in School Governance Council meetings.

Conduct of meetings

School Governance Council meetings are public meetings; the regulations and procedures governing meetings of other public bodies (such as the Brown Act and Roberts Rules of Order) generally apply to meetings of the School Governance Council. SGC meetings should be conducted in an open, civil manner.

Rules of Order

School Governance Council meetings must operate according to the following rules:

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

- Meetings must be open to the public.
- The public may address the SGC on any item within the jurisdiction of the SGC.
- Notice of the meeting must be posted at the school site at least 72 hours before the meeting (preferably longer).
- The notice must specify the date, time, and place of the meeting and the agenda.
- The SGC cannot take action on an item not described on the posted agenda.
- Questions and brief statements of no impact on students or employees that can be resolved by providing information need not be described on the posted agenda.
- If these procedures are violated, upon demand of any person, the SGC must reconsider the item at its next meeting, after allowing for public input on the item.

Voting

Although reaching consensus in decision-making is desirable, when a vote is taken it must be open and recorded; secret ballots are not permitted.

Record keeping

The School Governance Council shall maintain records of the following:

- elections
- official correspondence
- agendas of SGC meetings
- evidence of input from school advisory committees and groups
- minutes of meetings, copies of current and prior year *School Plans*.

All records pertinent to a funded project must be retained for three years. SGC records must be kept available for public review upon request.

After each SGC meeting a School Governance Council "Meeting Summary Report" recording attendance, discussions, recommendations, and actions shall be submitted to the District office.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

Annual Timeline of School Governance Council Activities

Tasks	Responsible	Date
Conduct elections for School Governance Council (SGC) at each school site	School Principal and outgoing SGC Chair person or designee	September 30
Collect SGC membership, election data, and select P&O Rep(s); submit to District Office for review	School Principal and SGC Chair or designee	mid-October
Participate in orientation / training	All new and returning SGC members; District staff coordinate	Fall-Winter
Review each SGC to certify the election and compliance with the guidelines; submit membership rosters to the Board of Education	District staff with P&O Committee representatives	October – November
Conduct regular meetings of the SGC to review all pertinent information about the effectiveness of the strategies adopted in the <i>School Plan</i> ; submit minutes of meetings	SGC Chairperson & School Principal; District staff to implement budget changes	ongoing
Collect and review student evaluation data from prior year and draw conclusions; prepare a report for the Board	Each SGC with school's Principal and District staff support	October thru December
Review school's student data analysis with selected School Board members & Educational Services Department staff	SGC Chairperson, members and Principal	January
Solicit input from school community re: the status, performance, and needs of the students and school	SGC Chair and members	January
Discuss funding priorities and possible new programs for the new year; develop (every 3 years) or revise the school's Action Plans and Strategies to meet the three year Goals	Each SGC	February-March
Develop budgets based on the Action Plans of the <i>Single Plan for Student Achievement</i>	Each SGC	March
Submit the <i>Single Plan for Student Achievement</i> with budgets for administrative review	Each SGC	March-April (deadline varies)
Adopt each school's <i>Single Plan for Student Achievement</i> (after 2 readings)	School Board	May-June
Prepare recruitment activities for election of next year's SGC members	Each SGC	May-August
Publish BSEP Annual Plan, including Site Plans	District Staff	June-September

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

VI. Development of the *Single Plan for Student Achievement (School Plan)*

The Single Plan for Student Achievement involves a continuous development, implementation, and monitoring cycle, shown in the following six steps:

- Step One: Measure effectiveness of improvement strategies at the school
- Step Two: Seek input from school advisory committees/school community
- Step Three: Reaffirm or revise school goals
- Step Four: Review improvement strategies and expenditures
- Step Five: Recommend the approved School Plan to the School Board
- Step Six: Monitor implementation of the School Plan.

These six steps are elaborated in the *Guide and Template for the Single Plan for Student Achievement, A Handbook for School Site Councils*, published by the California Department of Education.

Soliciting Input from School Community

Prior to plan development, the School Governance Council shall solicit input from members of the school community, advisory groups, teachers, administrators, parents and students, when appropriate, regarding the status, performance and needs of the students and school. Such solicitation may come through surveys, informational meetings, and the exchange of information with other sites.

All Students versus Targeted Groups of Students

The *Single Plan for Student Achievement* must benefit all the children at a school, although particular site funds may be targeted toward special purposes. Not every program that a site develops must directly benefit every child. Site decisions related to program development and financial allocations should consider qualitative and quantitative data that may determine the needs of each school.

