THE NATIONAL CENTER ON SCALING UP EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

# *Successes and Cautionary Notes from a Two Year Study of the Ohio Network of Education Transformation (ONET) Schools*

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***Successes and Cautionary Notes from a Two Year Study of the Ohio Network of Education Transformation (ONET) Schools***


## Abstract

As one component of its Race to the Top (RttT) grant, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) created and funded the Ohio Network of Education Transformation (ONET). ONET was an effort to dramatically move schools forward by funding one of five innovation models in selected schools. The Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) was charged with conducting an evaluation of the ONET effort. OERC contracted with the University of Cincinnati, Ohio State University, and Strategic Research Group to complete a two-year examination of five whole-school reform efforts

This presentation focuses on the progress of 8 of the schools, two per design type, that have completed three years of implementation and their first year of post-funding. Our two-year evaluation examined the implementation and evidence of sustainability of four innovation models – AVID, ISSN, EARLY COLLEGE, and NEW TECH. We used a mixed-methods multiple case study design to address five main questions. Data collected consisted mostly of interview and/or focus group data across all of the sites including observational data collection in addition to interviews and focus groups in three sites. Second-year data were collected from 39 key stakeholders (7 principals, 1 assistant principal, 3 district personnel, 4 curriculum developers and model experts, 24 lead teachers and program/subject area teachers) via face-to-face interviews and focus groups or phone interviews.

Data from the first year of the project (schools' third year of schools' funding), indicated that the STEM sites were no longer engaging in ongoing innovations, so the project focused on the eight schools engaged in the four remaining designs. We asked and addressed the following five questions/areas:

1) **To what extent were models implemented and sustained?** There was tremendous variance in levels of implementation. Teachers, principals, and districts were typically sustaining the reforms at approximately the same levels one year post-funding as during the third year of implementation funding.
2) **To what extent are these models effective in increasing positive student outcomes or other desirable outcomes?** At the end of three years of funding, none of the models had produced compelling data as measured on Ohio's School Report Card indicating dramatic improvement. Only one school of the eight had a notable increase in the school's performance index.
3) **What factors led to success in the implementation of each model and across models? What factors were seen as barriers to model implementation?** A broad range of general and reform-specific factors were observed. Issues of leadership, funding, professional development, and planning for transitions were among the most often observed in determining levels of implementation.
4) **What efforts were being taken to sustain each mode now that funding for the initiative is expended? What contextual factors may facilitate or hinder the sustainability of these**

**models?** The innovation model had been sustained for four years by seven of the eight schools observed in year two.

5) **What recommendations for future state initiatives can be gleaned from lessons learned from the implementation of these models across sites within the models and across models?** Our major recommendations included:

   a. To the extent that the state's measure of reform success is going to be scores on a state Report Card, or any other quantitative instruments, the state should build those criteria into the request for proposals. The gap between the state's measures of success and local professionals' expressions of success, given local realities, was striking.

   b. Allow more time for planning. Implementation is a large, complex process, and schools need several months of conversation, professional development and planning in order to gear up for success.

   c. Protect the school/district from having to implement multiple, often conflicting reforms at the same time.

   d. Physically show support for the reforms. Few of the schools in ONET had ever been visited by a state department employee in other than a monitoring/evaluating context.

   e. Insist on a plan for handling transitions.

   f. Insist that schools build in and sustain plans for transitions to local financial support and institutionalization for a reform, both as a part of a school's/system's initial proposal and as the schools approach the end of formal funding.

## Introduction

As one component of its successful $400,000,000 Race to the Top (RttT) proposal, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) created and funded the Ohio Network of Education Transformation (ONET). ONET was an effort to dramatically move schools forward. In 2011 Schools and/or school systems applied for three years of funding to implement one of five specific reforms chosen by the state department. A total of 52 schools received ONET funding for the 2011-12 through 2013-14 school years.

The Ohio Education Research Center (OERC) was charged with conducting an evaluation of the ONET effort. A first year report, conducted during the ONET schools' 3rd and final year of funding, (Lindsey, 2014) laid out basic facts and directions of ONET as well as an evaluation of the implementation at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. The second year data gathering and analyses (spring/summer 2015) provided an opportunity for more nearly in-depth analysis of the progress of 8 of the schools that had completed three years of funded implementation and were completing their first year of post-funding and institutionalization using one of the approved models.

This cross-site report draws upon site-specific findings and is divided into nine sections: this introduction, the background of research on whole-school reform, design of this evaluation, observations regarding variance and implementation, quantitative and qualitative outcome findings, student outcome data, reform facilitators and barriers, recommendations and conclusions.

## Background on Whole School Reform Designs

From the Eight Year Study (Aiken, 1942) to Follow Through (Stallings & Kaskowitz, 1974), the Rand Change Agent Study (McLaughlin, 1990), Special Strategies (Stringfield, et al., 1997), various reviews in the What Works Clearinghouse (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/) and the Best Evidence Encyclopedia (http://www.bestevidence.org/), several conclusions can be drawn regarding externally developed whole school reform designs. The first is that not all externally developed designs, regardless of how innovative or well-funded, produce positive results. No reform produces consistently positive student outcomes, and some are relatively consistent in not producing positive results (Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2003).

A second finding is that the range of implementation levels at the classroom and school levels tends to be very large, from complete non-implementation to moderately high. An often overlooked finding from Berman and McLaughlin (1978) was that externally developed reforms either achieve "mutual adaptation" or fail. They found no examples of unquestioning and total acceptance of an external "it." This finding has been replicated repeatedly (Datnow et al., 2003; Datnow & Stringfield, 2000) and often described in a more active voice as "co-construction." Local educators either adapt the reform to their realities, in effect co-constructing the reform in the local context, thereby modifying components in unique ways, or simply don't implement the designs at all. A few reforms are increasingly building co-construction into their reform designs (ex., Stringfield, Reynolds, & Schaffer, 2008, 2012).

A third general finding would be that reform implementation is more likely to be successful in elementary than secondary schools (Borman et al., 2004; Earl and Sutherland, 2006).

Scheerens (2015) points out that while there is an increasing literature on how reforms can be implemented, there is a much smaller but arguably as important literature on why and how reform designs fail. Schaffer, Nesselrodt and Stringfield (1997) produced a list of 10 specific ways to kill reforms, and both Payne (2008) and Supovitz and Weinbaum (2008) have produced detailed descriptions of "implementation gaps" leading to reform failure.

## Models Supported in ONET

Only one of the ONET-supported models has been the subject of multiple prior evaluations. The ONET-supported models vary greatly in design characteristics and levels of reform-specific supports for implementation. Schools have varied greatly in levels of support received from diverse directions (design teams, professional development providers, principals, superintendents, school boards and community supports) and in levels of implementation.

The five ONET-supported designs were: Asia/ISSN, AVID, Early College, New Tech, and STEM. Each is briefly described below:

- **Asia/ISSN.** The Asia Society's International Studies Schools Network (ISSN) strives to develop globally competent, college-ready students. ISSN works with schools across the US, striving to provide professional development, resources and coaching to support high quality performance based and globally focused instruction, curriculum and assessment. ISSN provides an instructional framework guided by the Four Pillars of Global Competence: 1) Investigating their World; 2) Recognizing Perspectives; 3) Communicating Ideas; and 4) Taking Action.
- **AVID.** Advancement Via Individual Determination, (AVID), is a school reform originally developed in two San Diego (CA) high schools and for the last 20 years disseminated to hundreds of schools nationwide. AVID can be implemented as a program within a school or school wide. The core focus of AVID is assistance to "middle level" students to help them get prepared for and successfully into college. The universal requirement is the offering of the "AVID Elective," a course in which the teacher, peer group and tutors help students succeed in college prep classes. Strongly suggested are school-wide materials and teaching methods designed to prepare students for college success.
- **Early College:** The Early College (EC) program supports "high schools and feeder middle schools that use a transformational strategy of bringing college into high schools." Early College schools expose all students to college coursework and, presuming the students do well, college credits thereby reducing the time and cost of postsecondary degrees. Today there are several hundred Early College schools across America, often but not always located on college campuses or closely affiliated with college faculties.
- **New Tech:** The New Tech Network is a subsidiary of KnowledgeWorks, an Ohio-based foundation that, in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and others, promotes school improvement through innovative models. The New Tech (NT) program uses a collaborative, interdisciplinary, project-based learning instructional approach. In project-based learning (PBL), students collaborate on projects that require critical thinking and

communication. By making learning relevant to them in this way, student engagement increases. This higher level of engagement is associated with better educational outcomes.

- **STEM:** Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), sometimes with the addition of the arts (STEAM), were the foci of the STEM school reform grants. The development of these STEM programs was intended to be local. In practice, funding for both projects was front loaded by local educators and by the summer of 2014 the programs had largely expended their funding and disappeared. As a result, the STEM projects were not part of the 2014-2015 evaluation or this report.

## Evaluation Design for 2014-2015

This evaluation examined the implementation and evidence of sustainability of four innovation models – Asia/ISSN, AVID, Early College, and New Tech – in two Ohio schools each. This evaluation used a mixed-methods multiple case study design. The two years of ONET data gathering included the final (third) year of funding support and the first year of post-funding and institutionalization efforts. The semi-structured interview and focus group protocol was motivated by the following questions:

- To what extent were models implemented and sustained?
- To what extent are these models effective in increasing positive student outcomes or other desirable outcomes?
- What factors led to success in the implementation of each model and across models? What factors were seen as barriers to model implementation?
- What efforts were being taken to sustain each model now that funding for the initiative is expended? What contextual factors may facilitate or hinder the sustainability of these models?
- What recommendations for future state initiatives can be gleaned from lessons learned from the implementation of these models across sites within the model and across models?

### Site Selection

The 2014 phase employed a holistic multiple case study design (Yin, 2014) to gather qualitative and quantitative data among ten study sites selected in collaboration with personnel at the Ohio Department of Education to represent different regions in the state and varying contexts. The 2015 data gathering was limited to eight study sites across four models: Asia/ISSN, AVID, Early College, and New Tech.[5] These sites ranged from the southwest to the northeast corners, including rural, suburban, and urban contexts across the state.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Data collected for the spring 2015 (post-grant-expiration cycle) consisted largely of interview and/or focus group data across the eight sites including observational data collection methods in addition to interviews and focus groups in three sites (ISSN site 1; New Tech sites 1 and 2).

The sample included data collected from 39 key stakeholders (7 principals, 1 assistant principal, 3 district personnel, 4 curriculum developers and model experts, 24 lead and program/

[5] Two sites that used the STEM model were not included in the 2015 evaluation. The ODE approved this change in the sampling

subject area teachers) via face-to-face interviews and focus groups or phone interviews. Furthermore, observational data were collected among six classrooms and one teacher planning meeting (Table 1).

**Table 1.** ***Interview and Observation Data Collection across Models and Sites for 2014-2015***

| ***Data Collected*** | | | ***AVID*** | | ***Early College*** | | ***New Tech*** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ***Site 1*** | ***Site 2*** | ***Site 1*** | ***Site 2*** | ***Site 1*** | ***Site 2*** | ***Site 1*** | ***Site 2*** | ***Total*** |
| ***Interviews*** | | | | | | | | | |
| *Model Expert/ Technical Advisor* | | | | | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *4* |
| *District Personnel* | *1* | | *1* | | | *1* | | | *3* |
| *Principal* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *1* | *8* |
| *Teacher* | *3* | *8* | *3* | | *1* | | *2* | *7* | *24* |
| *Total* | *5* | *9* | *5* | *1* | *3* | *3* | *4* | *9* | *39* |
| ***Observations*** | | | | | | | | | |
| *Content class* | *1* | | | | | | *2* | *3* | *6* |
| *Teacher planning meeting* | | | | | | | | *1* | *1* |
| *Total* | *1* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *0* | *2* | *4* | *7* |

During May 2015, site visits were conducted at seven of the eight sites with one site (EC site 1) collecting an additional phone interview with a teacher not available at the time of the site visit. Site visits involved 30-60 minute face-to-face semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions as well as observations (for three sites). Data collection for one site was conducted via one 30 minute phone interview only (AVID site 2). All interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Transcript data were coded by site teams using topical and emergent coding guided by the overarching evaluation questions and key areas of investigation outlined in the protocol. Key areas included outcomes, leadership, changes to program, factors of success and barriers, challenges and opportunities, sustainability, lessons learned, and recommendations. The coding and analysis were compared across site team members who discussed any discrepancies until agreement was reached. Observational data were tabulated and summarized.

Cross-case and cross-model analyses employed pattern analysis across model findings to identify common themes. An Excel document was created summarizing findings across sites and models for the major categories of interest. Emergent patterns were discussed and agreed upon by site teams during weekly meetings.

State "Report Card" data from each school provided a longitudinal context for academic performance outcomes. Report card data for the eight sites and additional 44 ONET funded sites (ONET, n.d.) for 2010-2014 were gathered and analyzed. Data from the 2014-2015 academic year were not available at the time of this presentation and will be analyzed in the next few months. Data are presented beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year for two reasons. Ohio changed the calculation of graduation rates for the 2010-2011 academic year and beyond, resulting in an inability to make direct comparisons with data from previous years. Furthermore,

ONET funding for these sites began in 2010-2011 academic year and programming began in earnest during the 2011-2012 academic year.