Two Readings of School Plan and Budget

To ensure a more collaborative process in development of the *School Plan*, the budget presented by the Principal to the SGC must be presented for review and discussion at a meeting of the SGC at least one week prior to the meeting where the vote for approval of the entire plan will take place. Therefore, the final approval of the *School Plan*, including final budget allocations, may not be approved by a vote of the Council at the same meeting at which it was presented for the first time.

Conflict of Interest

A "Conflict of Interest" occurs when a School Governance Council member or an individual in the member's immediate family **stands to gain financially from adoption of a particular proposal** submitted to the School Governance Council. Avoidance of a "conflict of interest" position should be taken into account during the election of School Governance Council members, e.g., personnel paid by

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

funds to be allocated by the SGC should not be elected to the School Governance Council, since funding for their position will need to be reconsidered and approved each year by the School Governance Council.

When a "conflict of interest" occurs, the "Interested Member" must resign from the Council and be replaced by an Alternate.

An exception to the above-stated rule shall exist in the case of programs that are generally available to a substantial number of teachers at the school. If needed, arbitration of conflict of interest disputes shall be conducted by the Superintendent or designee.

Delineation of BSEP/Measure A funds in the School Plan

The School Plan must clearly delineate the use of the BSEP/Measure A revenues from all other revenues in the Plan.

VII. Mid-year Changes to the School Plan

Any of the following factors may indicate a need to amend the *School Plan* during the school year:

- A major service or activity proves ineffective, and students are at risk.
- Material changes occur that affect the academic programs.
- Staff, equipment, or materials essential to the *School Plan* cannot be procured.
- School boundaries or demographics suddenly change.
- An activity is found to be non-compliant with state or federal law.
- A planned activity is not supported by staff, parents, or students.

The SGC may amend the *School Plan* at any time, in accordance with Board policy and SGC Bylaws. Whenever the SGC makes a material change to the Plan, the School Board must approve the change.

VIII. Dispute Resolution & Accountability

Because the School Board, administration, and School Governance Council have separate but related responsibilities for the *School Plan*, they need to work cooperatively. Every effort should be made to resolve disputes regarding the development and implementation of the *School Plan* and SGC compliance issues. Should an impasse occur, several remedies are available:

- The School Governance Council or an individual member of the SGC may communicate with the Educational Services Office in an effort to clarify policy or resolve a dispute.
- The P&O Committee or its designee may offer support to a School Governance Council seeking clarification.
- Individuals may file a formal complaint under the district's Uniform Complaint Procedure.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

- The School Governance Council may appeal to the School Board to resolve issues of planning or implementation, to clarify an issue in doubt, or to establish a needed policy.
- The administration may recommend that the Board not approve a Single Plan believed to be flawed.
- The School Board may develop policies to regulate or inform School Governance Councils and staff in the performance of their duties.

IX. Berkeley High School BSEP Committee and School Governance Council

Effective in the 2007-08 school year, each school except Berkeley High School combined the former BSEP Site Committee and School Site Council into a single body, the School Governance Council. At Berkeley High, due to its size and complexity, the BSEP Committee remains a discrete committee, focused on the school's BSEP/Measure A Site Discretionary Funds. The Berkeley High School Governance Council acts as the School Site Council (SSC), allocating state and federal categorical funds.

The Berkeley High School BSEP Committee shall be composed of elected parents, community members, students, staff, and teachers. The charge of the Berkeley High BSEP Committee is to develop a budget to allocate BSEP/Measure A School Site Discretionary Funds for the personnel, services and materials required to deliver effective activities leading to improved student performance as outlined in the *Single Plan for Student Achievement*. The BSEP Committee's proposed Plan and Budget will be sent to the Berkeley High School Governance Council where it will receive a vote to approve or disapprove. If disapproved, the BSEP Committee will subsequently submit another Plan and budget for approval.

In the event that the BHS School Governance Council rejects the BSEP Committee recommendations in whole or in part, the BSEP Committee shall have an opportunity to respond directly to the concerns of the SGC, and if the BHS SGC insists on changes contested by the BSEP Committee, the Plan shall be forwarded to the Board with a written BSEP Committee response to the proposed changes to their recommendations.

The BHS BSEP Committee will have at least two joint meetings with the School Governance Council: one in the fall, once both new committees are constituted, to review the Berkeley High School *Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)* for the current year, and once in the Spring when the School Governance Council is considering adopting the budget proposed by the BSEP Site Committee. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed to insure collaborative planning. Toward this end, the SGC shall notify the BHS BSEP Site Committee when revisions to the Single Plan are taking place.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL BYLAWS

The BHS BSEP Committee composition, quorum, and P&O Representative allocation is shown on the *SGC Composition, Quorum & P&O Representation Chart* (attached following).