## Findings

### Variance

The first finding in the 2015 ONET evaluation is a replication and a further working out of a finding alluded to in the background section, and it relates to variance. In this project, as in a great deal of previous research, variance on a range of dimensions looms large. In a well-controlled experiment, variance on one or two dimensions is an intended design component. But in ONET, the number of dimensions on which great variance exists is much larger. Consider the following:

1. **Reform designs.** The designs offered varied on a range of dimensions. AVID was developed over 20 years ago in San Diego and has specific, required components. ISSN is a relatively new reform that provides a framework that schools adapt to their context. Each STEM design was, by design, unique to the local context.
2. **Choice.** Most schools in ONET were allowed to implement their first choice reform design. Some were denied their first choice and directed to another reform.
3. **Levels of initial need.** "Before the beginning" of ONET some of the schools had histories of substantially sub- standard student achievement, and others were more nearly in the average range or better,
4. **Whole school implementation vs. programs or "school within a school".** Several of the schools in ONET implemented their chosen reform school wide, all at once. Others have been working toward school wide by beginning in one or two grades and adding a grade a year as students move forward. Others, sometimes with the same external design, have implemented their reform as a program within the school (e.g., an AVID program for some students, but not all) or as a somewhat separate "school within a school" (e.g., New Tech).
5. **Grade levels.** Most observed sites were high schools, though some were middle schools, one was an elementary school, and some were combinations ranging from elementary through high school.
6. **Urban/suburban/rural.** The ONET sites are spread across Ohio in ways that are relatively representative of the state. There are generations of research finding that the challenges faced by rural vs. urban vs. suburban schools and reform efforts are substantially different.
7. **Funding:** State levels of funding for the reforms varied with $61,000 for AVID, $571,700 for Early College, $600,000 for Asia/ISSN, and $750,000 for New Tech. This means that the funding ranged from three years of support for $61,000 to $750,000, a 12 to 1 ratio. Local districts vary substantially in their ability to provide additional funding in support of reforms. Some schools have been able to obtain additional grants to support one or more aspects of their chosen reforms, others have not.
8. **Levels of buy-in:** Buy-in is a simple phrase with complex underlying challenges. Some schools have strong buy-in from all teachers for their reform designs, others do not. The same is true at the principal, superintendent, and school board levels. Some reforms appear to have

reasonable buy-in at all four levels. Others have one, two, or different combinations of three levels.

9. **Opt out**. Some schools allow teachers and programs within schools to opt out of the school's reform. At one school the Advanced Placement teachers decided that the types of instruction advocated by the reform such as Problem Based Learning,( PBL: cooperative teamwork, active seeking of more data on the web, etc.) were ill-suited to their classes and to maximizing students' scores on AP examinations, and simply opted out.
10. **Competing initiatives.** Some schools have the luxury of focusing their limited energies on making their one ONET reform work. Others have one or more competing initiatives, what Tony Bryk and colleagues (2012) call a "Christmas Tree" of simultaneous reforms. In at least one school, the faculty have been told to implement two state-supported (one mandated) whole school reforms simultaneously. Many members of the faculty have taken sides on which to implement and the effect has been that neither is close to being fully implemented.
11. **Professional development.** Sending teachers and principals to national trainings and bringing in national consultants is expensive. These expenses have largely been absorbed by the grants, but especially the smaller grants cannot absorb the total costs of the current PD and the funds to support PD end when the grant ends. Other schools have spent their funds on tools or materials, leaving little funding to support PD.
12. **Technology requirements and costs.** Some reforms, such as New Tech, require a laptop computer for every student and professional in a school, plus access to the web for everyone. For families lacking home access, this has required a special, ongoing, added cost. Every year a new cohort of students arrives at a school, requiring an additional purchase of computers. Some computers fail, others are lost. All of these add costs to the reform.
13. **Perceived level of match to state and national testing.** Some educators have expressed concern that key aspects of some of the reforms are ill matched to state tests and national Advanced Placement tests. Schools are judged in part by their students' scores on those examinations. Others, with perhaps equal conviction, see active group engagement in problem solving as adult skills of such importance in the 21st century that they are willing to forgo a focus on "objective" tests.
14. **Levels of institutional support.** At some sites the district helped choose the reform and has been consistently supportive of it. At others, a superintendent or school board member has been questioning throughout and is/are disinclined to continue the reform once the external funding has run out. Teachers, principals, and community members notice the differences and typically adjust to local proclivities.
15. **Leadership and human capital.** Some schools and districts, for whatever reasons, are blessed with unusually highly skilled leaders at multiple levels who can inspire others to "get on board" and work together toward a goal. Others, which may have adequate competence to operate traditional classrooms, schools and systems, lack whatever qualities are necessary to mobilize consistent change toward an often seemingly abstract new goal. As with several of the other variables, these differing levels of leadership and human capital are present at every level of the large, complex organizations that are schools and school systems. Two examples of complex human capital concerns are presented here.
    **a.** Experienced teachers leave and new teachers arrive every year. Educators at almost every school talked about the complications involved in bringing new faculty up to speed on their reform. No school in this study had a system in place and no external reform group had a

program in place to train new teachers in the reform in a feasible and affordable manner before the new teachers began teaching. Other staff may have had two years of intensive training and coaching, and the new person must learn on the job.

**b.** One principal expressed what may have been in the minds of others in stating that after three years of implementation her entire faculty would benefit from a faculty- wide, multi-day booster re-training on the basic and more advanced areas of their reform.

16. **Competing demands.** A paradox of opting for a reform is that the change at one level requires at least a minimal level of stability in the larger environment so that professionals can focus on the work of intended change. The schools in the ONET study had principal changes ranging from after the reform was accepted but before the first day of implementation, to having a new principal in year three, to having a new principal for three straight years, to having the same principal for three years of stability. In no case was the evaluation team told that the new principal was chosen because of their prior experience with the chosen reform. Similarly, in no case did the incoming principal receive weeks - or even days - of training in the reform prior to coming to the school site. In some cases the new principal was only marginally aware that the school was even engaged in a whole school reform and may or may not have had an initially positive reaction to the reform. In some cases a new principal was perceived by some faculty as being somewhat disinclined to have his/her staff engage in the reform. The same was true of new superintendents. School boards have elections, and the probability that a candidate for school board is aware of a specific reform effort in a specific school is low.
17. **Planning for institutionalization**. The purpose of a reform is not to produce a one-to- three-year blip on the screen. It is to produce long-term improvements for both current and future teachers and students. The levels of planning and building support for long term institutionalization of a reform vary tremendously among the schools in the study and interact with all of the above 16 dimensions. In some cases, continuing the reform will cost tens of thousands of dollars annually that are not in the regular budget of the school. Further, institutionalization requires a core group of advocates, and such groups are as subject to receiving new job offers or otherwise departing as all other members of a faculty.

A final point regarding variance returns to the design of this evaluation study. Typically in designing studies that include a strong quantitative component, methodologists will insist on at least 10 and preferably 30 cases for each dimension on which change is to be measured. In this case that would require between 170 and 510 sites. There were 52 ONET sites and funding to follow 10 in year one and 8 in year two of this evaluation. It follows that this report relies heavily on qualitative case study data.

## Model Implementation and Sustainability Status

A great deal of detail on implementation at each site was gathered and analyzed. In abbreviated form, we note the following:

### Asia/ISSN

We examined the implementation of the ISSN model at a high school and a middle school. ISSN Site 1 was a large public high school offering grades 9-12. Four years after initial ONET funding, district personnel, school administration, and teachers at Site 1 had effectively worked

together to achieve implementation of the ISSN model with high fidelity. One year after the end of the ONET funding, the ISSN model was not only sustained, but continued to grow and expand in terms of the depth and quality of the implementation at the high school. The school had continued its membership with the Asia Society and was making strategic use of the associated professional development opportunities to train the Leadership Team, who were then providing in-school training to the other teachers in the building. Implementation of the ISSN framework was found throughout the building and has effectively become a sustained part of the school's culture. The ISSN model is starting to be adopted in the district's other schools.

ISSN Site 2 was a medium-sized public middle school that offered grades 6-8 initially, but switched to grades 7-8 in the second year of the evaluation. The school's implementation focused on the creation of a new two-semester Global Seminar course required of all 7th and 8th grade students. This course incorporated several elements of the ISSN framework. Teachers throughout the building received little professional development and limited use of the ISSN framework was found in the other content courses. The model implementation is being sustained at the school on a reduced basis. The Global Seminar course will be reduced to a one-semester course and no further professional development is planned.

**AVID**

AVID Site 1 was a medium-sized public high school offering grades 9-12 and serving students in grades 7-8 through an early high school option. Four years after initial ONET funding, the school had implemented the AVID elective course in grades 7-11 and incorporated the academic training, tutoring, and exploration components of this model. The school is on track to add grade 12 in the fall of 2015, but on-going scheduling issues have impacted the course enrollments and not all grade levels have been consistently taught each year once implemented. A high percentage of teachers throughout the building are implementing at least some AVID strategies into content courses including Organization Binders, Cornell Notes, Interactive Notebooks, and Philosophical Chairs. The program had continued its implementation trajectory the first year after funding ended. School and district personnel are working to sustain the program by continuing professional development activities, seeking funds to support program costs, and encouraging the adoption of the AVID model at other schools in the district.

AVID Site 2 was a small charter high school serving grades 8-12. Here, school personnel consistently struggled to implement the AVID model with fidelity due to extensive turnover of teachers and administrators. During the funding period, a version of the AVID elective course was taught to all students in grades 8-9, but the school was unable to implement the tutoring component of the model. Teachers received little professional development and limited use of AVID strategies was found in the content courses. One year after the end of the ONET funding, the AVID model was no longer being implemented at the school.

**Early College**

At EC Site 1 the model changed from having an application process for selecting participating students (2013-2014) to including any student interested in participating (2014-2015). The program begins in the 7th grade with exposure to colleges, some compacted curriculum, and summer bridge programs and Gear Up programs focused on orienting students to EC. Administrators and teachers continue to support the program, even though the district no

longer has the funds to provide additional compensation to teachers who teach EC classes. The initiative has been rolled into College Credit Plus and is being funded from the Straight A grant.

At Site 2 the district is working toward a coordinated K-12 effort in order to ensure that students are accelerated through the curriculum at an appropriate pace from elementary school onward in order to be ready to take college classes during high school. Students in upper grades take advantage of the increased college offerings and opportunities the district offers, and there is continuous effort to compact curriculum at the middle and early high school grades to allow for college level courses earlier in a student's high school program. The focus on Early College begins in the elementary school with college awareness activities and some compacting of curriculum. The model is being sustained through the district's successful open enrollment full day kindergarten program, revenue from which more than pays for the college costs of the district's juniors and seniors. The superintendent and school board are in talks to guarantee college or career credential to every high school graduate.

**New Tech**

Site 1 has a "school within a school" structure whereby both a traditional program and a New Tech program exist (not physically separated). Both students and teachers may opt into the NT program by choice and students select into one program. This site planned and achieved full implementation (grades 7-12) by 2015. Almost all teachers implemented the program and were committed to the model. The only teachers who were not fully dedicated to implementing the model were the new teachers who were just initiated into the teaching style. There remains strong commitment to sustaining the model. With strong support from the Board and Superintendent, all interviewees felt that the program will continue for the long run. Sustainability concerns pertained mostly to the cost of technology (ex., laptop computers and home internet connections for all students) and professional development.

Site 2 has a full school implementation model whereby all teachers are expected (and were part of the decision) to implement the NT model including project based learning. Selective implementation is occurring whereby the site chooses which aspects of the model they wish to use when they feel it is appropriate. The school expanded implementation to grade 11 in 2014-2015 and will expand to grade 12 in 2015-2016. With respect to sustainability, Site 2 continues to have a core group of teachers who are invested in parts of the model such as PBL. Most of the remaining funds for the program are spent on professional development. The principal expects to either have no one at trainings this year or send the other half who did not attend the summer training last year.

## Student Outcomes across Models and across Sites

A major question guiding this evaluation was: *To what extent are these models effective in increasing positive student outcomes or other desirable outcomes?* To address this question, we examined school-wide quantitative indicators found in the ODE Report Cards as well as qualitatively reported indicators that emerged from our site visits.

## Quantitative Indicators of Student Outcomes across Models

In order to compare student outcomes across the four different models, we examined trends over time in the schools' available Report Card information. Several variables of potential interest, such as 4-year graduation rates, were problematic for this analysis because they did not apply to all schools in the sample and/or the variable definition had changed during the time period of interest (2009-2015). These issues limited the usefulness of several variables for drawing conclusions about the models. Therefore, we examined the Achievement Performance Index over time for the ONET-funded schools. This variable is a measure of how well every student performed on annual achievement tests regardless of level of proficiency. It was selected because it applies to all schools in the sample and has been consistently reported over the time of the ONET program (2010-2014).