Regarding elections:

- Parents/guardians, residents, or other community members will be elected in September at the first PTSA meeting of the school year. Such members may not all reside in the same BUSD attendance zone, or have children who all attend the same BHS Small School or Program,
- Student members will be elected by the student body during the spring prior to the school year in which they will serve,
- Administrative/Classified staff will be appointed by the Principal,
- Teacher members will be elected by the certificated staff.

The BHS BSEP Committee will elect one parent, one student member, and Alternates for each to non-voting seats on the School Governance Council.

At least two of the four BHS P&O Committee Representatives shall be parents or community members.

X. Amendment or Suspension of Bylaws

Amendment or suspension of these bylaws must be authorized by the School Board. These bylaws shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Berkeley School Board.

School Governance Council Composition, Quorum & P&O Committee Representation

School/Program Type	Parent* Members	Staff Members	Student Members	Minimum Size	Quorum**	P&O Committee Representatives
Elementary	6 parents + 2 Alternates (elected at large)	6 staff + 2 Alternates (includes Principal & at least 1 Classified staff member)	N/A	12	7 = quorum** At least: • 3 parent members & • 3 staff members	1 + Alternate(s)
Middle	6 parents + 2 Alternates (elected at large)	6 staff + 2 Alternates (includes Principal & at least 1 Classified staff member)	2 students may serve as non-voting members	12	7 = quorum** At least: • 3 parent members & • 3 staff members	2 + Alternate(s)
Berkeley High BSEP Committee	5 parents + 2 Alternates (elected at large)	5 staff + 2 Alternates (includes Principal or designee & at least 1 Classified staff member)	5 students + 2 Alternates	15	8 = quorum** At least: • 2 parent members • 2 staff members & • 2 student members	4 (minimum 2 must be parents/community) + 2 Alternates
B-Tech	2 parents (+ Alternate)	4 staff (+ Alternate) (includes Principal or designee; Classified staff optional)	2 students (+ Alternate?)	8	5 = quorum** At least: • 1 parent member • 2 staff members & • 1 student member	1 + Alternate(s)
Independent Study Program	3-4 parents (+ Alternate) (parents + students = 5; minimum 1 student)	5 staff (+ Alternate) (includes Principal or designee; Classified staff optional)	1-2 students (+ Alternate) (parents + students = 5; minimum 1 student)	10	6 = quorum** At least: • 2 parent members • 2 staff members & • 1 student member	1 + Alternate(s)
Pre-K Program	4 parents (+ Alternate)	4 staff (+ Alternate) (includes Principal or designee and both Certificated & Classified staff)	N/A	8	5 = quorum** At least: • 2 parents + 2 staff	1 + Alternate(s)

* Per Measure A of 2006 Section 5-B-ii: "Parents/guardians, residents, or community members."

**Quorum must include Principal or designee.

ALASKA PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.
PROPOSED CAPITAL PROJECTS
UNIFIED PUBLIC TELEVISION SERVICES
Total \$2,400,000

Alaska is served by four community public television stations – KTOO in Juneau, KUAC in Fairbanks, KYUK in Bethel and KAKM in Anchorage. All but KAKM are mired in analog worlds, even as digital environments become more and more prevalent in the industry. And as technology changes swiftly, it becomes more and more necessary for these stations to collaborate formally to rationalize infrastructure, provide for innovation, and share production costs. This proposal supports systemwide efforts to standardize equipment, share technical training and standards, and gain efficiencies from centralizing infrastructure. This proposal also would equip a new team of public affairs producers expanding the reach of state and local programming, especially on the road system. State support for equipment costs totaling \$2.4 million is requested to achieve these improvements.

KAKM has the digital technology and server capacity to provide both statewide and individualized programming streams from a single location. The stations anticipate moving to this system in July and soon will conclude formal agreements implementing the change. This proposal, if funded, will provide the required infrastructure for the other three stations to produce, share and broadcast digital content. It will provide an automated monitoring system for the statewide television feed to save operating costs. Finally, this request would rebuild key pieces of the Alaska Public Radio Network distribution network for 26 member stations. A key benefit of the system collaboration envisioned here will be common technical standards, equipment purchases, shared maintenance and spare parts, and training support. Engineers estimate between 5 percent and 10 percent of the overall cost of these improvements will be saved by combining them into a shared initiative. Here are brief descriptions of the projects for which support is requested.

- **KYUK-Bethel, KUAC-Fairbanks and KTOO-Juneau Digital Production Facilities:** Each of the facilities outside Anchorage is in need of modern equipment for a digital era. While some infrastructure is being centralized to save overall costs, it is imperative to refresh technology and equipment at each location.