Figure 1 depicts the trends in the Performance Index over time for the entire sample of schools funded for the four models through ONET (*n*=49) as well as for each of the four model groups (*n* ranges from 5 to 19). As this figure illustrates, there was a slight increase in the Performance Index each year across the full sample (increasing from 79.2% in 2010-11 to 79.7% in 2013-14). As a group, the New Tech and AVID schools had a slight increase on average over the four years and the ISSN and Early College schools had a slight decrease over the four years.

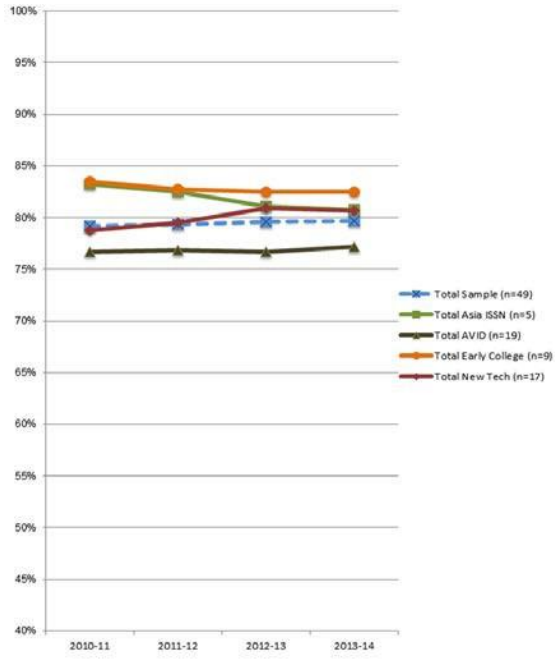


Figure 1. Performance Index over time: the four models

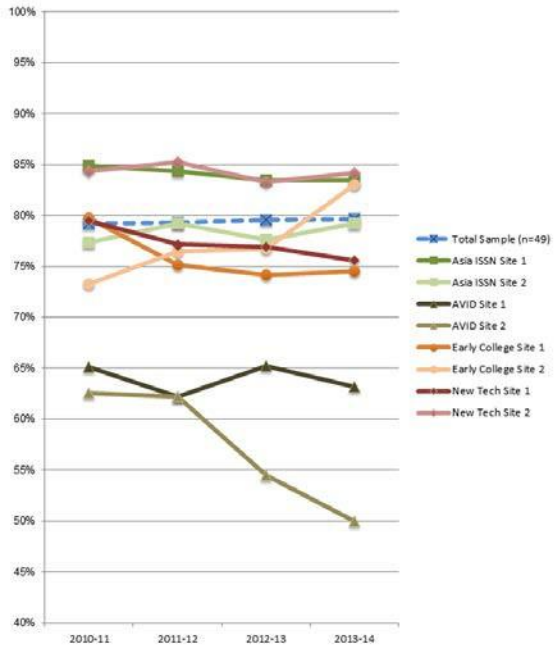


Figure 2. Performance Index over time: case study sites

Figure 2 depicts the Performance Index over the same four years for the 8 sites in our case study sample relative to the full sample. This graph highlights several important features of the schools. One, the eight sites started their reform efforts at very different performance levels. Some schools experienced notable increases during the time of the grant (i.e., Early College Site 2), some remained relatively consistent (i.e., New Tech Site 2), some fluctuated by year (i.e., AVID Site 1), and some had notable decreases (i.e., AVID Site 2).

Although the graphs present useful pictures of ongoing achievement trends, there are several key limitations of the Report Card data in general and the Performance Index specifically as an indicator of the success of the ONET program. First, these indicators are whole-school variables but some of the models were locally implemented in ways that targeted only a subgroup of the students. Therefore, any positive effects of the program will be difficult to see in the whole-school indicators. Second, due to the nature of the reforms and the time to scale up the implementation, most school personnel felt that there had not yet been enough time to fully realize the benefits of the program on student outcomes by the 2013-2014 Report Card. Due to these important limitations, we examined the data gathered in our case study site visits to qualitatively describe any positive student outcomes that may be occurring.

**Site-Specific Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators of Student Outcomes across Models**

Consistent with the quantitative results, school personnel overall perceived that Report Card data was not yet a suitable measure of the outcomes occurring in the program. Only personnel at Early College Site 2 noted that their performance index score had improved over the time of the program implementation. In addition, personnel at three schools described seeing improvement in specific state test scores (e.g., Ohio Graduation Test, OGT, tests) for the subset of students who were receiving the implemented model. These positive outcomes were noted by personnel at AVID Site 1, Early College Site 2, and New Tech Site 1. Personnel at Early College Site 1 noted that student ACT and SAT scores had increased.

Across the sites and models, school personnel described a variety of other desirable outcomes for which they perceived positive changes to be occurring for their students. Our analysis identified five broad categories of these other desirable outcomes. The *student attendance and enrollment* category included positive changes in enrollment numbers, attendance numbers, and number of students being held back a grade. The *student behaviors and strategies* category included positive changes in student actions such as use of specific academic and interpersonal skills. The *attitudes* category included positive changes in student attitudes about learning, college, and others. The *college and career readiness* category included positive changes in student engagement with concepts and actions directly related to preparing for post- secondary education and work. The *student experiences* category included positive changes in terms of new in-class and out-of-class experiences that students were having that were directly attributed to the model implementation.

These five broad categories emerged across the eight sites and four models indicating that the implementation of the models led to a variety of potentially valuable outcomes, few of which can be measured by state indicators at this time. Furthermore, the site-based data also provide evidence that these other desirable outcomes are qualitatively different across the four models. Therefore, we provide a brief overview of the positive outcomes described for the different models here. The individual case reports provide in-depth descriptions of the qualitative information learned about student outcomes across the two years of the study.

**Asia Society's ISSN and positive student outcomes.**

Personnel at the two ISSN sites emphasized positive student outcomes in terms of new experiences and improved student attitudes. A wide variety of new experiences were provided for the ISSN students at both Sites 1 and 2. Examples of these kinds of experiences include service

learning opportunities, interacting with people in other cultures, sharing work with audiences that included members of the community, and study abroad exchanges. Improvements in student attitudes included increased global awareness and being more open-minded to other points of view. At Site 1 improved attitudes also included students being more willing to take control of their own learning and being more aware of the audience for their academic products. Additional positive outcomes described included students learning to better research topics online, critically evaluate sources, and collaborate with others.

**AVID and positive student outcomes.**

Personnel at the two AVID sites emphasized the positive outcomes that occurred in terms of improved student behaviors and strategies. All students were described as being more organized and able to apply the Cornell Notes (a formal system for recording class notes) framework as a strategy for organizing new information. In addition, students in the AVID elective course were described as being able to apply more advanced learning strategies across their classes. Teachers described students as having an improved sense of responsibility for their learning. There were indicators of improved college and career readiness for the AVID elective students, such as enrolling in more rigorous courses at Site 1 and experiencing college field trips. Early indicators of improved enrollment included fewer transfers out of the school (a measure of improved student and parent satisfaction) and fewer failures at grade 9 were also noted at Site 1.

**Early College and positive student outcomes.**

Personnel at the two Early College sites emphasized positive student outcomes in terms of college readiness. Examples of such outcomes included increases in number of students enrolling in advanced courses at the middle and high school levels, number of students taking Early College courses, number of students going to college, and number of students graduating with an Associate's (2-year college) Degree. Improvements in student attitudes were described, such as better awareness of what it means to go to college and improved belief that college is a possibility. Students also were reported as engaging in new experiences including visiting college campuses, taking courses on a college campus (Site 2), and experiencing distance learning (Site 1). At Site 2, positive changes in students' behavior were described as including better completion of work and decreases in the need for remediation. Site 2 also noted that enrollment was increasing for the district, which was attributed at least partly to the focus on college readiness.

**New Tech and positive student outcomes.**

Personnel at the two New Tech sites emphasized positive student outcomes in terms of improved student behaviors and attitudes. Personnel at both sites perceived that the New Tech students had improved their oral communication skills and become more engaged and confident in their learning. Additional skills noted at Site 2 included better skills for working together, completing projects, and making formal presentations. Personnel at Site 1 noted that they had achieved a decrease in disciplinary issues. Perceptions of positive outcomes for New Tech students in terms of college readiness included increased student maturity at Site 2 and better understanding of college requirements at Site 1.

## Factors Promoting Strong Implementation, and Barriers to Implementation Success

As noted previously, a wide range of factors affected program implementation at the ONET sites. Based on all the gathered data across the sites, several factors were identified that helped to promote the successful implementation, outcomes, and sustainability of the school reform models. The factors described here arose as the most salient. This description is not exhaustive of all of the factors that contributed to success, or lack of success, in each of the sites, but they reflect recurring themes.

### Promoting Factors

Promoting factors related to implementation of school reform models included the following:

1. **School/Reform Match.** Having a match between the program goals and the school mission and clearly communicating the goals of the model during the initial roll out of the program.
2. **Teacher/Reform Match.** Some teachers reported great enthusiasm for their chosen reform. Even after four years of implementation, other teachers were clearly uncomfortable with specifics of their reform and simply did not implement it. Some of the reforms have specific courses and/or roles that are unique to that reform. Having skilled, enthusiastic teachers in those courses and roles is critical.
3. **An Implementation Plan.** Having a clear strategic plan for implementation, from roll- out to building early successes to long-term institutionalization.
4. **Flexibility.** It is impossible to know in advance the full range of things that will affect a school reform effort. Therefore, being flexible during the implementation process was a significant implementation promoting factor.
5. **Professional Development.** In terms of professional development, receiving quality training and having access to model experts to provide support was key. In interviews in the spring of 2015, a consistent theme echoed previous research in wishing for additional funds and time for more PD. That schools and systems wish they had built in substantially increased levels of PD is close to a universal finding in ONET, as well as nationally.
6. **Credentialing.** Some reforms (e.g., Early College) require that several faculty members obtain specific credentialing in order to teach core courses. Arrangements for teachers to obtain that credentialing therefore become critical. In other reforms it is advantageous for some of the local teachers to obtain extra training and become credentialed, national leaders in support of the reform.
7. **Empowerment to Lead.** Another promoting factor related to teachers was the extent to which teachers were empowered to contribute to the decision-making process. Several reforms require new levels of teacher engagement in decision making.
8. **New Types of Administrative Leadership.** Administrative leadership and support for the model was another important promoting factor. Not only were principal and central office endorsement and support of reforms critical, but new types of multi-way shared leadership were often required. Some principals and central office persons embraced these more collegial roles and others did not.
9. **Issues Increasing the Probability of Sustained Reform.** Several issues were important in increasing the chances of sustainability.

a. **Plan for turnover.** A plan, from the beginning, for dealing with inevitable turnover among professionals. We heard of no examples of principals who arrived at schools during, for example, year two of a reform receiving advanced training in the particulars of a model prior to arriving at a school. This almost invariably caused loss of momentum. Occasionally the momentum was re-built. Similarly, all schools have teachers retire or move to other locations. Schools need plans for bringing in new teachers and training them in the particulars of a reform.

b. **Refresher Professional Development.** One principal expressed the wish that all of her faculty, new and more experienced, could take a unified refresher PD sequence to hone some people's skills and, more broadly, to get everyone on the same page. Several teachers, at multiple sites, expressed the same wish.

c. **A Workable Plan to Continue the Reform After the Grant Funding Expires.**The goal of school reform isn't to create a blip, but rather to make fundamental, long-term changes in schools' operations.

**Barriers to Success**

Based on all the gathered data across the sites, several factors were identified that served to hinder, or created barriers to, the implementation, outcomes, and sustainability of the school reform models. The factors described here arose as the most salient, but this description is not exhaustive of factors that hindered success in each of the individual sites. Hindering factors related to implementation of school reform models included the following:

1. **A lack of initial planning time** at the start of implementation to ensure a successful roll out. Principals often reported receiving funding in mid-summer, when no faculty were available, and being required to begin implementation in August. Initial "quick wins" are often described as being integral to school turnaround. Shabby beginnings that created negative impressions of the reforms followed when inadequate preparation had occurred.
2. **Not achieving buy-in** from the teaching staff, district personnel, parents, community and/or students was a significant hindering factor across multiple models. At one site, the fact that the school had previously been vocal in promoting their academic successes led community members to question why their school needed to change.
3. **Early Transitions of Key Personnel** were observed in some sites. Instances in which key personnel responsible for the roll out and implementation of the models left the school building or school district and leadership transferred to other personnel unfamiliar with the model hindered implementation.
4. **Rigid school schedules** that were incompatible with the needs of the specific models hindered effective implementation.
5. **Competing change efforts** divided faculty energies. In some instances faculty members took sides among different external reform requirements, with the result than none were fully implemented.
6. **Unresolved conflicts not necessarily inherent to the reform effort,** such as interpersonal differences can kill group processes and, as a side effect, reform efforts. Reforms typically require new levels of cooperation among diverse adult groups. If those are not facilitated, a reform can die.

7. **A lack of a shared plan for continued funding of any components of the reform that could not be continued on a traditional budget** hampered commitment to sustaining reforms. For many of the sites, sustainability of the model past the grant-funded period was based on the availability of funds to purchase needed resources.