KYUK has virtually no studio production capacity at present, despite an honored tradition of video production for rural audiences. 1990s vintage production studio and control room equipment is now either unreliable or totally nonfunctional. This request would permit KYUK to establish a local studio capable of producing programs for local or statewide consumption; establish a production control area capable of receiving and retransmitting a statewide program stream from KAKM customized for Bethel; allow KYUK to receive and transmit KTOO's *360 North*, including *Gavel Alaska*; provide a studio for local students or other media training; provide a studio for community groups and local events; and reestablish the ability of KYUK to participate in co-productions with its sister stations such as statewide pledge drives, candidate forums or cultural events from the region.

KUAC, the UAF-licensed TV station in Fairbanks, currently does not have a production facility. An out-of-date analog production facility was dismantled years ago. A digital production facility and television studio is required to produce programs representing events and activities at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and Interior communities. KUAC would enjoy the same benefits of a digital studio as those described above for KYUK, and the facility also would be in place to help serve the needs of journalism or film students at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

KTOO currently has a standard definition production facility but needs to upgrade to a high definition digital facility to meet the needs of both Juneau/Southeast Alaska and the rest of the state through operations of *360 North* and *Gavel Alaska*. This improvement will provide for compatible real-time audio and video between the Juneau studio and other television facilities around the state. This connectivity will allow for increased sharing of important news and events such as the Legislature and

state government through programs like *Capitol Views*, *AARP Alaska* and statewide public affairs specials.

- **Mobile TV Transmission Capability for KAKM-Anchorage, KUAC-Fairbanks and KTOO-Juneau:** The three major public TV stations need to upgrade their transmission facilities in order to meet the growing demand for content on mobile platforms such as smartphones and tablet computers. Alaska lags national trends in this area: Approximately 140 stations and all major markets nationally now provide this service. But broadband penetration in our state is high and consumers increasingly expect mobile video service.
- **Mobile Production Trucks for Juneau and Anchorage:** KTOO and KAKM have developed a joint venture to produce content and cover news developments for distribution to radio and television member stations, as well as PBS and NPR affiliates nationally. This mobile “road team” will produce coverage of important public proceedings and cultural events across Alaska. Its work will extend the reach of current local and state programming, provide access to quality programming in more regions of the state, and share local stories that are currently going untold. The team would be responsible for a minimum of one complex multi-day event per week or three to five short-form events such as luncheons, cultural forums, lectures, news conferences or interviews. Such events might include: state government hearings or public forums; town hall meetings; association conferences such as the Alaska Miners Association or Alaska Federation of Natives; or arts programs such as the Anchorage International Film Festival. The mobile production unit based in Juneau would be used to provide more Legislative coverage of events outside the Capitol, plus government and cultural offerings throughout Southeast Alaska and occasionally the Yukon. The team would generate programs for *Gavel to Gavel Alaska*, 360 North, all four Alaska public television stations, 26 members of the Alaska Public Radio Network, and the Web.

This highly specialized team will work across all media platforms and generate video for television; audio for radio; and audio, video and photographs for the Web. Members of the team will be deployed in Juneau for capitol and related coverage and in Anchorage for operations on the road system. Their work will be supported by engineering, news and programming teams in Juneau and Anchorage. This request supports trucks and equipment – portable cameras, switcher, audio boards, microphones, editing hardware and software, computers and microwave transmitter and antenna – required for mobile operations.

- **Monitoring System for Centralcast Facility:** Centralcast television operations from KAKM will begin July 1 and lower costs for all system participants. To build reliability and provide swift response to breakdowns, an automated “exception based” monitoring system is needed. Staffing limits require automated monitoring of the various broadcast streams to different locations, and in fact automated systems in many cases are more reliable than human oversight. This capability will provide 24/7 confidence monitoring of signals going out to the entire system.
- **Radio Distribution Rebuild for APRN:** Aging and inconsistent receiver equipment among the 26 separately owned and operated stations of the Alaska Public Radio Network creates frequent maintenance and distribution problems and expense. This request would support installation of similar, modern equipment at all locations, lowering costs and reducing operating difficulties. It also would support enhancements to the APRN satellite uplink facility, improving reliability for the entire network.

Public broadcasting brings Alaskans closer and gives them unique insight into their government and their surroundings. *Gavel to Gavel Alaska*, *Alaska News Nightly* and many other public affairs programs allow the people of our state to participate more easily in their state government and issues important to them. Equipment provided by this capital request would extend services, provide the means for cooperation among the stations, share facilities, lower infrastructure costs, ease maintenance and upgrade expenses, and greatly increase public affairs programming in the Railbelt and statewide.