## Recommendations across Sites and across Models

There were also factors specific to individual models that served to promote or hinder the implementation, outcomes and sustainability of the models. For the Early College model, flexible school schedules that accommodated college course schedules and first-hand college experiences for students were identified as promoting factors, while lack of technology, lack of coordinating personnel, and lack of transportation to college campuses were identified as hindering factors. For the New Tech model, teachers' commitment to Project-Based Learning was identified as a promoting factor, and the conflict between the teaching styles promoted by the model and the traditional ways of teaching that occurred in the school was identified as a hindering factor.

As a result of the ONET data gathering, below we present a set of recommendations for schools, districts and the state for moving forward with successful implementation and sustainability of ONET programs. These recommendations are based on findings from the case studies of ASIA/ISSN, AVID, Early College, and New Tech.

### Cross Model Recommendations

Looking across the ONET models and the case study sites, there were a number of findings that led to the following recommendations for school district sites and the state in regard to the successful implementation and sustainability of intervention programs:

*Recommendations for schools and districts*

- Reforms were more successful in schools that apparently were operating relatively healthily before receiving the grants. If a school is experiencing significant internal challenges before receiving a grant, time must be allocated to addressing those challenges in addition to the time required to implement the specific reform design. Schools or districts in deep financial trouble, or faculties badly split along interpersonal lines are unlikely to succeed unless those challenges are forthrightly addressed.
- If a reform is worth doing, it is worth taking substantial time among leaders at multiple levels to plan for success. What are the likely long-term needs for the reform to succeed? Who will address those needs? Who will support the school's leadership and faculty?
- Some reforms require the creation of specific new classes and/or new positions for some faculty members. Great care must be exercised in placing faculty in those new positions. Previously recognized leaders and experts among the faculty often are more successful than available others.
- Before committing to a reform, obtain at least initial buy in from the large majority of affected professionals, and all engaged leaders. Teachers and other professionals need to be able to see

the new design as part of an overall philosophy of education or gestalt, not just as "another add on."

- Assume that the reform effort will require a higher level of ongoing professional development of professionals involved in the intervention programs than the developers state. Change takes longer than any of us wish, and it is labor intensive.
- Make the successful intervention programs a priority in the district and build in in funding to continue them after the initial grant runs out.
- Develop leaders in the schools and district who can shepherd the intervention programs in order to sustain a strong and effective program.
- Before it is needed, create a succession plan to maintain the consistency of leadership in the face of leader and teacher turnover. Leadership transitions are crisis moments in the lives of reforms and must be managed with forethought and care, if not to be destructive.
- Early in the implementation process of an external reform design, identify at least one "thought partner" at another school further along in the implementation process, and make use of the knowledge they have gained. Later on, share your experiences with others.
- Identify a structure for coordination of activities.
- Develop and sustain ongoing efforts to share information about the intervention with parents and community members.
- Given that in education today additional, new demands will inevitably "come down," have a plan in place that allows the school leadership and the faculty to continue the chosen reform uninterrupted while also addressing the new demands.

*Recommendations for state Departments of Education*

- Provide adequate planning time before reforms must be implemented. A school is a fairly large ship, and it cannot turn without the work of significant numbers of professionals.
- Provide early support for implementation by providing experts, like the ONET liaisons, who can help school personnel develop successful programs.
- Establish clear expectations for sustainability in the beginning and provide examples to help districts establish structures for sustainability.
- Continue funding for successful initiatives, including the funding of ongoing professional development, the upkeep of technology, and other resources important to the success and sustainability of the programs. If full funding isn't possible post-grant, create a ramping down of funding so that systems can make adjustments.
- Streamline expectations for school districts in relation to grant initiatives, new programs, tests, etc., so that districts are not faced with simultaneously implementing incoherent multiple initiatives.
- Understand that while each school's and district's "Report Card" is legitimately important, so are other things. Parents, teachers and principals often regard such things as students' developing adult-relevant skills as being at least as important as scores on achievement tests. This is not to advocate for eliminating Report Card requirements; rather it is to remind all concerned that there are other important, desired outcomes.

- Develop and diffuse examples of "what works." Support initiatives to broaden the reach of these programs by encouraging and supporting collaboration among districts.
- Develop and implement a plan for handling potential conflicts with other change initiatives. When the Ohio Department of Education promulgates mutually-conflicting mandates or suggestions, all of the desired changes become compromised.
- If expensive technology is involved (ex., laptop computers for all students), plan to provide to incoming students and to replace lost or aging out technologies, or at the least require that the proposing school and district present such a plan before receiving funding.

**Recommendations Specific to Creating Reform Sustainability**

The models observed in ONET remain viable in most of the eight schools studied. The districts that have been most successful in securing sustainability for their programs are those that are able to secure other vehicles of funding and those in which the programs have become part of the school culture and buy-in from multiple stakeholder groups has been established, including those that can serve as "champions" of the program.

Threats to viability often come from lack of resources, including key personnel. The most common hindering factor is the lack of funds through which to secure components necessary for the programs' success such as adequate technology or in-depth and frequently offered professional development. In addition to lacking funding to secure these resources, districts also reported problems resulting from a lack of key personnel or a turnover of key personnel. This often led to breakdowns in communication and an inadequate numbers of staff who were properly trained in the program or model.

Threats also often come from competing initiatives. When too many initiatives are introduced, particularly when new initiatives cannot be incorporated into existing initiatives, staff are unable to devote adequate attention to any one initiative, thus leading to poor implementation of programs.

In addition to the above general recommendations, the research team forwards the following reform-specific recommendations.

***Asia/ISSN***

*Recommendations for schools and districts*

- Strategically plan the roll out of the model and explicitly communicate the plan to stakeholders within the school and beyond, articulating how the ISSN model fits the school's mission and goals and how that mission will guide implementation decisions.
- Implement the ISSN model as part of the school's curriculum versus within an elective class (e.g., Global Seminar) to make ISSN a part of the school culture.
- Develop a strategic, multi-year plan for professional development that considers how to select and train lead teachers and the training of all teachers in the building.
- Provide teachers with the training and the time needed to integrate the ISSN model as part of an overall framework for delivering instruction.
- Recognize that the ISSN model provides schools with an instructional framework, not a set curriculum.

*Recommendations for the State*

- Ensure that the model experts providing professional development to schools are accessible, have expertise with the goals and strategies of the model, and are skilled at delivering training to teachers.
- Establish coherence among state initiatives, directives, tests, and other changes and requirements for schools and school districts.
- Make strategic use of individuals assigned the duties of monitoring and assisting with the innovation grants.
- Set funding parameters correctly at the proposal stage and if changes have to occur, work with school personnel to ensure as smooth of a transition to new plans as possible.

***AVID***

*Recommendations for schools and districts*

- Select AVID teachers who are well respected, experienced, and can develop good relationships with students and fellow teachers.
- Establish a leadership team that includes representatives from the district, administration, and teachers. These individuals should develop a strong understanding of the AVID Essential Elements, have a positive working relationship with each other, and communicate well.
- Plan professional development opportunities carefully, selecting key personnel to attend the intensive AVID trainings and determine how the rest of the building will receive adequate training.
- Integrate AVID as part of a coherent approach to education, with other on-going reform efforts.
- Implement AVID with fidelity, while thoughtfully adapting its components to a school's context.
- Plan for the logistical and financial demands associated with implementing AVID including tutors, membership fee, travel expenses for trainings, professional development, program materials, and salaries.

*Recommendations for the State*

- Support the successful implementation of AVID by funding initial project planning prior to implementation.
- Provide AVID schools with funding to implement key components of the AVID model as well as funding to assist with locating and hiring tutors.
- Provide additional support when key school people leave. Making additional training and/or logistical support available when turnover occurs could help an effort sustain through the time of change.
- Support schools with in-school experts who can provide coaching to schools throughout the implementation period and beyond, if necessary.
- Provide funding beyond the three year implementation period to support continued professional development.

***Early College***

*Recommendations for the schools and districts:*

- Establish a coordinator for Early College who can address implementation issues, such as scheduling and logistics, across schools and colleges.
- Provide ongoing professional development to keep veteran teachers engaged and orient new teachers to Early College and the use of technology for rigorous teaching and learning.
- Collaborate with colleges, universities, career centers and other post-secondary institutions and engage in ongoing conversations to work through different expectations of what it means for high school students to be in college-level courses
- Partner with community agencies, like transit authorities, to remove barriers to attending Early College courses on college campuses.
- Host regular parent nights and community forums on Early College opportunities to establish expectations and support for Early College in the community.
- Establish strong leadership for the program in the school and the district, including the development of a leadership team which can carry sustain the program when individual leaders or teachers leave.

*Recommendations for the State*

- Establish common expectations among school districts and colleges in relation to tuition fee structures and the credentialing of high school teachers to be college instructors
- Continue to fund initiatives like the Gear-Up program to help students transition from high school through college visits to college campuses and other opportunities for students to experience college culture.
- Encourage the development of Early College as a K-12 initiative that establishes high expectations for all students and better prepares all students to accelerate.
- To promote more college-going experiences for students, establish a funding model that allows for students to take college courses on campus without the district losing money.
- Provide time for change to occur before altering expectations, adding new initiatives, or changing direction.

***New Tech***

*Recommendations for schools and districts*

- Establish teacher commitment to Project Based Learning, as it is essential for successful implementation.
- Provide strong school leadership support for New Tech success, including support for the structural and cultural changes required to successfully implement the model.
- Develop student understanding and buy-in to the New Tech model, as students are responsible for their own learning; if they do not understand and accept the model, it is not successful.
- Brand and communicate the program to parents and the community to obtain support and to facilitate program success.

*Recommendations for the State*

- Provide adequate funding for the implementation and sustainability of New Tech.
- Provide professional development resources to schools using the New Tech model so that teachers receive proper training on using PBL in the classroom.

- Establish clear plans for sustainability of funded programs to provide guidance for school districts.

## Conclusion

Returning to the questions that framed the second year of the ONET study, data gathered by the multi-university team can provide the following conclusions:

**To what extent were models implemented and sustained?** There was tremendous variance in levels of implementation. Some of the reasons for this variation were set before the funding began; other parts could be attributed to at least 17 factors described in this report.

While the team only gathered data one year after the completion of the three-year funding of ONET reforms, our observation was that several of the reforms were holding up surprisingly well. Teachers, principals, and districts were typically sustaining the reforms at approximately the same levels created during the three years of implementation funding.

**To what extent are these models effective in increasing positive student outcomes or other desirable outcomes?** To date, none of the models has produced consistent, compelling data as measured on Ohio's School Report Card indicating dramatic improvement. Only one school out of the eight showed a notable increase in the school's performance index. That fact may reflect, in part, a lack of implementation at some sites. It almost certainly reflects the time necessary to show improvement on the state measures. Third, it may reflect differences in the goals of the reforms (cooperative problem solving, project-based learning, etc.) and the state measures (norm-referenced tests, etc.)

Importantly, at almost every site principals and teachers expressed the belief that the reforms had been of value, that they had new skills and new appreciation for students' potential. That these gains are not easily quantified is unfortunate, but does not call into question professionals' positive judgments.

**What factors led to success in the implementation of each model and across models? What factors were seen as barriers to model implementation?** A broad range of general and reform-specific factors have been detailed in this report. Issues of leadership, funding, professional development, and planning for transitions were among the most often observed in determining levels of implementation.

**What efforts are being taken to sustain each model now that funding for the initiative is expended? What contextual factors may facilitate or hinder the sustainability of these models?** The innovation model had been sustained throughout the fourth year of implementation by seven of the eight schools. At these seven schools, teachers, principals, and district personnel were working to sustain whatever levels of reform had been achieved in the preceding four years.

**What recommendations for future state initiatives can be gleaned from lessons learned from the implementation of these models across sites within the model and across models**? This is a complex issue, and one worthy of the final notes in this paper.

A first recommendation would be that to the extent that the state's measure of reform success is going to be scores on a Report Card, or any other quantitative instruments, the state should build those criteria into the request for proposals. The gap between the state's measures of success and local professionals' expressions of success, given local realities, was often striking

Second would be to allow more time for planning. Implementation is a large, complex process, and schools need several months of conversation and planning in order to gear up for success. Reforms that stumble in year one have additional challenges in convincing faculty to invest over the long haul.

Third would be, as far as possible, to protect the school and district from having to implement multiple, often conflicting reforms at the same time. If a school has been funded by the state to do AVID (ISSN, etc.), find ways to productively blend any new mandates into that model's framework, particularly in the early years of implementation.

Fourth, show demonstrable support for the reforms. Few of the schools in ONET have ever been visited by a state department employee in other than a monitoring/evaluating context. Have someone from the Ohio Department of Education sit in on a professional development day, or attend an evening in which student projects are being displayed.

Fifth, insist on a plan for handling transitions. How will new principals and teachers be brought up to speed on the reform? How can the school not lose momentum?

Finally, insist that schools build in and sustain plans for transitions to local financial support and institutionalization for a reform, both as a part of ther initial proposal and as they approach the end of formal funding.

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