Unified Public Television Service Capital Projects

Statewide Services

Alaska Public Radio Network Distribution Upgrade	\$150,000	
Centralcast Facility Automated Monitoring System	\$125,000	
Road Team Equipment	\$500,000	
Total		\$775,000

KYUK-Bethel

Digital Production Facility & Studio	\$345,000	
Total		\$345,000

KUAC-Fairbanks

Digital Production Facility & Studio	\$635,000	
Mobile Video Transmitter Upgrade	\$100,000	
Total		\$735,000

KTOO-Juneau

Digital Production Facility & Studio	\$345,000	
Mobile Video Transmitter Upgrade	\$100,000	
Total		\$445,000

KAKM-Anchorage

Mobile Video Transmitter Upgrade	\$100,000	
Total		<u>\$100,000</u>

Total Request		\$2,400,000
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**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES OF THE
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Administrative Policy 9.11
SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCILS**

History	Adopted 11-25-97; amended on 5-26-99; Revised 06-29-06		
Previous Coding			
Legal Ref.			
Contract Ref.			
Cross Ref.	Admin. Policy	1.03	Parent Empowerment
		8.18	Student Involvement in Decision Making
		9.04	Community Involvement in Decision Making
		2.12	Advisory Committees

(1) PREAMBLE

(a) It is the policy of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors to endorse and support parent, staff, student, and community involvement in school governance. It is the intent of the Board of School Directors that every school will have a school governance council that enables parents, school staff, students (when appropriate), and community to work together in facilitating quality educational plans that engender continuous improvement of student achievement. It is the responsibility of the principal to develop and maintain effective organizational structures and processes for advisement in each school in conjunction with its school governance council.

(b) The following guidelines are designed to facilitate the development and operations of school governance councils.

(2) PURPOSE OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCILS

The purpose of a school governance council is to provide a forum for parents, teachers, community members, students, and principals to work together in providing continued analysis and improvement of public school policies, curriculum, educational plan goals, and general student well-being. The council shall also be a clearinghouse for information collected from outside organizations, including student groups, parent-teacher groups, teacher associations, etc. The council's decision-making authority is advisory with respect to all duties, powers, and responsibilities, with the sole exception of the council's authority and responsibility to submit a cover letter with its school's annual budget and the school's annual educational plan. Council participation shall be on a voluntary basis via a school-based election process. Councils are not intended to replace parent organizations.

(3) SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

(a) School governance council membership shall include at least 51% parent representation, at least one student at the middle (including K-8 schools) and high schools, community representatives, staff members, and the principal. The size of the school governance council will be based upon a percentage of total student enrollment at a given school.

1. The number of council participants shall equal one percent (1%) of the total student enrollment, or a minimum of nine (9) members, including the principal; however, the size of the council may exceed 1% where desired by the individual school.
2. If the percentage results in an even number of participants (e.g., 1,100 students \times 1% = 11 + principal = 12 members), the number of participants shall be increased by one member (e.g., 12 + 1 = 13 members).

(b) Members shall be defined as follows:

1. Parent: A parent is a person at least 18 years of age who is the natural, adopted, or stepparent of a child enrolled or about to be enrolled in the school at which the council serves, and includes those people acting as legal guardian or registered custodian of the child, such as grandparents. A parent who is also a paid employee of his/her child's school shall not serve in the capacity of "parent member" on the council, but may serve as a teacher representative or support-staff representative.

2. Teacher/Support Staff: All teachers and support staff are eligible to participate on the council in this category.
3. Student: A student enrolled at a school with a middle school component (grades 6-8) or high school at the time of the election process is eligible to serve on the council for that particular school.
4. Community Member: Any resident of the City of Milwaukee is eligible to serve on a council.
5. Principal: The principal or employee serving as the leader of the school shall serve on its council.

(c) There are to be good-faith efforts to secure representation; however, a school governance council will continue to function even if full representation cannot be achieved. Every effort will be made to ensure that each school governance council has full representation.

(d) Even though representatives will be selected from various categories (e.g., parents, school staff, students, business, community), it is the responsibility of every member on the school governance council to communicate with, and represent, all segments of the school population.

(4) SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL ELECTIONS — MEMBERSHIP

Members will be selected through a fair and open election process. Each constituent group (parents, teachers, non-certificated staff, students) will oversee the process for electing school governance council representatives. The process for the election of representatives will be as follows:

(a) PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

1. Every year, no later than the third week of March, the principal/designated administrative leader of each school shall mail, via first-class postal service, information sheets regarding the school governance council and the school election timeline to all households of the school's student body (one mailing per household) for the purpose of soliciting parent/guardian nominations for Council membership. Parents who are interested in serving on the council shall complete a ballot information sheet and return it either by mail or in person on or before April 15. All eligible parents shall be included on the ballot.

2. The ballots (bearing a specific logo) shall be mailed via first-class postal service to all parents during the first week in May, with all of the nominees listed. Ballots shall be numbered sequentially for accountability purposes only. In addition, the principal/designated administrative leader is to plan an open meeting for nominees to speak relative to their candidacy for election to the council. Parents shall return either in person or by mail the completed ballots to the school on or before May 31. The number of parents to be elected shall be at least 51% of the total number of participants on the council.

3. Two members of the established parent group will assist the principal with the counting of the parents' ballots.

4. A record of the number of votes for each candidate shall be maintained at the local school until the end of the following school year. In the case of resignation, recall, or death, a parent member shall be replaced by the runner-up candidate not elected to the council the previous election period.

(b) TEACHER/STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

The faculty and support staff at a given school shall be responsible for selecting its representatives to the council. Selection shall be completed on or before May 31.

(c) STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Schools with grades 6-8 (middle and K-8) and high school student representatives of the council shall be elected by the student body through existing student government procedures. If no student government exists, students shall be permitted to campaign for the position of Council representative at a general assembly of the student body, and the student body shall make their selection by voice vote or ballot during the general assembly.

(d) COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Community representatives interested in participating on the council shall make their interest known at the open meeting held for parent nominations, although community members shall not be selected by the public at large. Community representatives shall be elected at the first meeting of the incoming Council held at the beginning of the new school year.

(e) PRINCIPAL REPRESENTATIVES

The principal of the school is entitled to automatic participation on the council at that school.

(5) SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL ELECTIONS — PROCESS

(a) Following the initial election process, the council shall manage the election process.

(b) The school governance council must be in place by the end of September each school year. The term of office for the smallest number greater than half of the council shall be elected for two (2) years at the first election. All other members of the council shall be elected for a 1-year term at the first election. All Council members thereafter shall be elected to 2-year overlapping, staggered terms. The candidates receiving the fewest votes serve 1-year terms after the first election. All candidates thereafter will serve 2-year overlapping, staggered terms.

(6) AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCILS

(a) School governance councils are empowered and limited in function by policies and procedures adopted by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors. If current policies and procedures, contracts, laws and regulations, or district agreements impede a school's restructuring process or strategic planning, the principal will obtain the support of the appropriate Central Services personnel to assist the school governance council with requests for adjustments, waivers, or memoranda of understanding from the appropriate body. School governance councils shall not discuss wages, hours, or working conditions unless a bargaining unit waiver has been secured. The Division of Labor Relations will assist schools in securing requested waivers.

(b) The role of the principal in terms of authority and responsibility for school management is not changed by this policy. Ultimately the principal is responsible and accountable to the superintendent.

(c) The Milwaukee Public Schools' Code of Ethics applies to all employees. Non-employees will be required to sign a statement that they will not participate in advisement which represents a conflict of interest. School governance councils shall establish procedures to be followed by members to ensure that conflicts of interest are prevented.

(d) All newly elected council members will participate in inservice/training sessions. Related costs for these sessions shall be funded by local school funds. Inservice/training sessions will focus on the development of quality educational programs and high standards with respect to team building, school policies and procedures, increasing parental involvement, consensus building, leadership skills, financial procedures (audits, budgets), committee work, and other issues that affect student achievement. Common documents (cover letters for the schools' annual educational plans and annual budgets, formats for agendas and written records of council meetings, etc.) will be developed by the Office of the Deputy superintendent — Operational Leadership.

(e) School governance councils shall develop and publish their own bylaws. Bylaws shall be guided by the principles of the Open Meetings Law, and all meetings shall be open to the public unless permitted to be closed under the law. The Department of Human Resources, in consultation with the Office of the City of Attorney, shall provide assistance in this regard. The definition of a meeting shall be included in each school's bylaws and shall be consistent with the Open Meetings Law definition. Written records for all school governance council meetings shall be taken at each council meeting and maintained in one binder. Minutes shall be on file and available for review at each school.

(f) Council authority and responsibilities will be advisory as referenced below:

1. The council shall participate in the selection and evaluation of school staff in a manner consistent with federal and state statutes, Board policy, and collective-bargaining agreements. Members of school governance councils shall interview and recommend

principal appointments to the superintendent in a manner consistent with Administrative Policy 6.23: "The superintendent shall have the sole right of nomination for employment and promotion of certificated personnel, and the appointment of any nominated candidates shall be effected only with the approval of the Board. In the case of rejection, the Board may request another nomination."

2. The council shall participate in the development of the annual school educational plan and the annual school budget.
3. The council shall regularly review and assess the annual school educational plan and the annual school budget. The council shall have the authority and responsibility to submit an accompanying cover letter when its school submits its annual educational plan and annual school budget to the superintendent. The cover letter will bear the signatures of each council member, thereby indicating the council's participation in the development of both documents.
4. The council will regularly review and assess school performance with respect to:
 - a. student achievement;
 - b. parental involvement;
 - c. dress-code expectations;
 - d. character and value building;
 - e. behavioral concerns;
 - f. scheduling procedures;
 - g. building maintenance;
 - h. suspension/disciplinary procedures.
5. The council, in cases in which the principal of the school has volunteered in writing to have the council's evaluation included in his or her professional evaluation, shall conduct such an evaluation of the principal's performance.
6. In the absence of a coordinated health team, the School Governance Council will function in that capacity.

(7) COUNCIL PROTOCOL

(a) The first council meeting of the new school year shall take place during the month of September, at a date and time agreed upon by all elected members. During the first meeting, the council shall select at least one person in the community to participate as a member of the council, based upon interest previously shown by eligible parties. Thereafter, the council shall have at least nine (9) monthly meetings during the school year.

(b) During the first meeting, council members shall elect an executive committee, which shall include a chair, vice-chair, recording secretary, and corresponding secretary. The principal will serve as a resource to the executive committee of the school council.

1. The chair shall conduct each meeting and shall execute all business necessary between meetings to ensure that each meeting is run in a smooth and orderly process.
2. The vice-chair shall assist the chair with his/her responsibilities and shall assume the responsibilities of the chair upon his/her absence.
3. The chair and vice-chair shall make themselves available to answer questions from the public in general, including from members of other organizations.
5. The recording secretary shall keep the written notes of each meeting, and make sure the minutes of the previous meeting are distributed to members of the council prior to each subsequent meeting, together with a reminder of the time and place of the next meeting. The corresponding secretary shall be responsible for making available to the public, by whatever means agreed upon by the council, the agenda of each upcoming meeting and the minutes of the previous meeting. Members of the public wishing to speak at any upcoming meeting with regard to a particular agenda item may contact the corresponding secretary to ask to be added to the agenda.

(8) DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Council will be made up of parents, teachers, students, community members, and the principal. Each constituency represented shall have a corresponding set of responsibilities.

(a) PARENTS

Council parents are responsible for soliciting input from the parental community with respect to issues of concern to the council. Parent members shall relay council activities to the parent community at large, as well as to parent organizations. The council shall have the responsibility of training and informing incoming parents elected to a subsequent council. Parent members shall have the responsibility of promoting the organization of a parent group where none is in existence for the particular school at which they serve.

(b) TEACHERS/SUPPORT STAFF

School-staff council members are responsible for soliciting input from the faculty and support staff with respect to issues of concern to the council. School-staff members shall report to faculty and support staff, as well as outside teacher/staff organizations. Faculty members shall present the school's educational plan to the council for input. Faculty members shall be responsible for playing an active role in addressing issues such as curriculum additions and deletions, grading practices and standards, test scores, building concerns, staffing needs, and resource/budget concerns.

(c) STUDENTS

Student members shall report council activities to the student body and shall solicit student input and areas of concern for presentation to the council. Student members shall be responsible for organizing student government associations where there are none.

(d) PRINCIPAL

The principal is responsible for keeping the council informed of all relevant school information. The principal shall take the lead role in promoting new programs at the school. The principal shall report to the council with respect to principal meetings, building meetings, etc. The principal shall seek the active participation of the council in deciding all school budget matters and shall present to the council in a timely fashion all information dealing with programming and budget items. The principal shall be responsible for creating and distributing a newsletter of council activities and agendas to school members, and shall provide administrative service support for council members needing supplies or resources. The principal may not serve on the executive committee, but shall have a vote equal to all other council members.

(9) REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

No members of school governance councils are to receive compensation or additional compensation for their service, with the exception of reasonable reimbursement for expenses resulting from their work on school governance councils. The expenses are to be paid from the school budget. Reasonable parameters shall be determined by the principal.

(10) COUNCIL LIAISON

The superintendent shall appoint the deputy superintendent, Operations Leadership, to oversee all councils and their operations. Council members shall have the right to request the liaison's involvement in dispute resolution between council members. The liaison shall have the responsibility of enforcing council decisions in cases of dissent and of ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of each council.

(11) EXCEPTIONS TO PROCEDURES

Exceptions to procedures outlined in this policy may be submitted to the superintendent for review and approval, with such action to be reported to the Board.

(12) RELATION TO EXISTING AGREEMENTS

(a) Nothing in this policy shall in any way reduce the powers or responsibilities already authorized at schools with ongoing governing councils, including Andrew Douglass School, Fritsche Middle School, La Escuela Fratney, HiMount Community School, Madison University High School, Malcolm X Middle School, North Division High School, Palmer Street School, South Division High School, or any other MPS school that already has such powers or responsibilities.

(b) Nor shall anything in this policy in any way reduce powers or responsibilities assumed by school governance councils consistent with federal and Wisconsin statutes, Board policy, or collective-bargaining agreements, as proposed by school governance councils and authorized by the superintendent.

(c) All schools, however, including these, are expected to adhere to all provisions of this policy regarding school governance councils with regard to the manner of representation and conduct of elections.

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School Governance Councils take shape in region

Updated 11:27 p.m., Tuesday, October 18, 2011

Once a month, a group of seven parents, five teachers and two community members meets with Ralph Paladino, principal of Barnum School in Bridgeport. The group is not about fundraising.

Instead, the group, in existence for about a year, is there to help improve one of the state's lowest-performing schools.

"The School Governance Council is the over-arching group," Paladino said. "There could be some crossover with the Parent Advisory Council, or School Leadership Team, but if I thought there was an issue that needed further research, the School Governance Council would be the one I go to."

Under state law, more than 180 schools must have such councils by Nov. 1, joining the one at Barnum and 13 others created last winter in the state's lowest-performing schools. The councils are required in all schools that failed to meet yearly progress benchmarks as of July 1, 2010, in math and reading on state standardized tests.

The deadline, which some districts have already met, marks a major step in Connecticut lawmakers' efforts to ensure more parents and teachers are included in reform efforts at the state's worst-performing schools.

Several districts have said they welcome the advisory councils. Others call them unfunded mandates and their potential power have made still others nervous -- enough, in fact, that a report says a Waterbury principal orchestrated a scheme last spring to boost test scores to avoid being ordered to create a governance council.

Gwen Samuel, a parent activist from Meriden who has nominated herself to serve on the School Governance Council at her son's middle school, said she and other parents hope that is a rare instance and not an indication of hidden reservations among other administrators.

Samuel has traveled throughout Connecticut to reach other parents about provisions of the law, showing them how to nominate themselves and others, and pushing schools to plan for the time when today's members must be replaced as their children age and move to other schools.

"As parents, this is going to be the best thing we have so far to help ourselves and help our children," said Samuel, who founded the Connecticut Parents Union education advocacy group and pushed for the law creating the governance councils.

Under the law, the councils' work includes watching test score trends, advising principals on whether budget proposals fall in line with reform priorities and participating in the hiring process for principals and top administrators.

The councils don't make day-to-day decisions about running the schools, managing employees, determining class sizes or dealing with contracts.

In Bridgeport, both Bassick and Harding high schools formed their councils last year, recruiting parent members who attended evening parent meetings. The state requires them to be established at 19 other Bridgeport schools by November, but an effort is under way to establish them in all city schools, even those not deemed in need of improvement.

"It's because (Schools Superintendent John Ramos) says we're one district and he believes in the concept," said Lisa Jones, director of grant programs for the district.

The councils are also being formed at Irving School in Derby and Ansonia High School.

At Irving School, most School Governance Council members are in place, said Principal Francis Gallo.

"We are looking forward to the council and the changes it can make," he said, adding the council still needs to discuss specific goals and bylaws.

"We do know what is expected of us," he said, adding a major goal is to increase Connecticut Mastery Test scores. In fact, Irving School was mandated to develop a governance council after it didn't make the required progress in CMT testing.

"My thought is that a lot of good can come from the council," he said. "We have people on it who aren't educators and they may have an alternative way of seeing things."

The goal for the governance council at Ansonia High School will also be to raise test scores, said Joseph Dobbins, who is assistant principal there and at Ansonia Middle School. "We want to close the gap," he said.

At Barnum, Paladino said it took most of last year to set up bylaws and an agenda. This year, the group will look at community relations and various issues that affect the school. It could be parent involvement, it could be academic issues.

"It depends on the need," he said. Paladino sees the group as a resource he can use to research an issue. It also will serve as a bridge between the school's parent group, leadership team and data teams.

Jones said the state this year made it clearer what it expects from the councils, but she called it an unfunded mandate.

Samuel disagrees, saying the biggest challenge is making districts see this as a best practice, not an additional expense.

"Parents and the community are an untapped resource to make a real difference," she said.

Most of the 184 schools mandated to establish councils are in the state's poor inner cities or

bordering suburbs that have a blend of middle-class and low-income families. A few magnet and charter schools also made the list, along with two state-run technical high schools and Hamilton Avenue School in Greenwich.

Hamilton Avenue, which has many poor students despite the community's wealth, was among schools that already had their councils in place.

The Associated Press and Staff Writers Linda Conner Lambeck and Anne M. Amato contributed to this report.

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